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In Momentum: The Navigation, Narration, and Negotiation of Continuing Professional Development by Mid-Career Artists in South West England

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University of Plymouth

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IN ADDITION: THE NAVIGATION,
NARRATION, AND NEGOTIATION OF
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT BY MID-CAREER
ARTISTS IN SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

K. M. SMITH

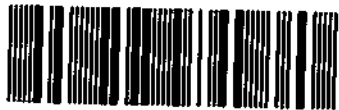
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**In Momentum: The Navigation, Narration, and Negotiation of
Continuing Professional Development by Mid-Career Artists in
South West England**

by

Karen Mary Smith

Appendices

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Appendix 1

Contacts for professional development and CPD providers

Generated by Karen Smith on 18 February 2008 and updated 6 February 2009. This is not an exhaustive list, and expresses some personal opinions. It was first written in response to BA and MA students in arts subjects asking for advice on where to look for information; it aimed to give a good start at navigating the wealth of web-based information.

Signing up for e-bulletin listings from many of these websites allows access to announcements of opportunities, specific and non-specific training, networks, commissions, new publications, talks, and a variety of potential possibilities. Many national organisations have regional offices. Organisations and initiatives change rapidly, and this information may be already out of date.

Organisation	Description	Web Address
a – n The Artists Information Company	Visual arts based, yet a fantastic resource for any artform. AIR - Artists Interaction and Representation is the membership scheme for practising visual and applied artists forming an integral aspect of the Artist subscription provided by a-n. AIR benefits include free £5m Public & Products Liability insurance, Open dialogue events, artists' representation to government and public bodies and access to all a-n's online and printed resources.	www.a-n.co.uk www.a-n.co.uk/AIR
Arts and Business	Offer training, networking, business intelligence and advice and research. Professional development programmes promote the exchange and development of skills between the business and arts communities.	www.aandb.org.uk
ACE and ACE SW	Arts Council of England website. Artsjobs and arts news feeds linked from here. See regional directories for south west specific information. Also has directories of local authority arts officers (e.g. for South West.)	www.artscouncil.org.uk artsnews@listmail.artsfb.org.uk
arts professional	Good source of current policy and political information, also produce free weekly e-bulletin that you can sign up to.	www.artsprofessional.co.uk
Artquest	London and visual arts specific but the comprehensive website is extremely useful. The aim of artquest is: "Critical engagement and practical support to London's visual artists and craftspeople."	www.artquest.org.uk

Organisation	Description	Web Address
Axis	Online resource for information about contemporary art. Monthly e-bulletin, as well as discussion and networking opportunities in different regions via café artistique, a part of Axis 'dialogues'.	www.axisweb.org
Live Art Development Agency	Works to support and develop the Live Art sector, its artists, practices, discourses, infrastructure and audiences. It offers resources, professional development schemes and curatorial and publishing initiatives to support Live Art practices.	www.thisisliveart.co.uk
Artsadmin	An excellent place to look at a model of good practice for live art and collaborative development. Has spawned a great deal of the UK's (if London-centric) flagship live art companies. Offers advice and professional development for artists within the areas of live and performance art, based in Toynbee Studios, London.	www.artsadmin.co.uk
Arvon Foundation	Runs tailored residential development courses for writers in four locations across the UK.	www.arvonfoundation.org
Business Links	There is anecdotal evidence that business links tend to be too generic, and they rarely understand the challenges of freelance cultural sector workers, and particularly artists.	www.businesslink.gov.uk
The Crafts Council	The main advocacy body for the crafts sector, funded by Arts Council England. Offering a wealth of CPD support, advice and information to craft artists.	www.craftscouncil.org.uk
Creative & Cultural Skills	The national sector skills council for the (non-media) creative industries.	www.ccskills.org.uk

Organisation	Description	Web Address
Creative Partnerships	Government's flagship creative learning programme, with an e-bulletin you can sign up for, and potential for artist / education partnerships. In process of winding up. Some creative partnership regions are developing social enterprise models and becoming independent organisations.	www.creative-partnerships.com
Creative People	National network of arts and creative industries organisations and individuals. Each member of the network individually supply a training and professional development (CPD) information, advice and guidance service to current and aspiring arts and crafts practitioners. Launched as a pilot in 2001, supported by the Arts Council England, the network is a virtual organisation.	www.creativepeople.org.uk
Cultural leadership programmes	Clore leadership programme or look at Cultural leadership programme and newsletter.	www.cloreleadership.org www.culturalleadership.org.uk
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Useful to keep up with policy making and wider government initiatives around culture.	www.culture.gov.uk
(ETA) Education Through Art	Pioneering visual arts professional development organisation.	www.eta-art.co.uk
Foundation for community dance	Generally very useful site. Primarily for dancers working in participatory settings, but very informative.	www.communitydance.org.uk
Engage	National Association for Gallery Education. Run training and CPD events for those engaged in visual arts activity.	www.engage.org/training
ENYAN	ENYAN, English National Youth Arts Network. Membership body designed to unite the diverse youth arts sector across England and the UK. ENYAN is delivered by Artsworld, the national youth arts development agency and part funded by Arts Council England South East.	www.enyan.co.uk

Organisation	Description	Web Address
Literature Training	A comprehensive online information resource for writers and all those involved in creating or supporting new writing and literature.	www.literaturetraining.com
LADA (Live Art Development Agency)	London based but delivering across the UK. The Live Art Development Agency offers Resources, Professional Development Initiatives, and Projects for the support and development of Live Art practices and critical discourses in the UK and internationally.	www.thisisliveart.co.uk
Lapidus (literary arts in personal development)	Occasional CPD opportunities in the South West – for example, a 2009 forum for professional members in the South West region to meet; identify potential professional working partnerships and mentors; sharing information on good practice. Lapidus South West intend to offer a number of CPD days for professional members throughout 2010.	www.lapidus.org.uk
Mailout	National participatory arts magazine	www.e-mailout.org
MusicLeader	A national organisation with regional networks (in the South West, this is MusicLeader South West). MusicLeader provides access to professional development and training for music leaders (musicians and others who deliver or support music making with children and young people) at every stage of their career. The networks provide: -Information, advice and guidance; -Networking, including skills development opportunities; -CPD programmes for new and experienced practitioners.	www.musicleader.net
NALD National Association of Literature Development	The professional body for all involved in developing writers, readers and literature audiences.	www.e-latest.org.uk

Organisation	Description	Web Address
NESTA	National endowment for science, technology and the arts. Can sign up for their useful e-bulletin from their national research and policy unit (nrpu).	www.nesta.org.uk
New Work Network (NWN)	National, artist-led support organisation bringing together people working in live art, contemporary performance and interdisciplinary practice in England. Supports the development of new work by nurturing arts practitioners through the creation of innovative professional development activities that focus on networking, exchange and collaboration across the UK and internationally.	www.newworknetwork.org.uk
PLATFORM	PLATFORM combines art, research, campaigning and activism towards social and ecological justice.	www.platformlondon.org
TIPP	Theatre in Prisons and Probation Develop and implement participatory arts projects and undertake training for artists and for professionals working in the Criminal Justice System.	www.tipp.org.uk
Voluntary Arts Network	Aims to promote participation in the arts and crafts across the UK and ROI and increasingly in Europe. The website holds a library of information sheets on all aspects of managing the arts from taxation to marketing to fundraising (see 'VAN Briefings' section)	www.voluntaryarts.org

South West Specific

Organisation	Description	Web Address
ALIAS	ALIAS advisory service draws upon a pool of knowledge and experience already existing in the community of artists in the South West. It operates with a core group of eight artist advisors.	www.aliasarts.org

Organisation	Description	Web Address
ArtsMatrix	Regional agency representing the development of CPD for artists and creative practitioners in the south west. As of December 2009 ArtsMatrix is defunct. However Plymouth College of Art and Design were in 2010 proposing to buy the company.	www.artsmatrix.org.uk
Aune Head Arts (AHA)	A contemporary arts organisation based on Dartmoor and running a number of artist-led professional development opportunities.	www.auneheadarts.org.uk
Creative Skills	Professional development organisation for all creative industries practitioners in Cornwall.	www.creativeskills.org.uk
(Culture South West)	(Their role was to help improve the quality and range of cultural activity available to those living in or visiting the South West region and support the further development of creative industries.) Culture South West are now defunct.	www.culturesouthwest.org.uk
The Creative Enterprise Gateway	Offers access to a network of individual experts and specialist organisations that can help creative businesses in the South West fulfill their growth potential.	www.creativesouthwest.org.uk
Spike Island Associate programme	Launched in 2007 by Spike Island in Bristol. The Associate programme offers "time space opportunity."	www.spike-island.org.uk
South West Screen	The film, television and digital media agency for the South West of England.	www.swscreen.co.uk
Picture This	Moving image projects agency commissioning contemporary visual arts works, and produces exhibitions, publications and touring initiatives.	www.picture-this.org.uk
South west sound	Annual conference to explore and debate new initiatives and practices; discuss current issues in music enterprise and education; learn new or refine existing skills and to forge relationships and partnerships. Useful website.	www.southwestsound

Organisation	Description	Web Address
SWRDA South west regional development agency	SWRDA's goal is to improve the economy of the South West. The Creative Industries has been identified as a key sector for the region by SWRDA	www.southwestrda.org.uk

The Guardian online (www.guardian.co.uk) is another useful source. Google is also useful.

Other regions such as the North West have various organisations that are region specific, and maybe part of a national network. For example:

Live Art North West (LAN west)

North West Playwrights

CIDS (Cultural Industries Development Service) in Manchester

Appendix 2

Creative People, consortium details, 2001

Extract from the Original Creative People Business Plan: “A Network to support Continuing Professional Development”. December 2001, p. 31.

Consortium	Partners/Associates
All Ways Learning	Southern Arts; South East Arts; Arts and Business South; Arts & Business South East, Arts Marketing Hampshire (acting as lead agency for the arts marketing agencies across the region); Slough Borough Council; Hampshire County Council; Kent County Council, The University of Portsmouth; The University of Sussex, West Sussex County Council.
Community Artists	Sound Sense; Foundation for Community Dance, plus associates the Musician's Union, Youth Music, Bath Festival, NAWA, Goldsmith's College University of London
Crafts Consortium	Applied Arts Scotland, Association for Contemporary Jewellery, British Blacksmith's Association, British Society of Enamellers: Glass on Metal Artists, British Toymakers Guild, Crafts Council, Designer Jewellers Group, Devon Guild of Craftsmen, East England Arts, East Midlands Arts, Embroiderer's Guild, Guild of Master Craftsmen Ltd, Lace Guild, London Arts, The Marquetry Society, Midland Potters Association, North West Arts Board, Society of Scribes & Illuminators, Somerset Guild of Craftsmen, South West Arts, Sussex Guild, University of Central England – School of Jewellery, Yorkshire Arts
Disability Arts Steering Group	The members of this were to be agreed.
Knowledge Services	Arts Intelligence - Arts Business; Arts Research Digest; SAMs Books; Arts Marketing Association; National Rural Touring Forum; University of Northumbria in Newcastle; University of Sussex - Arts & Cultural Management Studies Unit, Southern Arts, Independent Theatre Council. Plus a variety of associates, primarily from HEI & specialist National Arts organisations.
New Writing & Literature Consortium	National Association of Writers in Education; National Association for Literature Development; Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers; Lapidus; writernet.
London CPD Partnership	ArtQuest, Artsadmin Limited, ArtZone, Black Arts Alliance, Children's Discovery Centre, Chocolate Factory (Haringey Art Centre), Council for Dance Education & Training, Creative Industries Support Partnership (Haringey Arts Council, Enfield Arts Partnership, Free Form Arts Trust), East London Dance, Engage, Half Moon Young People's Theatre, Hothouse, International Workshop Festival, Live Art Development Agency, London Arts, London Disability Arts Forum, New Vic VI Form College, New Work Network, Outset, Rich Mix, Serious, Shape London, Showhow, Stratford Circus, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Theatre Venture Stratford Cultural Quarter

Matrix	Arnolfini Gallery, Art Shape Limited, Arts Centre Trust, Barbican Theatre Plymouth, Bath Festivals Trust, Dance Agency Cornwall, Dartington College of Arts, Devon Guild of Craftsmen, Equata, Folk South West, Perfect Moment, South West Arts, Watershed Media Centre, Wren Trust. Plus various associates to provide expert advice.
Northern Cultural Skills Partnership	Northern Arts, North East Museums Libraries and Archives Council (NEMLAC), Northern Media Training, Association of Colleges Northern, Universities for the North East, Northern Business Forum, The Regional Employment Service, Association of NE Councils, Learning and Skills Councils, Small Business Service, Arts and Cultural sector practitioners, Cumbria College for Art & Design, Cumbria County Council.
Survival-To-Success	Foundation for Community Dance, Dance UK, The Place Dance Services
TMPL	TMPL Training/Consultants, West Midlands Arts, working with the Regional Arts Boards.

Appendix 3

Ethical approval application form and confirmation email



Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC)
APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF RESEARCH
ON HUMAN SUBJECTS

Title of Research:

1. Nature of Approval Sought (please tick relevant box)

(a) PROJECT*: ☒ (b) PROGRAMME*: ☐

If (a) then please indicate which category:

- Funded Research Project
- MPhil/PhD Project
- Other (please specify):

X

**Note: In most cases, approval should be sought individually for each project. Programme approval is granted for research which comprises an ongoing set of studies or investigations utilising the same methods and methodology and where the precise number and timing of such studies cannot be specified in advance. Such approval is normally appropriate only for ongoing, and typically unfunded, scholarly research activity.*

2. Investigators/Supervisors

Contact Address: Karen Smith 24 Montgomery Street, Bristol. BS3 4SE
Director of Studies/Other Supervisors: Dr Roberta Mock, Dr Martin Woolner, Annie Warburton (ArtsMatrix).

(only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student)

Please indicate department of each named individual, including collaborators external to the faculty.

**Note: Principal Investigators are responsible for ensuring that all staff employed on projects (including research assistants, technicians and clerical staff) act in accordance with the University's ethical principles, the design of the research described in this proposal and any conditions attached to its approval.*

3. Funding Body (if any) and Duration of Project/Programme with Dates* :

AHRC

Research with artists and individuals in arts organisations will take place May 2007 through to December 2008

**Approval is granted for the duration of projects or for a maximum of three years in the case of programmes. Further approval is necessary for any extension of programmes.*

4. Aims and Objectives of Research Project/Programme:

To investigate the Continuing Professional Development needs of those artists who are 'mid-career' in the South West.

5. Brief Description of Research Methods and Procedures:

Qualitative research involving face to face, telephone and email interviews with individuals who work in the creative sector. All individuals consulted will be over 18 years of age. Research may involve one to one interview or group interviews. I will record these interviews via writing, possible visual documentation and mini-disc recorder.

In all cases the following will be provided in an information sheet:

Research objectives; approximate duration of interview; agreement to send a first draft for comment to all contributors.

The research will involve a minimum of 30 people to a maximum of 200 over the duration of the study. Recruitment will be as follows:

- Visiting and talking to already existing groups, (of no more than 20 people at any one time) who will be asked for permission, and briefed in advance. Their details will already be held by one or more arts organisations such as ACE SW, ArtsMatrix, PASW, SWPAN, or by research bodies such as University of Plymouth, Dartington College of Arts, University of Bournemouth.
- Individual interviews. Agreed in advance. As above, their details will already be held by one or more arts organisations such as ACE SW, ArtsMatrix, PASW, SWPAN, or by research bodies such as University of Plymouth, Dartington College of Arts, University of Bournemouth, or by Local Authority Arts Officer listings.

Specify subject populations and recruitment method. Please indicate also any ethically sensitive aspects of the methods. Continue on attached sheets if required.

6. Ethical Protocol:

Please indicate how you will ensure this research conforms with each clause of the University of Plymouth's *Principles for Research Involving Human Participants*. Please attach a statement which addresses each of the ethical principles set out below.

(a) Informed Consent:

All participants will be informed well in advance of any features of the research that may influence their willingness to take part in the study.

(b) Openness and Honesty:

All participants will receive a verbal briefing and / or written document which set out the nature of the study, what questions they will be asked, how their input will be recorded, and how the results of the research will be made public. They will also be told that members of the supervisory team will have access to that information.

All participants have the right to remain anonymous, and can also state that their comments are 'off the record' and therefore will not be used. I will follow the 'Chatham House Rule'. Participants will be told that members of the supervisory team may see anonymised information. Participants will be able to choose whether that information is seen or not, and whether that is by all or only some of the members of the supervisory team.

Note that deception is permissible only where it can be shown that all three conditions specified in Section 2 of the University of Plymouth's Ethical Principles have been made in full. Proposers are required to provide a detailed justification and to supply the names of two independent assessors whom the Sub-Committee

can approach for advice.

(c) **Right to Withdraw:**

Any of the participants have the right to withdraw at any time.

(d) **Protection From Harm:**

All interviews will take place in public places, for example in the café at Plymouth Arts Centre, in the café at Watershed in Bristol, or in the individual's own art spaces.

(e) **Debriefing:**

An account of the purpose of the study will be provided. All participants will be provided with a first draft of writing for comment.

(f) **Confidentiality:**

Participants' identity and data are confidential throughout the conduct and reporting of this research. Except where consent of the participant is given to quote them in whatever capacity they wish to be quoted. This consent will be requested prior to the research taking place, and with full explanation of the research procedure, and absolute right for the participant to withdraw at any time. The work complies with the Data Protection Act. All records held by me will be destroyed no later than 6 months after the awarding of the PhD.

(g) **Professional Bodies Whose Ethical Policies Apply to this Research:**

Whilst they are not professional bodies, the research will also conform to the ethical policies of ArtsMatrix and the Arts Council of England.

7. Declaration*:

To the best of our knowledge and belief, this research conforms to the ethical principles laid down by the University of Plymouth and by the professional body specified in 6 (g).

	Name	Email (s)	Date
Principal Investigator:	Karen Smith	karen.smith@plymouth.ac.uk	19 February 2007
Other Staff Investigators:			
Director of Studies (only where Principal Investigator is a postgraduate student):	Dr Roberta Mock	r.mock@plymouth.ac.uk	19 February 2007

Circle Your Answers

Do you plan to do:

- ☐ research involving vulnerable groups – for example, children and young people, those with a learning disability or cognitive impairment, or individuals in a dependent or unequal relationship

Yes ☐

- ☐ research involving sensitive topics – for example participants' sexual behaviour, their illegal or political behaviour, their experience of violence, their abuse or exploitation, their mental health, or their gender or ethnic status

Yes ☐

- ☐ research involving groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members – for example, ethnic or cultural groups, native peoples or indigenous communities

Yes ☐

- ☐ research involving deception or which is conducted without participants' full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out

Yes ☐

- ☐ research involving access to records of personal or confidential information, including genetic or other biological information, concerning identifiable individuals

Yes ☐

- ☐ research which would induce psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause more than minimal pain

Yes ☐

- ☐ research involving intrusive interventions – for example, the administration of drugs or other substances, vigorous physical exercise, or techniques such as hypnotherapy. Participants would not encounter such interventions, which may cause them to reveal information which causes concern, in the course of their everyday life.

Yes ☐

*You will be notified by the Research Ethics Committee once your application is approved.

Completed Forms should be forwarded BY EMAIL to the Secretary: Anne Jervoise (ajervoise@plymouth.ac.uk)

University Of Plymouth
School of Sociology, Politics and Law
Faculty of Social Science and Business
Room 215, 8 Portland Villas, Drake Circus
Plymouth PL4 8AA

Your Ref: SSB&Arts/FREC/No:13-06/07

Dear Karen Smith

Re: The Continuing Professional Development Needs of Professional Mid-Career Artists in the South West

This is to confirm that your application for ethical approval has been approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

Approval is for the duration of the project. Should you wish to extend the project, you would need to seek further ethical approval.

Yours sincerely,

(Sent as e-mail attachment)

Malcolm Williams
Professor of Social Research Methodology
Chair of Faculty Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Social Science and Business
Faculty of Arts

Appendix 4

**Comparator CPD schemes at the time of the
Reflective Practitioner Scheme, and extract from
On Reflection detailing other schemes nationally**

Within the Reflective Practitioner Scheme I undertook research into a number of professional development schemes to compare efficacy and findings. This included interviews with the relevant person in the organisations in addition to desk-based research into the professional development provided. The extracted summary of findings was written in 2003, and whilst the schemes themselves have changed, the findings appear to be being found again and again in subsequent research.

Comparator schemes or artist-led initiatives researched were:

- Alias, South West.
- a-n. Artists Information Company. Various schemes.
- Arts Admin, Artists' Bursary Scheme; Digital Media Bursaries for Disabled Artists.
- Art Connections.
- The Art House, Esmee Fairburn Artists Bursaries.
- Artquest and space place, London.
- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Arts Programme, Try out and experiment.
- Chrysalis Arts, Training for Real; Art Connections.
- CIDA Creative Industries Development Agency, Yorkshire.
- Crafts Council, professional development events, initiatives and opportunities; Crafts Council Development Award.
- Creative Skills Consortium
- D-Cap – East Street Arts. Leeds
- Education Through Art (ETA), Artists Professional Development Scheme; Makers Professional Development Scheme; Professional development Training Programme.
- Esmee Fairburn Foundation Schemes.
- LAPIDUS. Peer training programme.
- Live art development Agency (LADA), One To One, Individual Artists' Bursaries in Live Art; DIY. Professional Development BY Artists FOR Artists in London
- National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE). Writers in Schools.
- National Association for Literature Development (NALD), Expanding Horizons
- Suffolk County Council

- Yorkshire Arts, Year of the Artist Research & Development; Artists mentoring scheme 2000 /2001; Artists Professional development scheme 2002 / 03.

Comparators were asked a number of questions based on the following:

- Minimum and maximums of the fund, and amounts offered
- Art form or non-art form specific
- Support / other support offered? (e.g. linkages, specialist help, etc.)
- Timescale
- Conditions of grant / bursary / funding
- Costs
- What language do they use?
- Was the scheme a pilot or is it continuing?
- Any positives and negatives that have been learnt so far?
- Any evaluation already taken place of scheme?
- Pivotal points in their schemes.

The extract follows:¹

¹ Karen Smith, On Reflection. Matrix: Reflective Practitioner Project Evaluation Report. June 2003, pp. 41-42.

Section 6: Artists Professional Development Schemes.

Comparators.

6.1 Summary

The following findings discussed by comparator schemes are pertinent to the Reflective Practitioner project:

1. Continuity, embedding, longevity

Artist Bursary Schemes work well when given time to continue and create longevity. Time to embed and test principles for a number of years creates well established yet flexible schemes that are held in high esteem by both artists and arts managers. For example: Education Through Art (ETA), Arts Admin, and Live Art Development Agency (LADA) and the Crafts Council all have longstanding professional development schemes for artists.

2. Dialogue, dialogue, dialogue

Schemes work best when there is good dialogue and one to one sessions and engagement from the beginning coupled with the opportunity for dialogue with peers and other arts professionals.

3. Opportunity to engage in surrounding complementary activity

Where hosting or leading organisations have resources or linkages to relevant resources and experience, schemes are most successful. For example, ETA runs a complementary seminar scheme alongside its professional development scheme, and also creates the opportunity for week long showing and sharing. In other schemes, this opportunity manifests itself as resources and opportunities for critical debate, training seminars, sharing and showing, utilising physical space or in-house expertise (such as that within LADA).

4. Support for individual process and practice linked to group debate

Successful schemes support individual practice by being flexible and reflexive, encouraging the pushing of boundaries and also by applying a rigour and structure to both the formalised and non formalised areas of development. These schemes expect artists to change focus and develop practice, and actively push that ability to change and experiment.

5. Artists are consulted and embedded into schemes at the very beginning.

Some of the successful schemes are artist-led, and most of them consulted and embedded artists into the planning processes at the very beginning, and reflect changing practice in an ongoing and flexible way. Artists need to be represented on steering groups, planning committees and discussion groups around new schemes.²

² I would now add, with the benefit of experience and hindsight, that artists should be paid for their travel and consultation time.

6. Other funders

Funding organisations such as Calouste Gulbenkian and Esmée Fairbairn are beginning to put high emphasis in their priorities on experimentation and pre, pre-production at the very early stages of development of practice. This is in recognition of the need for early investment in the development of practice and in thinking around practice. This does not mean that artist's have to be 'young' or 'emergent', but that they are at a point which requires early experimentation and challenge, either to develop new work or refocus and represent work in a different context.

Appendix 5

**Redundant table from my 2006 research which
collated understandings of the word “artist”**

Frey and Pommerehne	The Arts Debate	Research findings with ArtsMatrix staff / thoughts on 'artist'	Research findings / thoughts 'mid-career'
Amount of time devoted to artistic work.	Effort and skill.	Works 'professionally' Identifies oneself as an artist. 'Being'. Questions, moves, changes, challenges. Practices, explores. Does...	Is devoted to practice at least half time.
Earnings from artistic work.	Gaining a response, creative idea.	Quality. Doing and being. Practices.	Earns at least half income from artistic work.
Reputation as an artist among the general public.	Gaining a response.	Shares what has been made. Able to bring ideas to fruition. Doing and being.	Is and does. Has done so for at least 7 years in the last 10 years. Duration and continuity of expertise.
Recognition among other artists.	Gaining a response.	Quality. Shares what has been made.	Body of expertise and experience.
Quality of artistic work.	Effort and skill, creative idea.	Mix of expert technique and ability to bring ideas to fruition. Awareness of need to reflect and attend to professional development.	Developed expert technique, brings ideas to fruition with consistent level of quality.
Membership in a professional artists' group or association.	Gaining a response.	Integrity. Works professionally.	Has professional standing.
Professional qualifications (especially educational credentials).	Effort and skill.	Works professionally	Accreditation not important - working professionally is important. An MA is still seen as 'professional'. 'Trust' by the funding system is an interesting marker.
Subjective self-identification as an artist.	Creative idea.	Enquiring Mind. Makes their art from 'inside out', from their imagination.	Takes risks. Is past start up. Immersed in practice.

Appendix 6

Details of those interviewed for Chapter Three

Interviews: November to December 2006

Person interviewed or gathered information from	Date	Place
Annie Warburton, Project Director. ArtsMatrix.	17/11/2006	ArtsMatrix Watershed café, Bristol.
Tracey Guiry, Director. ArtsMatrix.	30/11/2006	ArtsMatrix Watershed café, Bristol.
Alicia Miller, Bristol Visual Arts Consortium (BVAC) Project Manager.	30/11/2006	South West Arts Marketing, Bristol.
Claire Heathcote, Professional Development Coordinator (PDC), ArtsMatrix Wiltshire Office, and then 2 months for ArtsMatrix Bristol Office until December 2006.	04/12/2006	ArtsMatrix Watershed café, Bristol.
Karin Rucker, Professional Development Coordinator (PDC), ArtsMatrix Plymouth Office.	05/12/2006	Phone interview.
Rebecca Canon, PDC, ArtsMatrix Devon Office.	12/12/2006	Phoenix Arts Centre, Exeter.
Joanne Jones, PDC, ArtsMatrix Somerset Office.	13/12/2006	Phoenix Arts Centre, Exeter.
Keturah Warren, PDC, ArtsMatrix Dorset Office.	18/12/2006	Offices at Arts Institute, Bournemouth.
Frances Meredith, PDC, ArtsMatrix Gloucester Office.	20/12/2006	Offices at Gloucester Resource Centre.
Ruth Staple. Project Manager Skills Development Programme (SDP) ArtsMatrix.	15/12/2006	ArtsMatrix offices, Bristol.
Tim Andrews. Ceramicist.	21/12/2006	By email.

Questions asked

- 1) Artist. What does this definition mean to you?
- 2) How would you define 'mid-career'?
When does an 'artist' go past mid-career? What defines that?
- 3) What does being in the South West mean?
What does it mean for artists in the South West?

- 4) What are 'learning pathways' or professional development?
What research needs to be done? What should I be finding out?
What's important for me to help / shape / research?
- 5) Whilst we are talking it would be good to also get an idea of the following:
What is going on around your area in terms of CPD / learning?
What do you think is missing for 'mid-career' artists at the moment?
What have got planned in the near future?
How have you planned that?
Have you been thinking from an artists' perspective?

Artist interviews: May 2007 to August 2007

Artist	Place of Interview	Duration	Date	Their description of practice
B	Bath Spa University	1.5 hours	31-May-07	writer (published) also lecturer
I	Riverstation Café Bristol	1 hour	31-May-07	artist, environment, natural worlds
D	Artist's home (prelim interview)	1 hour	11-Jun-07	artist
	Station, Bristol (2nd interview)	1.5 hours	26-Jun-07	
J	Artist's home (prelim interview)	1 hour	18-May-07	artist performance and lecturer
	Email (2nd interview)		14-Jun-07	
N	Café in Devon (2nd interview)	3 hours	13-Jun-07	no description wanted
K	Café in Totnes	2 hours	13-Jun-07	no description wanted
M	telephone	46 minutes	10-Jul-07	artist
A	telephone	52 minutes	10-Jul-07	artist performance
F	Banco Lounge, Bristol	2 hours	07-Jul-07	movement artist
H	Stroud Valley Arts	3 hours	18-Jul-07	artist
E	telephone	1.2 hours	17-Jul-07	artist photographer
C	email		03-Aug-07	artist (painter)
G	email and telephone	40 minutes	09-Jul-07	artist, photographer, moving image

Artist	Place of Interview	Duration	Date	Their description of practice
GROUP Artists	Somerset: Hothouse Business Enterprise and Innovation Centre, Taunton, Somerset.	half day session	26-Jul-07	freelance musician and workshop leader
				project manager
				theatre director
				painter
				artist
				performance artist, artist, community networker

Questions asked

- 1) General discussion around your practice. Is there a SW influence to your work?
- 2) Are you from the SW originally? Yes / No
- 3) How many times have you moved here / away?
- 4) Did you move to where you are living now for personal, artistic, practical or other reasons?
- 5) Is where you live where you work from, or do you work from somewhere else?
- 6) What is it about the SW that influences or supports your work? Or the particular area that you live / work?
Or doesn't it support your work?
What does the SW mean to you?
What are your feelings towards the SW? Or where you live now?
- 7) Mid career
My definition of mid career is a 'non-place' that artists get to after about 7 years or so of immersed practice.
Would you consider yourself mid career? If not, why not? What kind of 'career' are you in? Where are you at?
- 8) Future research
Would you be willing to work with me for a longer term?
How often would you be willing to talk / meet / discuss?
What might you be willing to do? (Re: case study approach).

Example of email letter sent

Hello

Following our conversation, please find below a list of questions which will provide a framework for when we meet. As we discussed, the research is for my collaborative research doctorate, which is about the continuing professional development of 'mid career' artists in the South West.

What I am aiming to discuss with you, is the context of the SW for your artistic practice, and your critical engagement with the concept of space, place and home. I would also like to discuss your opinion and feelings on artists 'mid career' in general.

In addition for my future research there is the possibility of creating long term case studies (approx. 9 months duration), where I could perhaps follow, reflect, interject, talk to, discuss and look at what comes up in that time for your artistic practice, cpd and career path. This would involve discussion about whether you might be willing to work with me for a longer term, identifying times, ways to talk, and means to gather information, and if you are interested, what you could or could not offer in that time.

Before I come to see you at this stage, would you mind having a think about how you would like to be referenced in any written research (E.g. totally confidential / Artist / particular label... title / your name etc). I will also ensure that if you want something to be 'off-record' or 'confidential' then it will be if you state so. I have ethical clearance from the University of Plymouth to conduct my research, and if you have any concerns we can discuss them when we meet.

I am looking forward to meeting with you. The questions follow.

Thank you

Karen

Appendix 7

Details of the four artists interviewed for Chapter Six

Interviews and Walks

	Interview 1	Walk 1	Walk 2	Walk 3
Helen Poynor	07/07/07	10/07/08	10/03/09	x
Mariele Neudecker	x	09/05/08	27/08/08	13/03/09
Phil Smith	10/07/07	08/07/08	07/03/09	x
Alyson Hallett	x	13/03/08	12/09/08	09/03/09

After I had drafted each artist's section of Chapter Six I sent it by email and had final phone calls with each artist to check the written drafts. These were on the following dates:

Alyson Hallett: 18 January 2010

Mariele Neudecker: 12 January and 26 January 2010

Helen Poynor: 12 January and 14 January 2010

Phil Smith: 5 January 2010

Attendances at related exhibitions, performances and workshops

Alyson Hallett

Lavinia Greenlaw, David Morley and Alyson Hallett: Poetry reading, Arnolfini Auditorium, Bristol, 11 September 2008, 8.00pm, as part of Bristol Poetry Festival, 4 - 14 September 2008.

BBC Radio 4 Broadcast 11:00am Tuesday 13th October 2009 Nature: "Migrating Stones".

http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00n52kz/Nature_Series_3_Migrating_Stones/, accessed 13 October 2009.

Mariele Neudecker

In conversation with Kate Brindley, Director, Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives. 31 January 2008, Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery. This event linked to the opening on 17 December 2007 of Neudecker's permanent pieces at Bristol's City Museum & Art Gallery: *Those Who Came Before Us, And Us Who Are To Follow* and *You Are Always On My Mind*.

Helen Poynor

Three day Workshop, Charmouth, Devon. 19 – 21 September 2008. "September Seas and Skies." Helen Poynor and Beatte Stuhm.

Phone conversations, including fact-checking discussion on 30 May 2009 regarding my paper about Helen Poynor for the "Living Landscapes" conference at Aberystwyth.

Phil Smith

Paper at Hidden Cities Conference, University of Plymouth, 4 October 2008.

Performance at TRIP, Manchester Metropolitan University, 19 - 22 June 2008.

Walk at TRIP, Manchester Metropolitan University, 19 - 22 June 2008.

Further information sent to artists before walking

Walk One

I'm interested in finding out your thoughts around the following:

1. Support for your practice.
Is there enough of it in the south west?
Is it mostly defined from the 'outside' (e.g. agencies)?
2. The transience of CPD for artists.
Do you miss opportunities? Are there enough opportunities?
Can you access the right opportunities? Are you there at the right time?
Are those opportunities at the right level and right quality?
3. There is no career path, mid-career is everything that is not 'emergent' or 'late'.
4. Does the south west mean anything to you?

Example of the letter:

Dear X

Following our email conversations, please find below more detail for when we meet in July.

As we discussed, the research is for my PhD thesis: Researching the continuing professional development needs of 'mid-career' artists in the south west.

Before I come to see you, would you mind having a think about how you would like to be referenced in any written research. I would like to be able to use your name and some case study of your work, and work with you over the next 6-9 months to a year if possible, and whatever's appropriate. Of course, if you need something to be 'off-record' or 'anonymous' then it will be if you state so, and if you've had enough after Thursday, that's fine too!

I am planning to record our conversation if that is o.k. with you, and will check when we meet, before I press 'record'!

I have ethical clearance from the University of Plymouth to conduct my research, and if you have any concerns we can discuss them when we meet.

Please do feel free to take me on a walk where you want, and where you feel you will be able to discuss your work freely with me, and can talk about where you think you are in your 'career', how you got there, and consider both this existing and future journey of your artistic practice.

The general framework of my hypothesis and the areas I was thinking around follow. These are quite lengthy, and they're very dry, so if you'd rather ignore them, and just talk when we meet, that's absolutely fine, I don't want to put words in your head that weren't there!

I am very much looking forward to meeting you, and thank you very much for agreeing to spend time with me.

With best wishes

Karen Smith

What I am aiming to discuss and test out with you, are my possible hypotheses on being a mid-career artist in the south west and how you continue to professionally develop.

I'm interested in finding out your thoughts around the following:

1. Support for your practice.

Is there enough of it in the south west?

Is it mostly defined from the 'outside' (e.g. agencies)

My feelings:

Whilst artist's trajectories cross and constellate, and run parallel at certain times, artists also need to be able to take individual risks and veer widely in any direction if it looks like that may be supportive of a breakthrough in their own practice. When they do this is individual to them. The most needed individualised support (with artists, for artists, or led by artists) is the most difficult to fund, as it links to a highly individualised (and therefore potentially 'expensive') need for different things at different times, particularly as an artist develops in expertise.

Mid-career artists need different professional support at different times, that some of this support needs to be based around trust and spontaneity, surprise and play, and not necessarily about frameworks and structures. ???

Choice, direction, place, construction of experience, development, progression, and happenstance in professional artists' career paths are all equally relevant...

That by the time you get to mid career are there very particular things you might need? (it might not be easy to know your need...)

Some artists do access funds to set up their own artist-led CPD schemes, these are fragments, and mainly (with the exception of artists newsletter (a-n) and a few others) UK-provision has remained an agency-led sector (ACE, Sector Skills, HEFCE, etc) where new fledgling organisations such as ArtsMatrix could be seen to operate within a commercially viable 'business-like' framework, bridging between 'creatives' and 'business' or 'industry'.

2. The transience of CPD for artists.

Do you miss opportunities? Are there enough opportunities?

Can you access the right opportunities? Are you there at the right time?

Are those opportunities at the right level and right quality?

I think CPD for mid-career artists is particularly transient, with little time to absorb and allow a seeping in of development. Individualised support at the right time can make pivotal and groundbreaking differences in artists' practice, and yet the policy and practice in cultural funding institutions and sector skills agencies, still looks to the basic box of development tools to provide artists' CPD. The constant emphasis on pilot culture and need to prove 'additionality' and 'difference' for most funding bids creates new opportunities on a regular basis, but also creates a culture of short-termism which do not exist for long enough to become embedded or continual. Consequently artists miss relevant, never-to-be-repeated opportunities which were successful in supporting risk taking and innovation. If these initiatives are not able to embed and pass the word round, the opportunity for another group or individual to benefit and undertake that opportunity is lost.

3. There is no career path, mid-career is everything that is not 'emergent' or 'late'.

A 'career' path as such does not exist, and that this is far more so for individual artists who are not aligned to any institution or umbrella body than for those who work within the arts ecology but who have a defined 'job' on a day to day basis.

There are many narratives, navigations and journeys, and the certainty of unknowing is a kind of compass in itself. Artists have an incredible steely commitment with an ability to go with the flow, a dynamic heterogeneity and fluidity.

4. The south west doesn't mean anything to you?

The 'south west' as a term is one of administrative convenience, that what it means and what it can support is highly individualised and resonates at distinctly different pitches with different individuals. It is also simultaneously and dynamically changing in a complex web of threads. Do artists produce the SW as a 'place' by their set of practices?

Whilst I do not have anything like a hypothesis as such 'to prove' on the south west, it has an immense nugget of artistic practice residing here, and therefore is there anything about it that makes it distinct?

Is there support here in the SW that is not available elsewhere?

Walk Two

Examples of questions:

- What projects are you working on now?
- What's changed since we last spoke / walked?
- Who's funding / supporting you?
- Is XXX still what you need? (this is what you said last time...) XXX = time, exposure, money...
- We talked last time about XXX are there other organisations that are now supporting you / not supporting you...?
- We talked last time about lack of structure / issues of confidence, what do you feel about that now?
- Do you have a mentor? Have you ever had a mentor?
- If you could go back and change anything would you?

Appendix 8

ArtsMatrix route map

If you make a living being creative, ArtsMatrix can help you achieve your goals. We work with thousands of creative individuals and enterprises to grow their businesses and develop their careers.

We offer:

Business development: tailored support for freelancers and creative businesses

Professional development coaching: in-depth guidance to develop your career

Creative development workshops: a chance to grow ideas, design a plan to achieve your goals and network with other professionals

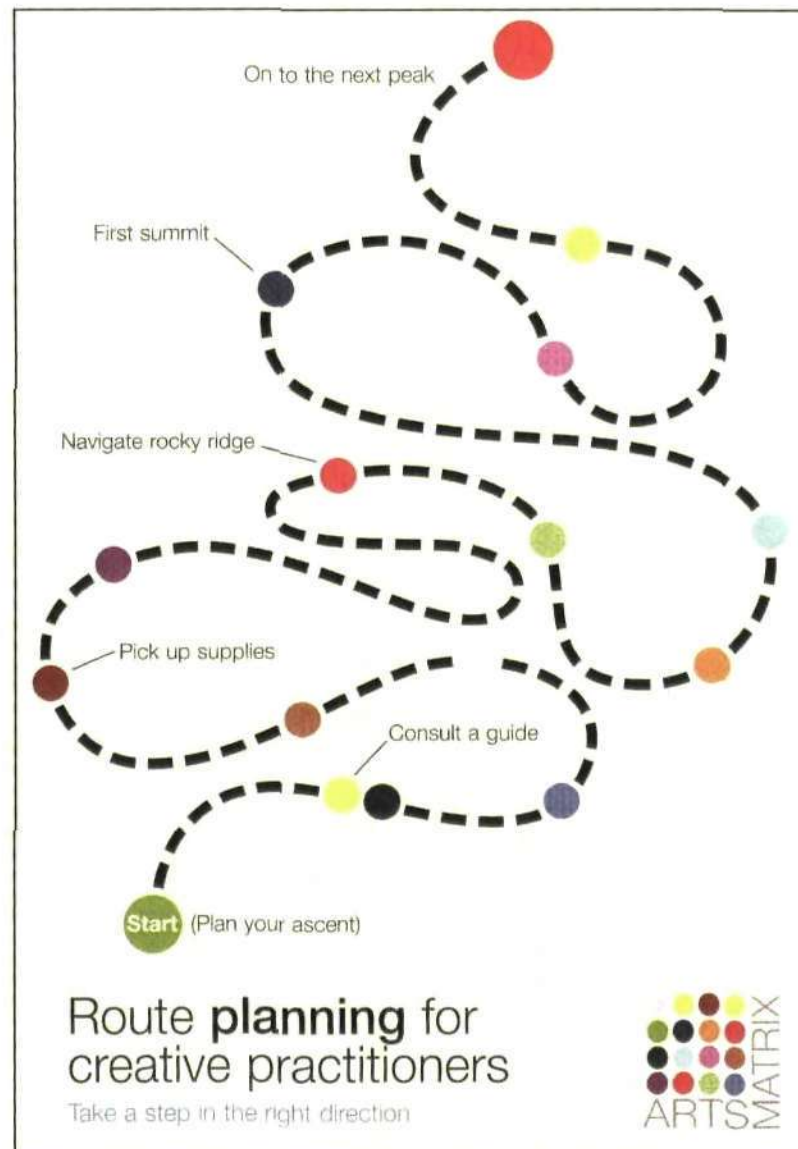
Information: keep up-to-date with the latest opportunities through our regular bulletins

Whether you are poised at base camp or have already scaled your first peak, our creative enterprise specialists are here to help you plan your route to the top.

To find out more about how we can help, visit www.artsmatrix.org.uk, call us on 0117 915 0190 or email info@artsmatrix.org.uk

Or get in touch with your local office:

bristol@artsmatrix.org.uk
devon@artsmatrix.org.uk
dorset@artsmatrix.org.uk
glos@artsmatrix.org.uk
plymouth@artsmatrix.org.uk
somerset@artsmatrix.org.uk
wilts@artsmatrix.org.uk



Route **planning** for
creative practitioners

Take a step in the right direction



Appendix 9

Details of the objectives and structure of CCFS programme

The methods used by the evaluators for the CCFS included analysis of feedback and comments from participants, partners and stakeholders, questionnaire gathering and analysis, interviews, observation and desk based research. Three in-depth case studies explored in more detail the impact of the Scheme on those particular individuals. Two extracts from the evaluation report follow.

Extract from Palmer Hamilton Partnership for ArtsMatrix: Contemporary Craft Fellowship Scheme (CCFS) Evaluation Report, June 2009, pp. 9-10:

Programme Objectives

The CCFS was aimed at established mid-career designer makers with proven practices looking for an incentive to re-engage with their own continuing professional development. The Scheme defines mid-career as key craft businesses able to demonstrate:

- at least seven years of established practice through a track record of development and regular exposure of new work through exhibitions and commissions at a regional, national and international level
- originality and quality of making
- evidence of a strong personal making style in their work
- a potential to combine innovative and creative ideas with entrepreneurial acumen and the ambition to grow their business

The CCFS was developed to meet the following strategic objectives:

- support growth in the size and the economy of the contemporary craft sector in the region
- increase sustainability of individual businesses
- offer more opportunities for mid-career practitioners
- provide role models for the sector and the region
- encourage entrepreneurial activity, risk taking and development of excellence
- expand markets
- provide more up to date information on craft practices in the region

In addition the Scheme was designed to support participants to:

- reflect on their creative practice and professional development needs
- plan the development of their business with confidence and prioritise the actions needed to take their business forward
- invest in the key areas needed to realise growth

- develop new ways of working
- use peer support networks to monitor, review, evaluate and sustain development

The target outputs for the Scheme were:

- 20 established craft makers assisted
- 20 outline professional development proposals completed
- 15 detailed growth plans completed
- 15 programmes of growth initiated
- 15 documented case studies produced
- 5 bursaries delivered
- 5 detailed development programmes undertaken in one year
- wide range of mentor support engaged for up to 20 days
- one show case event delivered
- one specialist post established
- one regional agency and their programme strengthened
- collaborative network of regional agencies established to deliver CPD programmes for contemporary craft sector
- communication strategy successfully delivered
- evaluation report completed
- advocacy report completed

Further extract on the two phase process of CCFS from Palmer Hamilton Partnership for ArtsMatrix: Contemporary Craft Fellowship Scheme (CCFS) Evaluation Report, June 2009, pp. 17-18:

Programme Structure

The structure of the CCFS was developed in response to the findings of the research published in *The Real World*. It was then further developed based on ArtsMatrix's experience of delivering the Reflective Practitioner Project. This project was delivered in 2002-03 and offered a professional development bursary to support artists to develop their practice within a structured reflective environment. Evaluation of this cross-art form project found that there was benefit in the provision of flexible supported learning and that an approach that gave room for individual practice whilst developing complementary peer group support was extremely successful.

The structure of the Scheme had to be rescoped several times in response to funding issues. The initial funding proposal, under the working title "Craft Fellowship Scheme" was submitted to ACE South West in 2006. However, the award offered was £50k less than originally sought. A reworked proposal was then resubmitted in 2007, which was successful. The funding secured from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for Phase 2 was also less than applied for.

The design and delivery of the CCF Scheme faced certain constraints, as all the funding had not been confirmed at the point when it was launched in November 2007. The funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for the bursary and mentoring element of the Scheme was not approved until 30th November 2007. For this reason it was decided to split the Scheme into two phases so the launch of the pilot could take place.

Phase 1 invited Registrations of Interest from which applicants were invited to apply for a limited number of fully subsidised places on the Scheme. Successful applicants were then invited to attend a Professional Development Planning day, held February 2008, and subsequent one to one sessions with a Professional Development Advisor to support the development of a detailed 'growth plan'.

Phase 2, which would be launched if and when the funding was approved and would offer the opportunity for candidates from Phase 1 to apply at a later stage for a bursary award of £4,000. The purpose of the bursary was to enable the designer maker to carry out research, develop new skills and explore new ideas towards the creation of new work in the future, in line with their 'growth plan'.

The rationale for developing these two phases was that each phase was considered to be valuable in development terms on its own but they could be designed to 'interlock' in order to leverage investment already made into the craft businesses in Phase 1.

Phase 1 was developed as the 'growth planning' phase with peer-to-peer development and networking included. It was felt that that this planning phase could stand alone, offering information advice and guidance to designer maker businesses, leading to the development of a detailed 'growth plan', which could then be used in application to a full Fellowship in Phase 2 if the funding was secured.

Appendix 10

Details of CCFS timetable and professional development days

Shaded areas indicate the networking and CCFS events attended by Phase One and Phase Two artists and at which I observed.

ArtsMatrix sessions with Fellows, and mentoring sessions, were held via individual arrangement.

Applications

November 2007	Launch of CCFS and request for registration of interest. 100 applicants registered interest.
December 2007	Formal application process. Application pack sent to those who had registered interest.
11 January 2008	Deadline for Phase One of CCFS. From original 100 applicants, 27 made a full application.
January 2008	Management Committee selected Phase One participants. No interviews. 13 candidates selected (including two partnerships).
End January 2008	All applicants informed of the decisions. Unsuccessful applicants given details of other CPD opportunities.

Phase One

21 February 2008	Professional Development Planning Day at PCAD (Plymouth College of Art and Design).
February-April 2008	Professional development sessions with ArtsMatrix and Action Planning support.
14 April 2008	Peer Networking and Review Day at Pierian Centre, Bristol.
18 April 2008	Deadline for Action Plans and budgets submission to apply for fellowship and go forward to Phase Two.

Phase Two

30 April 2008	Bursaries awarded to four individuals and one partnership.
30 Sept 2008	Peer Networking Day at Exeter University Innovation Centre.
20 January 2009	Peer Networking Day at Bovey Tracey Town Hall.
13 March 2009	The Devon Guild of Craftsmen. "Re-Route" exhibition launch and preview opening. Speech by Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director of the Crafts Council.

14 March – 26 April 2009	“Re-Route” at the Devon Guild. Accompanied on 22 April 2009 by a Review Day for South West-based full or part-time practitioners of contemporary craft practising for seven years or over.
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Details of Phase One

21 February 2008, Professional Development Planning Day at PCAD, Plymouth College of Art and Design

This was the first face-to-face meeting of successful Phase One applicants.

Attendees

11 artists (including two partnerships).

8 representatives of institutions and 1 observer (myself)

PCAD (Plymouth College of Art and Design)	Tim Bolton
Crafts Council	Beatrice Mayfield Claire West
ArtsMatrix	Ruth Staple Frances Meredith
Alchemy	Karin Rucker (also ArtsMatrix employee)
ACE, South West	Erica Steer, Crafts Officer (from April 08: Devon Guild)
The Devon Guild of Craftsmen	Saffron Wynne

2 artists gave presentations on their experiences of mentoring.

Evaluators were not present.

The beginning of the first Phase One day focused on a welcome and introductions from the key administration players: the Crafts Council, ACE South West and ArtsMatrix. This was followed by “case study” presentations on mentoring by two experienced artists: Lucian Taylor (silversmith and former mentee of Simon Grennan, via the ETA scheme – see previous comparator schemes in On Reflection) and Daisy Dunlop – jeweller and mentor who also had experience of being a mentee.

The Crafts Council discussed their involvement and funding of “innovative regional projects in three regions: to pilot different CPD approaches for mid-career practitioners from 2008 to 2010.” The three models are: South West (CCFS); The V&A (Victoria and Albert Museum) Craft Residencies funding individuals to work in a museum environment, and a Higher Education partnership with University of Sunderland funding peer learning residencies. The findings from these three schemes will support the Crafts Council’s modelling of future provision. Other Crafts Council support in the South West region includes the Bovey Tracey Contemporary Craft Fair, the Next Move Scheme based at Bath Spa University and The Emerging Makers South West Scheme (in association with ArtsMatrix).

After lunch, Karin Rucker working as Alchemy (also ArtsMatrix employee in Plymouth area) led all participants in an afternoon of visioning and how to “action vision into life”. The day ended with time for feedback and questions, and a chance for artists to book a session with ArtsMatrix.

The handout pack on the day included guidelines for submitting a CCFS bursary application, and a sheet entitled “When Might you Consider Looking for a Mentor?”

14 April 2008, Peer Networking and Review Day at Pierian Centre, Bristol

Attendees

11 artists (including one partnership)

Three ceramicists (including Higg and Bunn, and Jenny Beavan), and a sculptor/ceramicist, two jewellers (including Fionna Hesketh), two textile artists (including Janet Stoyel), one partnership of cob-makers.

Fabrizia Basso (glass) not present.

6 representatives of institutions and 1 observer (myself)

Crafts Council	Beatrice Mayfield
ArtsMatrix	Ruth Staple Frances Meredith Veronica Loveless
Appointed Evaluators (Palmer Hamilton Partnership Ltd)	Paulene Hamilton Sarah Palmer

At this stage in the process artists did not know whether they would be chosen for Phase Two or not, and all gave short presentations. One of the textile artists gave a separate (requested from ArtsMatrix) presentation regarding their publishing experience.

Veronica Loveless facilitated a Marketing Audit exercise with fellows.

At the end of the second Phase One day, an Open Space session was facilitated by ArtsMatrix,

Details of Phase Two

30 Sept 2008, Peer Networking Day at Exeter University Innovation Centre

Attendees

6 artists (including one partnership)

Fabrizia Basso, Jenny Beavan, Katie Bunnell and Jessie Higginson (Higg and Bunn), Fionna Hesketh, and Janet Stoyel

5 representatives of institutions and 1 observer (myself)

ArtsMatrix

Ruth Staple
Frances Meredith

Coaching Creatives

Melissa Kidd

The Devon Guild of Craftsmen

Saffron Wynne

Evaluators
(Palmer Hamilton Partnership Ltd)

Paulene Hamilton

Following a welcome and information session from ArtsMatrix, and a brief information session on The Devon Guild exhibition, Coaching Creatives led a marketing session: "selling the idea" based on crafting your story and helping people to buy your products. The two main messages from Coaching Creatives were: "Facts tell, stories sell" and "it is not selling, it is helping people to buy".

This marketing session was politely and enthusiastically embraced, but the peer expertise in the room far outweighed that of the marketing consultant, and perhaps a presentation by one of the mentors (who were invisible to each other and to the other Fellows throughout the process except for the final exhibition) may have been more successful and potentially relevant.

After lunch, fellows presented the ongoing process of their fellowships.

The day closed with a discussion about what might happen at the next peer networking day.

Handouts included Coaching Creatives' sheet on Confidence and Enthusiasm, an information sheet from Devon Guild on the proposed exhibition to celebrate the end of CCFS.

20 January 2009, Peer Networking Day at Bovey Tracey Town Hall

Attendees

5 artists (including one partnership). Fabrizia Basso, Jenny Beavan, Katie Bunnell and Jessie Higginson (Higg and Bunn), Fionna Hesketh.

Janet Stoyel unable to be present.

Film-makers making promotional video

8 representatives of institutions and 1 observer (myself)

Crafts Council	Beatrice Mayfield
ArtsMatrix	Frances Meredith
The Devon Guild of Craftsmen	Saffron Wynne Erica Steer Anna Trussler
ACE South West	Andrew Proctor, Crafts Officer
Appointed Evaluators (Palmer Hamilton Partnership Ltd)	Paulene Hamilton Sarah Palmer

A welcome session was followed by presentations by fellows. Saffron Wynne conducted a visit to the exhibition space, and discussed individual details with each fellow.

The afternoon followed a rotating pattern of three sessions

- 1) Informally titled "what happens after?" with ACE, Crafts Council and Devon Guild and one to two fellows at a time.
- 2) Session with evaluators. One fellow at a time.
- 3) Filming (for the "Re-Route" video). One fellow at a time.

Saffron Wynne also needed time with each of the fellows following on from the exhibition space visit.

**13 March 2009, The Devon Guild of Craftsmen. "Re-Route"
exhibition launch and opening. Speech by Rosy Greenlees,
Executive Director of the Crafts Council**

Attendees

5 successful fellows, including one partnership: Fabrizia Basso, Jenny Beavan, Katie Bunnell and Jessie Higginson (Higg and Bunn), Fionna Hesketh. Janet Stoyel unable to attend.

Mentors (where possible)

Members of the public

Representatives of institutions and 1 observer (myself)

Crafts Council	Beatrice Mayfield Rosy Greenlees
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ArtsMatrix	Ruth Staple Frances Meredith Fahmida Begum
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The Devon Guild of Craftsmen	Saffron Wynne Erica Steer Anna Trussler
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Evaluators (Palmer Hamilton Partnership Ltd)	Paulene Hamilton Sarah Palmer
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The exhibition gave an opportunity to look at the processes (and some end products) of the fellowship, and to talk to fellows, mentors and representatives of the main funders and partners of CCFS.

Erica Steer, Director of The Devon Guild introduced the exhibition, and introduced Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director of the Crafts Council, who gave a brief presentation.

Appendix 11

Extract from email sent 25 July 2008 from Alias

The Artist as Cultural Agent: DIY (people, place and spaces)

BOS08, Bosigran Farm, Zennor, West Penwith

25th – 28th September 2008

Event cost: **Free**

Places available: 50

Deadline for applications: September 14th. To book your place, please e-mail admin@aliasarts.org

A 3-day event, camping on site, BBQs, film screenings, talks, spare time for exploring cliffs and coves (bring your kit!) Camping (free) at Treveal Farm, Zennor courtesy of National Trust. Transport provided between venues. Travel details and directions can be found [here](#).

Taking place at Bosigran Farm, courtesy of the National Trust. Bosigran is set in the West Penwith Moor, an area layered with ecological, archaeological and anthropological richness, straddling the coast path under the shadow of Carn Galva. Bosigran is the National Trust's West Penwith 'jewel in the crown' (map ref. OS 370 426). The seminar will ask questions relating to how artists approach creating contexts for making work, both in terms of places and spaces, but also developing relationships across a range of dialogues and partnerships.

1. What methodologies do artists use to examine and present the complexities of cultural knowledge and knowing....?

2. In what way does the artist take on role of cultural agent/leader? How can artists mediate the tensions between being open to others and their methodologies whilst remaining committed to visual processes?

3. What are the implications for artist-led culture, particularly with respect to the rural? This seminar is designed to challenge established ways of thinking about what DIY means within the context of artist-led culture and to explore what DIY means in relation to the artist/curators critical role in the generation of what has been termed 'non traditional knowledge'. We are considering the critical worth of artist-led culture in terms of the organisation of projects, the making of work and the resultant discourses, which often incorporate experimental methodologies, cross disciplinary exchanges and together result in the formation of non traditional knowledge as that which we have to trade with the system.

Do the radical associations of artist-led activity prevent artist-led projects working with institutions and funders without a sense of loss of part of their identity, or a lessening of their power?

How can the critical work of the artist/Curator continue from within the system?

Should we move beyond the dichotomy of instrumentalised art/radical art in order to negotiate new ways forward?

How can artists mediate the tension between being open to others and a commitment to their methodologies/ideologies?

Seminar Structure

The seminar will use a specific initiative BOS 08 (The Bosigran Project – Bosigran Arts) as an event facilitator and host. Building active and creative relationships with

other organisations and structures has been central to the development of The Bosigran Project. This will form the practical and discursive nucleus at the heart of the seminar. The programme will consist of a mix of speaker presentations, peer-to-peer discursive sessions and site visits. It is intended that the composition of the seminar will reflect the curatorial stance outlined above, incorporating experimental methodologies and cross disciplinary exchanges.

Camping: Treveal Farm (Zennor),

Presentations: Zennor Village Hall

Site Visit & activities: Bosigran Farm

Appendix 12

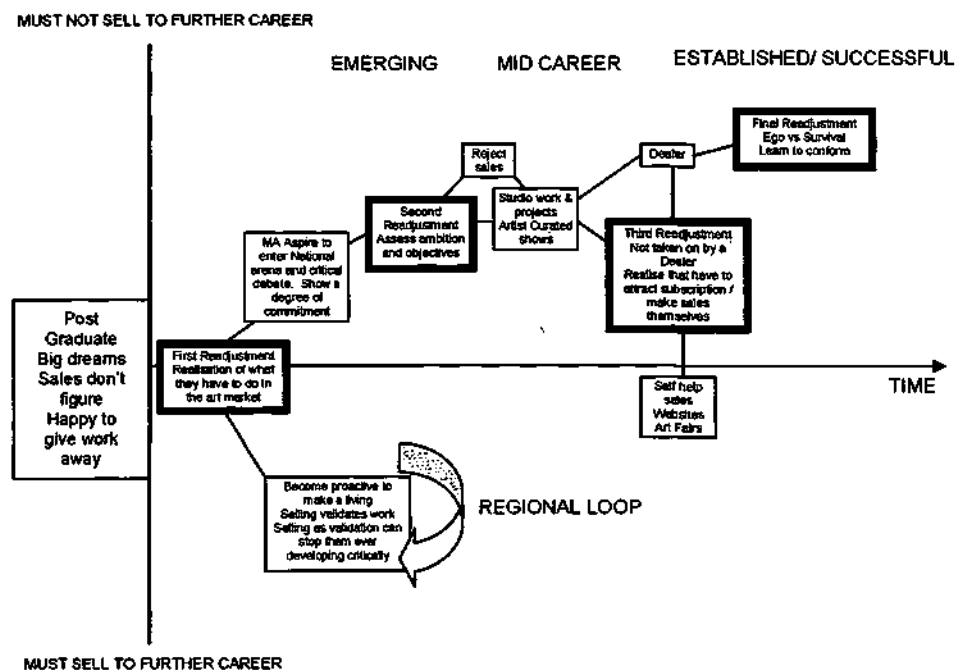
Extract from Taste Buds

Extract from Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, Taste Buds: How to Cultivate the Art Market, October 2004, p. 64.

Artists' aspirations

Artists hold a diverse range of aspirations and objectives. Many go through periods of readjustment over the course of their careers. The diagram below illustrates the possible career paths of artists after graduation. There are major readjustment points throughout an artist's career that are determined by their individual motivations, aspirations, lessons learnt and life changes.

The artist's career path



© Morris Hargreaves McIntyre

Crucial in an artists' trajectory is the decision either to focus on making sales or to develop their CV. Some artists are able successfully to manage a portfolio in both worlds, crossing this line. Some prioritise developing their CV early in their career and then opt for making sales in mid-career. Some arrive at this point through the recognition that they will never make it as a major artist but do wish to continue making as much of their living as possible doing something that fulfils them and that they are driven to do.

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Appendix 13

Alyson Hallett, 13 March 2008, Walk One

We met at Alyson's studio in Cheristow and talked there, then walked passing the "National Geographical Observatory to Measure Magnetic North", through dazzling woods with bluebells. Alyson said: "Let me take you on this bit, it's one of my favourite walks, when you've got the sun out here, this moss is electric, it's berserk."

We walked past a beech tree brought down in a storm, past Jacob's sheep. We walked on monk's walking paths, past the abbey, to Hartland Village. We went to the "world's biggest hammock" (allegedly). We stopped to look through Merlyn Chesterman's B&B window at her woodcuts (I stayed there on the eve of walk three nearly a year later). Alyson talked about a road trip from Minnesota to New Mexico with Merlyn when she had only just met her. We returned to Alyson's studio, had lunch and then drove down to Hartland Quay and had another smaller walk at the sea. Whilst at her studio Alyson showed me her third migrating stone which will go to Australia, I was amazed at the size and weight of it. "And stones moved silently across the world" is engraved on it. She also showed me some of her favourite books.

On growing up in Street, near Glastonbury, she said "when I grew up, I didn't know anything about the Tor...I went to punk gigs, my mum went to bingo." Alyson studied Comparative Literature at the University of East Anglia then an M.A. in Creative Writing from Bath Spa University. Previously she had worked in Glasgow as a mental health worker. Whilst in Glasgow she had been part of a writer's group, which she perceived as more "open" and "less posh" than the one that she then attended in the South West when she came to Bath. Alyson perceived a difference of North to South in Britain, commenting on an "open-ness" in people in the North which she has not experienced in the South. She lived for twelve years in Bristol and commented she had felt happier in Glasgow, despite working in very difficult and poor places, and life being quite a struggle. Within the South West Alyson felt a distinct difference between for example, Bristol and Hartland. Alyson also lived on the island of Iona for eighteen months in the Hebrides. She commented: "Hartland is like island life, it attracts people, it is a strange little place."

We discussed the importance of dream to Alyson, and the persistence of her dreams, about being precious with time. Alyson discussed the American poet, Jack Gilbert who she had wanted to interview for her PhD.¹ He had said no to an interview with Alyson because of a stroke and a desire to spend his time writing poems. As Alyson said: "I'd rather have his poetry than his interview time."

Alyson had worked for the last three years as writer-in-residence at The Small School in Hartland. The village has a strong community of artists. Alyson commented there was "something about being able to walk" in Hartland which meant she was happier than when living in Bristol. She didn't feel safe walking in Bristol and that had an impact:

I'm like an animal, I have to walk. To live somewhere where I felt inhibited was difficult. There is an open-ness here, no locked doors, I can swim, I used to crave water, I have satisfied that craving somehow now. You can be receptive to what's around you and other people, and what you're feeling. Sensitivities can be there, and I don't have to be boxing them away. The city has so many influences, onslaughts.

¹ Alyson's PhD is at St. Mary's London.

You find yourself knowing things more and more here, it is spiritual and magical. Not in a Madam Zsa Zsa way, it's just open, there are old monk's walking paths, there are traditions walked into this land – spirituality is walked in here.

You have to adapt in the city, what you have to do to survive in that place. Some people are happy with adaptations, for me, I'm not...It *must* affect the work; the landscape affects how you think and speak. It *must* influence you. Burns (Robert) said: the land shaped him. The Scottish accent comes out of being in that land. Everywhere it lodges in your core. In Bristol and Bath, people seemed to be wearing masks, they seemed to be nice to you but actually they weren't being. You can get embedded here.

Extracts

- A I wrote the word "career" the other day, and then quickly scrubbed it out. Because it feels very uncomfortable...I was really aware that I had written the word, I associate a career with a very conscious path...

...

- K The other thing I've been wrestling with and trying to work out, this idea that CPD, a word that everyone uses all the time, is something about being considered and planned, so far a lot has been about the totally unexpected and not planned, and they might be the things that push your practice on, and whether that rings true for you, and then from that, that you're a particular sort of artist, you don't go into the same place of work everyday, and if you did, would your development be more planned?

- A I think both things again. I'm going to want both things with everything. Because on the one hand, you know I'm completely naïve and I totter along and all I want to be is in my study writing, and I don't care about the rest of the world or what happens and I've always had this notion, that the one thing I don't have to do is earn my living, it was the one thing that was given free to me at birth. Ok, so I was born and my heart was beating, and I was breathing, I mean, that's my living, awesome. So I've got that, that's there, yeah I need to earn money, to exchange money for heating, and food, but my living I don't earn, my living was given to me. I think that, but at the same time, I went and saw somebody in Bristol recently from the Poetry Can to have a development talk, just to have someone who knows about poetry and who's interested who could help me, just because I'm very alone with it. But it's that thing, I need money, I need to eat, I need to wear shoes, but, and, my greatest need is to write a poem and write a *better* poem.

Jack Gilbert who is by far I think the most brilliant poet I've come across probably in a decade, he's bit of a hero really, he lived for a long long time on his own, is reclusive, I'm sure it won't be until after his death before he's very well known; we're starting to know him. His thing is, find out what's important, and put that in a poem. That's your task. Yes, that's my bottom line.

On her PhD Alyson said:

And you know, it's been very good for my poems, my supervisor is great, and gives me quite good feedback, and it's very nice having that feeling of writing, knowing someone's going to read your work. The academic stuff I'm just so much more suspicious of. There are fashions, and ideas, and I get kind of nervous around that, and I'm not, I don't think I'm by nature a theorist, unless it rises up and out of experience.

...I feel slightly inhibited being recorded, I keep hearing myself...

K Do you access any business support or anything like that. Is there anything that you go to that's in the South West, like ArtsMatrix sessions, or business advice, or Arts & Business sessions for example?

A I decided to get motivated...this'll be interesting for you. I decided last July that I wanted to stop teaching. I've been teaching for ten years, and I wanted to stop. My book was just coming out, and I thought, that's it, make that step, so I went on a Devon Arts Culture marketing course. It was kind of chronic really; I mean it was kind of good, just actually going, it meant there was kind of a nanogram of commitment from me to do some marketing.

...

So I went on this marketing course, because I thought I'm going to have to start doing the things that I don't like to do, and we spent hours talking about health and safety, which just did my nut really...most of the things you see, they'll be visual artists, and that's what I find time and time and time again, with different agencies, even. I've had mentoring before, well I only went to one session, but they know about visual arts and crafts, but writing, nada... so he was talking about people who were opening up their houses for the day so that you could come and see their artwork, so should you have that wire to that plug... I mean hello? Two hours got devoted to that, I had a bit of a fit in the end.

K So that had been marketed to all art forms but actually was visual arts. And do you access things like Arvon?

A I've taught for them...it's such a nice way to earn money. I teach with a lovely poet from Ireland as well when we work there. It's nice work, you get cooked for, it's well paid, and you can just become

obsessed for the whole week. It's great...I think Arvon is fantastic...It's the best teaching experience for me.

But then it was quite good with the Devon Arts Culture, because they gave me money for my launch, book launch. I did a launch here [Hartland], and they paid for the alcohol, which meant that the village could have a great big party, which was just the best thing, because I really wanted to say a big thank you to all my friends, because I'd had so much good support. So it meant that we could have loads of cava and wine, and Merlyn put some pictures up and it was fab, we had such a good night and that was very supportive.

Extracts on "exposure"

A ...So what would really forward my practice is good reviews. I'm reading in a couple of festivals this summer, which will be really nice, but more things like that. I need some money, that's what it comes down to, to a certain extent you have to get a bit more pragmatic, you have to eat.

K But there's all these different courses you can access if you want to; marketing, doing your accounts, press and publicity, etc, are they actually at a high enough quality as well? Quite a lot of people who I talk to who are experienced like you, who do earn their living in some way shape or form from their practice, say that those courses just aren't, they're just not relevant, which is kind of what you're saying about the arts marketing course really.

A Also, I don't really like courses, to be perfectly honest, I don't like them...If I hadn't stopped teaching six months ago. I had some money, I had some savings, I always thought I'd buy a house but it wasn't enough, so I thought I'd buy time. So at the moment, you see, I'm using my own money to buy me time...

K You're spending most of your time, thinking, and trying to craft the best possible words, pieces of work that you can, maybe you're not bothered about making fifty grand a year, and I'm trying to work out if that makes you different as an artist or a poet, to people who for example, play cello for an orchestra, they are a paid up freelancer, their training comes from the structure. For you, you're a writer, and buying time is crucial, you don't get paid for ideas time... thinking, trust and ideas, is it important for a grant to trust that you'll do something really good, and not just fripper it away, is it resources? Time to make or create? Or is it about making a book, or is it all those things at different times?

A I think it's all those things at different times. It changes. So a year ago it would have been time; let me stop teaching, and now, it's get me some more reviews. I want more people reading my book. Poetry

is quite an obscure art which I always forget, but you know the time when people turn to it, is at weddings and funerals, these heightened moments in their lives. Which is understandable. I just wish they kind of had more heightened moments. (laughter)

K So, poetry being in the everyday?

A Even just once a year would be good. I think it changes, and I am quite interested in where I am, because I don't see myself as a teacher anymore. I've been able to step aside from earning my money for a while, and that's made me feel more rooted in what I do. And that is delicious I have to say. I mean there aren't many tangible outcomes from that. But it is delicious.

...

We discussed David Nash and Wooden Boulder. Alyson said:

I've experimented with getting lost quite a lot; I get to a point in my head, where I say "o.k. All paths lead somewhere, and lost is another way of saying I don't know." It is such a crucial part of my practice. I don't know when I write a novel, what it's going to be about. But again to say that in an academic environment is very hard.

K How does an agency like ArtsMatrix start to plan courses or training or ways of supporting artists if they don't know what they want yet?

A One of my questions is how much do you see? If you walk and talk, for me walking as a practice, is usually on my own, and I'm very cautious about walking with other people. There was a time when I wouldn't do it, because they'd want to talk. I mean now, I do make walks with other people...When an experience is ready it will come out...

...

K Do you not feel like you're working now? I don't necessarily mean right now, but?

A Oh yes, I work very hard, but most of what I do I don't get any money for, so when I say work, I mean just put some cash in my hand. (K hence cleaning). Which around here is more problematic, because most jobs still give you the minimum wage, and life in the country is more expensive. Economically, my council tax is more here than in the centre of Bristol, and what do I get? Ten street lights, we don't have gas piped into the village, we don't get channel 5, I mean... it's quite curious when it comes down to it, because I do think so many of the things are just very practical, my craft, my work. I'm going to contradict myself already, there was a time when I got a small grant from a business development centre in Bristol and I paid a fellow poet to go through some of my poems with me...[see Chapter Six for full quote].

K Do you think that moved you on, it pushed your work in some way?
You remember those nuggets.

A Yes, yes, he was meticulous...[see Chapter Six for full quote]

K So it's there – it's just accessing it at the right time then is it?

A Yes.

K I'm really interested in this right time, right place and wrong time, wrong place, or things not being there when you need them... this transience of opportunity, that so much of what's out there is only available once, because it's a pilot funded bid, or it's an opportunity that someone's decided that everyone needs, for example, you've decided that you're going to be an arts manager for a bit, and you think what do people like me really need, and you set it up, and you get the funding for it, but that's the only time you ever do it because no one will ever fund you for it again, so if you hadn't heard about it and been in the right place at the right time, you miss that opportunity. Is there anything else out there, or do you have to wait? Or think about someone else starting something, that's the other thing I'm really aware of, this ridiculous culture that we've got of, it's almost like if you had a car factory, that's not a good analogy... there isn't really a good analogy, but like if you had a factory that only opened when someone decided to fund it for a new project, it just wouldn't be able to function, and yet there are all these individuals out there like you who function, make their own path, that's what I'm trying to say, make your own journey, make your own path, but then someone else takes you on a different journey and there is a path for a bit and then you end up veering wildly off it to pick up something else that's important.

A Yes yes [spoken throughout the above rant from K]

I am quite curious at the moment to see where I'm going to go, because I feel like my time in Bristol was very specific and I was lucky in the timing of things, I had fantastic residencies, I could not have had better residences, started off with my MA with very little ones, but I ended up as visiting writer at University of West of England for two years. I mean magic, absolutely magic, loved it. I was very driven, passionate about getting more experienced teaching, and doing it, I was lucky, things came. I was also doing quite a bit of public art... there's a library in Bradley Stoke with some of my stuff in it as well, so I was very into that.

...When I worked in mental health all those years ago, I used to produce booklets, and of course, nobody would give you a penny in those days, we're talking twenty-five years ago. But I'm curious because I feel there aren't many residencies, I've just applied to do the Royal Literary Fund fellowships, I don't know if I'll get one, but that'll be next year.

What do I actually do? Because I don't want a career in academia. I've never wanted to be part of an academic institution, I like being there as an outsider. I like being *anywhere* as an outsider. I love it. It's where my heart is. I've only ever had a proper job once for a year and a half, two years, that was ok. I worked with good people. I'm much more at home being on the edge of something, more independent. I can offer things from my way of seeing, without really having to fit in. So what do I do next? It's a great big bloody mystery. What would you advise me as a mid-career person?...What would help me is finding out how I could earn some money, that would seriously help me, or having been born into a rich family, you know, if my Uncle Moro was about to die and bequeath me his house, and his cellar full of vintage wine and silver cutlery that I could pawn...So that would help, but that's not going to happen...

I would not be without my years in mental health I tell you, I've worked in so many sections of society. I've loved that, loved it, and I really wouldn't be without that...

One of the things that excites me is how do I get to that place where there are no agendas. That's maybe where walking comes for me; I can walk myself into a place, where I just get bored of all the thoughts I know, and so I just forget those for a bit, and then very occasionally a new idea or new thought comes through, *that's* when I'm interested, and it's rare to be in a space, or to be with people, or to be in a place where you're without an agenda. That's maybe why I like getting lost or I'll go in that pub because it looks interesting, or I'd intended to go in that direction. The favourite times in my life are when I've intended to go one way, and I go in completely the opposite way, and nobody knows where I am and then it's like "hey hey", that's what I love. So mid-career, beginning career, end career, I hope I always have time to be able to do that in some way, and that's not something I can get from anyone else and no-one else can make it possible for me.

K I'm very aware I'm getting in the way of your quiet time in a way to do this, it's thwarting the very reason why I walk, but on the other hand it does unlock. I'm interested in what happens, and it's an experiment in a way. I'm taking a risk but it's not a very big risk. I think it's interesting what does come out when you're walking anywhere and you're talking and walking, although I get irritated when I go out with friends for a walk because I want to be quiet...

A Yes yes (laughter). You're not taking away my time. John Cage said that all interruptions are part of the work, and I really like that.

...

Alyson imagined seven migrating stones in her life and she was currently on stone three, however she observed:

This is where the funding runs out. So how the others are going to come into being and where they will go I have absolutely no idea, and I don't have the feeling for it, we'll just see. Some people have been really helpful, and they've managed to find me a sculpture park [in Australia].

...

We talked about mischief and playfulness being Alyson's preferential position.

- K I think that comes out in your work actually, even though it's sunk very deep, I don't mean sunk as in disappeared, it's got very strong roots, and it's quite profound for me, but it does have a playfulness about it which I really like.

...

- A What I do that feels quite risky but I really like doing. There was a desire lines conference at Dartington and I went and gave a paper on the Migrating Stones project. I'd been reading something about silence, how much happens in the silence. Half way through my lecture, I stopped. I told them what I was doing. I said, "you know we're surrounded by the most incredible stones here, you know it's a really old building, let's just listen; I'm going to stop speaking now." And I did. It was so nice. When you're bombarded with information, I can't take it in after a while, so I thought, "I know you all know because any piece of music you would ever look at, your rests and your pauses before you perform anything else", and I thought "why am I not practising this?" I wrote unspeaking into my lecture.

You can do something like that at Dartington. It's very interesting holding a quite space, because you do hold it, if you've done any group work, you know how you hold, and I thought, "Well I'll hold it until it feels right to move on." So maybe three or four minutes which in a room of people is quite a long time. Then I just started up again and off I went, and it was such fun. To make that experiment, and go "I'm not going to talk to you about silence; I'm just going to do it".

...

- K A lot of what we've been saying and what I'm interested in, is actually improvisation, knowing your craft, but being able to play within quite a wide range is the thing that everyone is trying to balance. You can't just stick within the grids.
- A Rilke [Rainer Marie Rilke] has a lovely phrase: "poets and artists are the bees of the invisible"...So you are always working with something invisible in your actual practice, and you know nothing can really help that. It really is just a practical where you live, how you eat, how you get around...

The Eskimos simply say a man should do all things properly. I like that. Art and poetry are verbs not nouns.

It's not my culture, but a lot of these things mean a lot to me. It's the same with anything: when you get to the heart of what you do, it's just the doing of it and the wanting to do it really really well. All the other stuff, the infrastructure, the culture within which you work, here, for me is about so I can eat, be warm, so I can have a roof. I need those things but it's your work. People can help me, like I said, someone helped me with my punctuation, people can bring my attention, but my own responsiveness; that's my task.

The Eskimo language has no real equivalents to our words create or make which presuppose imposition of the self. The closest Eskimo term means "to work on" which also involves an act of will, but one which is restrained. We think of art as possession, and possession to us means control to do as we like, art to them is a transitory act, a relationship. Again, its like the control, what would further me as a mid-career artist, I can't remember what the term was, mid-development... is around the structure and how an artist is seen in society and what I have to do to eat, and they're all important, but the work bit... art is a transitory art, a relationship – it's my relationship with words that excite me and thrill me day in day out because I don't know what's going to happen, and you nurture your relationship. It's not, I can't possess it, well it does possess me sometimes I suppose, you're going backwards and forwards.

Here's one of my favourite books that I thought I'd show you: Thomas Clarke – he used to make walks, then he'd write about them: "A day on the mountain a moment by the burn", that's walk number one. "The grey of distance, the taste of brambles." "Through the woods, over the fields." So they're very brief.

I went to Mexico just over a year ago. Penny who I did the crow book with lives over there. I have to say that was one of the most life-enhancing experiences, I wrote a little poem about it the other day. Health and Safety does not exist over there. Just does not exist. There's massive poverty, but the generosity, and I just met the most fantastic people, really, I loved it out there. I was there for the Day of the Dead which I've always wanted to go to. I'm completely preoccupied with death, and I just had such a time, met these lovely poets, three poets who translated my work, I did a poetry reading out there, all totally unexpected, I did a reading out on the radio, in the press, I was just hosted. If there was one thing that egged me on as well, was the way people responded to me in Mexico. I reference quite a lot of Latin American writers, I'm more likely to reference Neruda and Octavia Pas than I am the great English canon because I feel more affinity with them, and their writing, with the energy and the way they just say well of course the dead are part of your life, and each year you invite them in you make shrines to them in your house.

You go round the whole city, they're with you, whereas here we're so cagey, and I just felt so at home there.

...Being in Mexico that pushed me on hugely, I just met fantastic people. And you know communities where there's really no money, it's just wild. Mexico, I'd like to go back there. There we are, that would help me, a grant that would enable me to go and live in Mexico for six months, I'd like that, and there's something in the air there. It's probably one of the least Western places I've ever been. I've never been to India or Asia, but I've been to South America, Argentina and Chile and they're quite Western in their own way, but Mexico was different, Mexico was like "what is this place?" weird...I loved it.

We talked about Ian Hamilton Finlay and his garden, "Little Sparta". Alyson met him in the garden, and they ended up writing to each other.

Alyson observed: "Money always comes up; I've never talked to an artist where money doesn't come up."

K I was thinking that we've not really talked much about your work, but it is all the surrounding stuff, your work comes from you. What you choose to tell people, not that you're secretive, but the things that you are formulating might not be articulatable.

A I don't know if I talk about work much. I'm very superstitious, if I'm working on things I never talk about them until I've done them

...

Alyson told the story of being commissioned to write a BBC 4 radio play [Dear Gerald].

I'm looking for money and Martin from a production company in Bristol says "come along, let's have an interview, a chat, I need an assistant". I think great, so I go along, we're chatting away, have lunch out, and I say: "I'll make tea, post letters, I'll do anything, I don't care etc". He looked at me and said "You weren't born to do that...you're a creative you should be writing, I've got something for you to do, I want you to write a play", and I was like "I've never written a play in my life" and he says "a radio play" and I said "I don't listen to radio plays I don't do them" and he said "you're going to do this" and I came out of his office that day and I felt like I'd drunk ten bottles of wine, just totally, felt drunk. Anyhow he ended up giving me these big folders of letters that had sat on his shelves for seven years and these were letters that someone called Gerald had written to his mother during World War II. Gerald was evacuated to South Africa, very unusually because he was working class, and it was usually the upper classes who were sent abroad. And he'd written letters home to his mum, and unbeknownst to him she'd kept them, and when she died, and they'd cleared the house, they got sold in a trunk these letters. They ended up being discovered and a postal

historian bought them and he found out that Gerald was alive, and he handed the letters over to Martin and said that "maybe one day someone can do something with these", so seven years they sit on a shelf until I walk in and say "I'll make tea, do the post for you", and he says, "no this is your job"...And I write the play. And it was quite curious because it went down really well.

K That's right time right place, isn't it? You can't plan for it.

A You absolutely couldn't plan for that. It was curious because it was successful. It got chosen as "pick of the week"...they repeated it, and so many people said, "That's it now Alyson, you can write plays, you know what you're doing"...I really believe in that project because it was a mixture of live interview material, letters, and I wrote a fictional mother, because apparently on her deathbed his mother had said the day he went away, the day he was evacuated was the worst day of her life, and she'd never forgiven herself, so it felt like a really curious thing for me to do. I was speaking for the mother whilst the son was still alive, and that's quite a responsibility. And I felt somewhere there was some kind of appeasing of her spirit to say look it is actually alright, and it was a great honour. I think there are legacies how people feel passes down through generations that may not even be said, but there are legacies, and maybe at some point you can address that legacy or you can work with that and I think that's what I did in that play, but you couldn't plan for it.

K That's really interesting what you said about not then going along as a career as a playwright...

A and TV. There's so much money in TV. That's how I went travelling: I wrote some short scripts for Sky TV. Earned a fortune, and I could do it. I'd write five minute scripts and I could write three in a weekend and I got paid £200 per script. This was in 1997. Really good money

...

K The other thing I've been thinking about a lot, is this bespoke quality, you bespoke everything. Even when I was co-directing a community arts company we always did these, if you like, Vivienne Westwood dresses (to use a dress-making fashion / tailoring analogy). We'd tailor these incredibly crafted, well thought out, very considered, very expensive in terms of our time and set-up time projects, that then every other local authority or commissioner in the area wanted one of because we'd done it, we'd tested it whatever, or we'd done this amazing project and they wanted it in their housing estate. But we were like, "no we've done that we want to move on", so we were constantly reinventing and bespoking these things, and if we'd decided to turn that into a training pack or done something that we could replicate, which we could have done, it would have made the company loads of money but we didn't want to do it because it was just boring.

A Exactly, exactly.

K There was enough of an artist in us to be wanting to be constantly moving on, community arts or not. I think that I'm selling out if I don't, perhaps it isn't always a good thing to think, but I think I am a bespoke. If I was a woodworker I'd be making bespoke things.

A That's what my partner does: bespoke furniture maker. I'd never heard that word before until I met him, curious word.

...

K I'm wondering, and thinking on what other people have said. If you took some of the organisations away would it matter? Artists seem to manage quite well without these agencies and support systems, they know what they want and can find it themselves and act on it, and there'd be a lot more money for artists then.

A ...Part of me is quite curious with what you're looking at, with what would help me. Sometimes less interference helps, and there's such a proliferation of writing courses, and this is what would help other people: we have very few writers' retreats in this country. I always thought about setting one up. I thought here would be a very good place to set them up. But then that would be my full time job.

K And it takes time away from your practice

A Yes, so maybe sometimes what we actually need is less. It's terribly seductive being involved with universities, having reviews, being involved, being known, getting some acclaim, it is seductive. I get seduced and the really lovely bit is when I'm just left alone by everything and everyone, and I sit for weeks struggling over a poem that somebody may read one day or they may not. Hopefully they will.

K Do you think that's to do with validation, how we, particularly here, if you're not validated externally, that inner self that inner core of knowing what you're doing is good, that inner knowledge that what you're doing is enough? That actually that should be enough?

A I don't think there's a "should" because everybody will have a different need. And validation is delicious.

I'm still taking on board the change I made with stopping teaching, I can't tell you how big that was. Even if I go back to it, that's why it's kind of weird to think of me as being 'mid-career' in some ways, because I actually only stopped teaching eight months ago. I feel actually I'm only eight months into what I'm doing this way round. Even if I teach again it's going to be different because I feel I've just taken this period of time to write, nothing else, that's all I'm doing. I'm removed from the world with it. I'm, I don't know

...

I know X and X really well who own the house, and they'd just done this place up and I was looking for somewhere to live.

K So did you think I'm going to stop teaching and get a studio then?

A I thought I'm going to stop teaching, and my partner I have to say was brilliant, because he was very behind me, he was like "yes just do it, just do it." And like I say I had some money that I hadn't spent. And I wasn't going to buy a house, so I thought, I buy time. It was a big decision to kind of unlock that, and say "o.k. I'm going to give you this Alyson. You've been talking about not teaching for seven years, do it." And I needed somewhere to live and this place came up, but I actually moved in with my partner so this became my workspace.

K So you rent it as workspace, but actually it was going to be your living space?

A Yes it just kind of came together... Curiously, I got very depressed for about two months. which I think was a combination of coming into contact with a degree of solitude I'd never had before, and when I taught I was part of a world, I had colleagues I'd see, if somebody said to me "what do you do?" I could say "I teach". And I'd been doing other projects whilst I was at the school as well. I did a project with a photographer in Bristol ...so I was in the world and things were happening, and then when my book came out and I did some readings and some workshops, and then it all went very quiet, and here I was, with me, day after day and the ducks, and I got very depressed. And I was meant to be doing a reading in the village and I just postponed everything, and I think it was quite healthy actually.

K Maybe that took you to a place of struggle that then enabled something a bit different to come out.

A Yes I think it was really good, and because my quest is to get closer and closer to the knuckle if you like. You know, Rilke talks about how important solitude is. It is, if you're really going to listen, if you're going to be with yourself, and see what your response is to something or to feel something, with as little mediation as possible, you've got to be on your own, you've got to put yourself out on to some kind of edge where you can start cleaning away all the ideas, all the you know, stuff around being busy, being important, and significant and valued, you know all that goes, all that goes, bit by bit, all that goes and then you're just sitting there going "um, ok, what's this then?" and curious again from a different place, and I like that, I like pushing myself into those really uncomfortable places and seeing what happens.

...

A By the next time you see me I will have a job, so I might be saying by then "I need more time"...I need something...

K Or maybe something will come. It sounds like things have come to you, or you've put something out there.

A This residency here [The Small School, Hartland] came to me. I was in a terrible place... out of the blue I got an email saying we're trying to get money for a poet in residence; will you be our poet in residence? So Hallelujah...

I'd been here ten years earlier to run a creative writing week in the school, it only has twenty four students, it is a secondary school. And they got the money and I came for a year and it's now three and a half years later. So, yes, that came out of the blue, that was a godsend, an absolute godsend. Got me out of Bristol you know, and it's just, if you're an emotional mess, the country can be fantastic, absolutely fantastic.

Appendix 14

Alyson Hallett, 12 September 2008, Walk Two

We walked in Leigh Woods, Bristol starting off on the blue trail. Alyson said "this is the route I know," and we found Alyson's first migrating stone sited in the wood. The evening before our walk, Alyson had read her poetry at a Bristol Poetry Festival event in Arnolfini Auditorium, alongside Lavinia Greenlaw and David Morley. We discussed the reading as part of our conversation. After our walk we drove to the Café at Ashton Court and had tea and cake. It was raining.

Since our first walk, Alyson has moved out of her writing studio, and moved in with her partner, still in Hartland keeping a writing space there. Alyson had also finished her book, Lines of Desire, and sent it off to her agent. She had taken some freelance summer work, but had been unsuccessful in various applications for funding and a fellowship. Her money which had bought her time was about to run out.

Extracts

K When we talked before you said that time would have been the thing you wanted, but because you'd got your studio and you were writing, you'd bought yourself the time to stop teaching but you could see that probably the next time we spoke which we thought would have actually been July or August, but ended up being September, you thought you'd need to get a job.

A But my dream, I don't want a job, what I want to do is work, I want to do my work...I'm going to have to find a way of getting some money, whether I get a grant, because I'd like to really expand the stone project, because it's the end of this phase, but I'm starting to realise that a lot of funders only fund new projects.

... I'm six years in, I haven't done it all the time, people are interested, it's international, *but* of course it's not new, I want to keep it going and make it bigger, and I don't know where...I'm just going to have to find money.

Alyson was going to Australia in two weeks time, staying for three weeks and planning to visit Hong Kong for a few days. She said: "The whole thing's going to be quite an adventure."

...

K So if you'd got a teaching project, it would have been hard to do?

A Yeah, although the universities don't go back until October.

I'm very ready *not* to teach, very ready just to practice.

...

K So those three poems that you read at the end, were they part of a new body of work about Hartland?

A Yes. Well because I live there, and it is such an intense place to live, they've grown out of the place rather than being about the place.

...

So where I am, and Hartland is different.... You can cut off there, you can immerse. You see I used to come to this wood [Leigh Woods, Bristol] every week, for a few reasons partly because I could relax here. I used to sleep here quite a lot. I'd be overcome with tiredness and crawl into the trunk of a tree to sleep.

K In the day?

A Yes, and I came here to train myself as well, to train myself to get lost and not be frightened and to be able to distinguish between a fear that was one of my own making and a real fear. So I would start on paths, and I'd start off the paths, and get more and more lost, and just kind of monitor how scared I got and whether or not there were real things to be scared of because it's a very small wood, eventually you come to a path, and all paths lead to somewhere. I've slept here overnight before. I didn't die obviously, so this was like my training ground, but in somewhere like Hartland, it's much more of a wild place. It's very special to me this wood...

K When's the last time you came here?

A Three or four years ago, a long time. I love it, I love this wood. It was my little pocket of sanity when I lived in Bristol, when I put the stone here, the wardens were so generous and accommodating, they were just so lovely.

K It is a real privilege to be with you, what we talked about before, walking in silence, looking back through the transcripts. Everyone has different paces...about being, knowing how to travel...but of course you have to have those modes where you have to have validated something. I think you said: "Validation is delicious". Another artist I was reading about said, "it's a bit like showing your arse in public". The thing that is frightening is really needed - outside validation, like you needed exposure.

A I need people to clap.

We arrived at Alyson's stone in Leigh Wood.

A The stone stands up more than I remembered it standing up...

...

Hello. [To the stone]. Wow look at that, oh that's so fucking beautiful. This piece of graffiti... I'd forgotten how absolutely beautiful it is. This piece of graffiti ["Podki"]; when we cited the stone, we put it in, went back to the warden's hut, and in the space of an hour, Podki, whoever Podki may be, had come along and inscribed himself on the stone

K and no one else has since

A and no one else has. Isn't that weird in that one hour? I had so forgotten how beautiful that was. That so needs some good photos doesn't it? You see I like it being so peripheral because you could so easily miss it. In fact you would miss it if you didn't know, but that's ok I think.

...

It's interesting, because this one is in public and set back; the one in America is in a private place, in a retreat centre, and the Australia one is much more prominently sited. In Australia, it's a scraggy little park where people go and eat their burgers and chips for lunch. I'm quite excited by that difference. It's a reflection of my confidence really, putting it somewhere more public.

It is beautiful isn't it? I had forgotten we went up to the quarry and chose this piece of stone...it just jumped out. That was our piece of stone, for the letter carver as well.

K I was so taken with how heavy your stone was that you are taking to Australia.

A It's fun to be on the edge of what's possible so I'm on my weight limit, (just with the stone) with the suitcase, the metal box it goes in, and the stone. I will take some knickers and maybe a spare pair of trousers or something...It's so nice to see that [the stone].

We joked that this first stone was a "pilot" and had a discussion on how can you embed anything if all you do is pilots? I talked about Reflective Practitioner. Then I asked:

K But would you do it if you weren't given the structure to do it in is the other question? I don't know. You're driven aren't you; you're not going to stop working? I suspect most of the people that continue to practice are pretty driven.

A Yes, being driven, it's an interesting thought. I was thinking about that with regard to teaching today. That when you teach writing there's a number of people who come to your class or that you studied with, and how many of them don't carry on writing once the structure's gone. There lies the big difference, no academy, no grant; no anything can give you that motivation. Which is where then something like the academy or the teaching of something becomes...I was thinking about the word "industry", and it is an industry. That's fair enough, people

are earning money and it's a machine that people are working in and with. I'm resisting what I'm doing as being an industry.

...There's industry in the sense of it being worked upon, in the sense of it being work. I don't know. I suppose all I can do is speak from where I am and where I want to be. And that's the difference maybe in stepping out of the world of education and everything, because I don't need to be presenting or teaching. I can become wholly more self obsessed really (laughter) without needing to help other people the whole time at the moment.

K So you've been not teaching for nearly probably a year is that right?

A Yes that's right, big smile!

K It's interesting; a couple of people talked about seeing teaching as a necessary diversion, someone else saw it as a virtuous thing to do, and someone else saw it as something that feeds them, as well as feeding. How do you see it?

A I have to say at the moment, I don't, I'm so happy...I've run workshops since 1985. That's twenty-two years, it's a long time. It was really nice last night, there was a student from UWE who came to my reading, and he was from some of my writing surgeries, and he was so enthusiastic...and he was saying "no-one has ever given me feedback on my work like you". It was lovely to hear. But did it feed me? I don't know. I mean today I thought I'm a terrible teacher (K: I bet you're not!) I am, a really bad teacher. My fantasy is if I was going to teach now, I'd refuse to put marks on things. I'd probably do what I did in Hartland, in the small school. I'd just want to take people out, I'd want to lie on the grass, talk, drink tea. You want people to be happy in their own passion, finding their own weirdness, and doing something. That's what interests me, if there are one or two people who want to do it, that's fine, if the other ten don't, then also fine. And I thought, "god I'm a really bad teacher." That was exciting to think that, because I've also been working hard to be a very good teacher, and that was quite liberating to think at the moment I'd be a really bad teacher, because all I'm interested in is doing my own work, and if I were to work with other people then I'd just want to sit in the sun with them and chat. I don't want to impart any wisdom, anything. It's like, let *me* be in the playground now, not the playground supervisor, or attendant, so I'm really pleased to report today that I am an appalling teacher!

(Laughter)

I'm appalling at the moment. But you see, the people who wanted to write wouldn't give a flying fuck, *that's* the difference, and when you teach you have to be there working with all the people who don't actually really want to write at the end of the day, but you can't say that when you work there, because you've got to earn your money,

and get the students in, and do whatever. But now that I'm a bad teacher I can be wholly rude and irreverent about it all.

K But that comes from experiences as well doesn't it?

A Yes. I've loved teaching, I've loved it, I've loved seeing my ex students, but at the moment I'm an appalling teacher and I'm just very pleased about that.

(Laughter again...)

...

A I don't know where we're going either, let's go this way!

It's funny that part of me just thinks, and this is probably after being in Hartland as well, but where we are, we're in nature, we're in this totally amazing thing, it's alive, everything. Ooh look at that [walked into spider web]. I'm so sorry I've broken your home...I once wrote a short story about how spiders have no word for failure in their vocabulary, you destroy their home and they don't sit around moping or looking for a therapist. They just build a new one.

We discussed nature, Alyson's PhD and her focus on Jack Gilbert:

A He's here to write. His council is "find out what's important, fall in love, follow these things" ... He's very harsh, and you know, two books of poems in his life, they blow me apart. He's not being clever, he's not playing with anything. It's like it says on the back of his book, this guy goes so far, he goes to a place inside that's dangerous to go to. If you're going to journey...what are you going to write about? Of course your work is going to be infused with what you feel and what you say. How are you going to hear that? How do you stay with that? If someone's dying, how do you stay with that? How do you totally inhabit whatever this strange thing of being human is, and then for me in my practice, bring it into words?

His council is "stay with it, stay with it, stay with it". You get two poems in a year. That I respect. It doesn't fit into any career plan, it's not fashionable, but it fucking grabs the core of me. I love him, I'm in love with him, I can't stray from that. Well I can stray from that way of thinking, and I do and I keep coming back to it. Then the question for me is how do I keep some kind of integrity, authority, how do I keep with that which is what for me has a true pulse? Whether anyone else is going to validate it or not, I know in my secret inside here, that that's true. That's strikes me as true, and that's what I need. I need something that's going "that's true".

K Where do you get that confidence where all around you is all that kind of, well... I know that I'm always trying to please, without realising it, I'm looking outwards to please, and this inner voice is very hard to listen to.

Alyson stopped walking and stood still, listening:

A I'm answering your question. As I said, I came here to train myself, this is where I got my confidence, I came here every week, on my own, pushing myself to a limit of being scared and beyond it every week, get lost get lost get lost. Find out where my senses are. *This*. You know you don't have to please any of this. You can go and have a crap over there, the grasses aren't going to complain, and you can go over there and scream your head off, and the oak trees don't give a flying fuck.

I could come here and sleep and relax in this place. I have total permission, the only encouragement if you like is, an acorn grows into an oak. How does an Alyson grow into an Alyson? That's the kind of core issue somewhere and for sure I'm always losing that and it's nice to please people, it's nice having the balance, and sometimes I don't please people enough and sometimes I'm hideously stubborn and arrogant and you're always overstepping and making mistakes, but this and Hartland which is really extreme for me. I mean I live with sheep outside my door, they piss when they see me coming.

K Yes they do! I know I have them too. ... I wonder whether they do that because they see you coming, or whether they do that anyway...

A But you're living with...this is where you have to look at Rimbaud, getting away from the constraints of being polite and being proper. In the country you can do that, you're surrounded by shit. It is, it's like you've got to get into that excremental part of ecology, get into the sewage farm, because that's where things grow from. It's not clean, it stinks, it's messy.

K ...But you have reached a point clearly where you can identify that and understand it, or do you think you've also been like that? Knowing that you need to train yourself, most people would go "I'm comfortable, I'm comfortable here, I don't want to go out there and learn how to do that."

A I don't know, I'm sorry I don't know.

K But you do seem to know how to travel, or there's something that makes you push yourself, and I don't just mean travel to Australia. I mean travel metaphorically as well.

A It's fascinating, it's so, I fascinate me and you fascinate me, we are here for such a short period of time. Whatever I am I'm in this body, this body has certain functions, it has feelings. It's fucking fascinating and sometimes it's like being on a horse; it just leads me. You know when you go for a walk and you walk intuitively which again is what I came here to practice... literally sometimes you start to feel a magnetic attraction and what happens when you start following those attractions and you have no rational reason to do that. Keats' negative

capability, man's ability to live with uncertainty and doubt rather than any irritable reaching after fact and reason. Developing negative capability. But you know who's going to teach you that? You're not going to go to school, to be taught this is how to be uncertain and to doubt and be nervous; people are going to say you're going to have a goal and this how you aim for your goal. Both have a place.

Maybe that's the kind of teaching I'll do if I ever go back to it. I'll say, "Right, I'm going to be your terrible teacher who's going to teach you how to be nervous and uncertain..." (laughter)

K Mariele said something similar, that there's a point every year where it dawns on her students that no one's going to tell them how to do this, no one's going to give them their ideas, no one's going to help them. They've just got to do them. It might take three years, it might take five years, it might take ten years to get to that point, when it dawns on them, and they go "oh, do I really want to do this"?

A Exactly.

K and you can't teach that really, although somehow within that teaching process, it happens.

A Yes, you can make a space for it.

K I guess the only way you teach it is by getting them to do something to find that out.

A I was talking about this just this morning. I used to teach fiction at Bristol Uni. I had one or two students who wanted to know how to do it. They thought there was some sort of secret recipe whereby if they began their story with this word, and ended with that word, and had sentences of fifteen words long they were going to go great. I was saying you've got to write something, you can't start working on material. For sure there are guidelines, and whatever else, but there wasn't a simple solution. You've got to make it, you've got to start entering your own (K: your own mess!) Yes. (K: I can see we're leading back to poo!) I'm so sorry, what a scatological brain today!

When I worked with the Year of the Artist one of the really good projects I did was I followed some garbage trucks up in Gloucestershire. I was up at dawn. And they had pictures inside them, it was fantastic. It was amazing seeing everyone's rubbish being taken away. Because that's the invisible part of our lives, We can put things in bags, and then we put them outside, and the magic fairies come whilst we're asleep and it's all gone, and the *amount* of stuff was quite astonishing and you think, "My god where does all this stuff go?"

...

It's funny that you asked me what gave me confidence and I don't think I have confidence most of the time. It's strange isn't it?

K You came over incredibly well last night...And also you were really there with your words...your confidence to go your way, and say "this is my way, this is what I'm doing." ...I know your granny spoke to you in the persistency of your dream...

A You look historically, probably my granny helped, she spoke her mind, no matter what anyone thought. She was great in that respect, she spoke the truth, she made enemies, didn't speak to people for years, but she *had her* truth and that's great, that's a great thing to have. *Somewhere*, that's really with me. It'll be more important than almost anything, because at the end of the day, she was blind for the last eight years or so, living on her own. I mean o.k. she had lots of family around, but you have to spend hours and hours with yourself and if you don't like yourself or you don't have your own truth, that's going to be a really hard thing to do. I don't know why she had that with her, but she was a really strong women, an inspiration.

K You said it's quite hard to talk about the work you're making right now, but do you find it hard to talk about your practice, as in what you do, and does it matter?

A Sometimes I find it difficult, and yes it probably does matter, because it matters that you can communicate it to people. Sometimes I feel hideously inarticulate around people. What is curious is sometimes I learn what I'm doing from other people, because they say "oh god, you're tapping into this this and this", and I think, "Am I?" It's like I haven't realised. That's fantastic, I love it when that happens, it depends what it's with. Like with the stone project – at the beginning I did so much research and I was very very articulate around what I was doing, and I've gone into a place where I'm not so much. Maybe because I don't spend so much time on it, but it's very nice receiving back from other people, what they think, so maybe I'm in a different phase with it. Being able to articulate my practice isn't a constant thing, it goes in phases, as anything would probably. I don't know, I don't know. If I meet up and I do talk about work with some people, there's a great book Art not chance – do you know that?

K Yes yes, I've used it in my PhD....

A There's a great line in there if you get a load of artists together they're going to talk about where they buy their turps not the theory of why they've backgrounded the yew tree on their triptych...Often when I meet with people, I'm not talking about my practice as such. I'm talking about life and what's happened, but then maybe that's part of the practice. I don't know.

K I love that book; Sian Ede sent me that when I was working on Reflective Practitioner...

But in that kind of... something that Mariele said was that when she's doing these tutorials with people, she thinks "where's my tutorial?" You don't stop needing those kinds of things, but you might need to be able to pick, you might not want to talk about turps to another artist, but you also might want to talk about something *at* a particular point. And then where do you go? Would you say that was true?

- A Yes, very true totally and utterly. When I was putting my first manuscript together for my book of poems, I paid a really good poet, Roddy Longsdon to help me with the manuscript. So, we'd meet in the Boston Tea Party [café in Bristol], he was living in Bristol then, and we'd talk for hours about why I had a comma in a certain place. (K: so very much focused on your words.) Yes, so great articulation of practice, there aren't many people who'd sit round and talk about commas with you, or how you resolve an image. Then you're getting into the real technicalities...

I've got a really good friend in Mexico. I miss her, she's a painter, she's well read, she was really good to talk with just about ideas. I miss that, sometimes you do need somebody. Actually, I did it two years ago; I went and saw someone I really liked in Bristol. I was needing help moving something forward so I chose this person I liked, I went to see him, and it was brilliant, it was really really good. So yes, when the need arises I *will* find someone, and I'll go and talk to them.

- K Something Mariele said, (but when you're writing of course this doesn't really happen. You don't have buildings with little rooms in them with writers in them, where writers turn up, whereas you do have visual arts based studios with some live art performers etc, of which, Mariele's in one). But, when she was in London she had a more open network where you might just go and have coffee and someone would be there and they were quite eminent and you'd talk to them because they were your mate, but also they were also struggling with how to get this bit to Singapore or whatever. But there isn't anyone there at Spike who she can do that with. Even though she's not saying she's any better or worse, there just isn't anyone there.

- A Those things start to happen in your practice when you've been in it for some time. You're always a novice when you turn up, but you're a novice with your track record and your experience, and you need to start looking towards people who have more experience again.

- K Do you think you are at that point again where you're looking outwards to find those people?

- A I don't know. That's probably a question I'll ask myself when I come back from Australia when I flounder because I don't know what to do next or how to do it next. I don't know. I've been very lucky with getting my agent for my novel because he has pushed me and helped

me with that book in a way that I've probably never been pushed or supported before. So that was really lucky that I've found him.

K Are you getting enough exposure now? When we met before that was the thing you said you now needed was a review in The Guardian.

A I don't know, I don't know, its well, let me say yes, and I hope it's something that gathers momentum.

K You seem to be doing quite a few readings, are they mostly South West and London?

A Yes. It'll go in phases, and at some point I'll need to retreat to my study and get all hermit again, but at the moment, I'm on the stepping out side, and I need to do that really well before I can step back in.

K This is a stupid question, not a great question at all, if someone asked me this, I'd probably tell them to fuck off, but I wanted to ask if you there was anything that you could see if you could go back to it, would you change it? Would you change a choice about your work where you can see there were crossroads or places where...

A Yes. I'll go back to Glasgow. One of the ironically inhibiting factors has been my lack of confidence, my lack of self belief. Before I did my MA, when I was still working in mental health in Glasgow I belonged to a fabulous writing group in Glasgow, and I was a prize winner in a competition, with a poem I'd written called "Strathclyde Park". It was made into a book of winning entries and others, and it was launched at the Scotia pub which was my favourite pub in Glasgow, and of course all the people who had work in the book, got a book.

I never went to the launch, and I never got the book. I think largely because I couldn't believe it was true, or there was a large part of me that thought if they'd chosen my work then they were not worth listening to, because I'm so bad and my work's so bad.

So now, I would go back and I would go to that launch and I'd get my book with my poem in it, and I'd celebrate it. Because the lack of confidence has probably been the most crippling thing...I still have to remain quite energetic around being a bit upbeat because it's very easy to slip into other ways of thinking. I had a really quite staggering lack of self belief and confidence and I'm not sure that was very helpful.

K Yes it's a bit close to home for me as well.

A And that perverse sense of if people like my work or show interest in it, then they're not worthy of trust in a way, because they don't know about it. Quite why I was doing it having those beliefs at the same time, but that's what I did.

K Was there anything that could have helped you get there quicker with that knowledge? Or was it something that you have to learn on your own?

A I don't know. I'm sure, it seems to be really helpful when people are really supportive and encouraging of you.

K Your work is fantastic Alyson, I'm so pleased it's fantastic...
(laughter)

It is incredibly profound, and fantastic to see how you performed it last night, regardless of how nervous you were. What came across was your work, that is "this is my work, I embody it, I'm giving it to you now", almost like that Beowulf thing "Attend, I begin", "I'm here, I'm sharing this with you, I'm speaking, listen to it." That wasn't arrogance, that was "I'm in my work". It was fantastic.

A It's funny, in the shower beforehand when I was trying to overcome my nerves, I was thinking this is such an opportunity to share my work, and this is why I make my work, to share it. But the crippling arrogance that comes with the lack of self confidence is the fear of ever sharing it so you keep it to yourself...

We discussed ways of representing our experiences, telling different stories.

A There's a great poem by Rumi called "The Guest House" where he says whatever it is you feel, whether it's grief, confidence, joy, you welcome them into the guest house of your being, because they are all your guests and you accommodate them, and I love that generosity, because it's like somewhere, it's almost like needing the permission to go "let's be vile together, let's be unconfident together". And when I taught at The Small School, I was just given completely free reign. I could go into my class and I could say "I don't know anything today. I have got nothing to teach you, do what you want, go to sleep, play a game, you teach me something, I know nothing today" and another day I might not like them, "I don't like you today, you're smelly", and I'd do that, and that's nice, and they could have days where they'd say "I don't know today", and I like that. Find out where you are at the moment, and yes sometimes you can be cajoled into different places and some new spark comes from that, but when you feel you have to be knowledgeable, and you feel you have to be this, or you have to be that, it's bloody difficult.

Appendix 15

Alyson Hallett, 9 March 2009, Walk Three

I stayed at a B and B in Hartland prior to walk three with Alyson. She had left written instructions for me, with Merlyn who runs the B and B. Merlyn handed me the envelope, and Alyson's instructions are detailed here. The title on the envelope was: "Karen Smith – breakfast instructions!"

Dear Karen

Good morning – I trust you slept well last night. Below are two options, which are weather dependant.

1. Sunny / overcast / dry day

At 11 o'clock, go to the Vale through the large white gate (Merlyn will tell you where this is). Go down into the Vale and take either the path on your right or straight ahead. If you take the latter, you need to turn right at the fallen tree (about mile in) and there is a bridge. If you take the former, it will lead you straight to the bridge. Please wait by this bridge for me.

Task: pick something up that catches your eye. A question will enter your mind – a question that you need to ask me. Please remember it.

2. Rainy day

Call me on XXXXXX and we can go from there!

Love Alyson xxx

The bridge is small and wooden – it's the only one and is easy to find.

Alyson's sense of mischief was evident particularly on this walk. I followed her instructions, and the first part of both of our walks on 9 March were solitary ones moving to meet one another.

For the first section of conversation transcribed here, we sat in the sun on a bench by the bridge where we met. A friend of Alyson came past. Later, we walked and talked and picked up a pheasant feather like a quill. Snowdrops were out and hedge garlic was shooting up. We discussed why neither of us are able to pick a snowdrop. Alyson changed her mind about how far we might want to walk, and we ended up walking to the sea, past where the abbey would have been. We arrived at the churchyard and went in; music was playing. We took turns to sit in the seat where Haile Selassie sat.

On our walk to the sea, we saw the lookout tower on the horizon. Alyson told me it was built at the beginning of the 17th century, because Lundy was inhabited by pirates, and functioned as a lookout for pirate invasion. The tower's next incarnation was as a Warrener's hut, lastly it was a brothel. We walked down to the pub on the quay in silence.

Extracts

K My question is: How lightly can you travel? (I gave Alyson a small piece of very light, grained wood picked up on my walk).

A Wow. I'm tempted to say very heavily. Partly because I've just been looking at a poem by my favourite poet Jack Gilbert. He's having a conversation with the gods. The poem's called "I imagine the gods" and the gods offer him three wishes. His first one is to see squirrels again, the second is to eat hogmeat which was his favourite thing as a child, and the third is to be allowed to fail at his life, which I love, and to fall in love, and part of to fall in love is to know the heaviness of the day. I love that, and what I love about the poem is that it goes against so many commonly held emotions. Most people would want success, and he says let me fail at my life, and you know there's the *Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera and the whole idea of stepping lightly, and when I read this poem by Gilbert's it's like a big bell rings inside me, let me know the heaviness of this day, the weight of it. Let me be heavy. So yes, contrary to what I might have wanted to answer to your question...my answer is really quite heavily, in my own way.

...Let me know the heft of the day...so I'm going to align with my favourite poet and answer your question in that way. I can't put a measurement on it. I'm going to go for that rather unexpected answer. Also, there's another poem called "Devonian Days" by a poet called Rebecca Elson. She's in a cottage in Devon, and it's raining, and they're looking out of the window, and she's an astronomer as well, fantastic poet, and she says we must look on our dissatisfaction with the weather with a heaviness that the first creatures felt when they crawled out of the ocean. So I've been thinking a lot about when the first amphibious creatures came out of the ocean and the sense of unbelievable weight that they would have felt after the weightlessness of being in the ocean. You're on the land and you've got that heaviness as you feel your belly scraping over the pebbles. It's a really good question, but at the moment I'm rather enamoured with the heaviness of things, just because it opens up a rupture in my thinking. There's so much obsession with being light, stepping lightly, and it's like, god our heaviness is astonishing and it's just as amazing, and that for me opens a new door in a big room.

I'm remembering the heaviness of the lizard, the reptile, when it crawled out of the sea and felt the weight of its body, the heaviness of being on dry land. That must be quite odd.

K Cor, we're almost straight back to Ashton Court, straight back to Jack Gilbert...it's a year since we first met.

...

Alyson gave me a deflated purple ball with a face on and discussed it as an “impolite agent”:

- A I met with a geographer a while back, when I was falling in love with all the things that were rather ugly,... she told me that in geographical terms they're called *impolite agents* – that is looking at the barbed wire and litter rather than snowdrops...

In a way that's almost what I think a poet does because they give you an idea that goes against the acceptance of polite understanding.

Alyson's question: What single thing can I help you with the most in your research for your PhD? In short my answer was “with truth and integrity”.

- K I actually think you've already done it and you're doing it, which is to have a truth and integrity about your answers. That's it really. Anything I ask, or anything that comes out, I've got a sense now that that's just as important as anything else. So whatever it is that comes, is what comes...Also please read your bit when I've done it and ensure that it's fair. And on the back of that is how to get through the PhD when you really really don't want to do it, I just want to keep walking, not write.

- A My instinctive answer if it's like this and you want to walk; walk.

The one thing that's seduced me into writing my PhD recently, and enjoy doing it, is that I started writing it as a letter to someone. I imagined someone who I really liked, whom I'm writing for. I picked someone called Vivian who's dead, and an incredibly intelligent 90 year old woman. Somewhere it's really changed what I do, because I think I'm having a conversation with her, rather than trying to produce and to please various people. It's starting to be fun. What would keep her interested? What would she press me on at this point? It's made a massive difference imagining her almost as my guardian angel to whom I am speaking, rather than some anonymous body who will roast me alive in a viva.

- K Thank you, that's helped in lots of ways.

- A ...If I walk I'm having fun and I'm being amusing divine, so how do I have some of that amusing divineness when I write, how do I bring some of that into that?

Extracts

- K How do you feel about the stone going?

- A Brilliant, I think it's the first time that I've ever been satisfied with a piece of work, ever. I sited it, we had a launch, and my friend from Sydney played trumpet. It was very magical.
- K It's been a long journey hasn't it?
- A I'm totally fulfilled with this one. I'm always dissatisfied, thinking I should have done it like this, or that could have gone better, but it was fine. I've done a great piece of work; there's been enough drama and difficulty. The day we went to site, it was an almighty storm. We couldn't drill the hole, the glue wouldn't set, it was a disaster, but every project needs its disasters. It's very mythical because before you reach your objective, you have your biggest demons in place. I had to leave the stone with this workman called Bob and I was quite nervous, but deep down I thought it was fine, it's absolutely fine, and the site was brilliant, right by the shore of a lake, looking over to Koonawarra [The site for the stone is at Kanahooka Point and it looks directly over to Koonawarra.] It felt very unusual for me as a practitioner to be so happy with a piece of work. I've come to love pieces of work in retrospect but always at the time I've been terribly nervous. But *this* time it was "no it's a really good piece of work". It's fantastic to have worked with all these people, starting from a random email – someone in a university saying please help. And then all the things that came into being; the whole thing out there was just ridiculous, it was just so in the right place at the right time, things unfolded. All the help I needed came. It was great; it was really good, but very uncomfortable for me for things to go so well. (laughter)...
- K There's heaviness again.
- A Yes, whereas the impetus is "hit now, achieve your objective, what are you doing next?" And I just think sometimes it's appropriate and sometimes it really isn't. My new challenge is to continue that feeling of suspension - I've finished my novel.
- K Lines of Desire? you said that last time. That's brilliant.
- A Oh really, I lied; I hadn't finished it at all. That was completely untrue, I thought many times I had finished it. I really hadn't finished it!
- K You said it was with your agent...
- A My agent was not happy with it. He said that before I went to Australia, so I crawled under my desk and wept buckets. I thought "fuck it I'm going to the other side of the world", and completely forget about it, but then after Christmas, I had an inkling of what I wanted to do with it. So I shifted it from first person to third person...I really enjoyed this edit, it takes it more into conventional storytelling, and my four separate sections have now been woven together, and again, dare I say I am now happy with it... I know I've

really finished because I did a spell check. Whenever I spell check, it's like I'm at the end. The line is drawn.

So as soon as space opens up, Vroom. Other things zoom into it. So my PhD I guess, has taken centre stage

Alyson was hoping to finish a draft of her PhD by the end of 2009. Life events had also intervened; Alyson's mum had been very ill.

A I miss the *fever* of getting up every day and going right ok, this is the book, let's do the book. I've missed that because a PhD isn't the same kind of fever at all, *but* dare I say there is the seed of a new book that is just beginning to plant itself that I feel quite excited about actually, and I won't start writing that for quite a while, and strangely for me it would involve some research, a new idea is spawning...I'm quite excited about that.

K So I wanted to ask you about floundering? (Laughter). Now I've written about that as being comfortably uncomfortable, and we talked about not knowing in March 2008, and having a certainty of unknowingness,... then I saw in your blog from December 2008,¹ you'd given it a name, you'd called it floundering. I wanted to ask you about waiting and floundering... Is it part of your practice, does it help, can you learn it?

A Can you learn how to flounder? God I hope not...! Ah, you can perhaps learn how to accept floundering, I think it happens anyway, and it's often when there's a disparity between what you want and what is. So I've come to the end of my stone project at this point. I've made three works of art, taken them here, the States, Australia. And, I've run out of money, totally...

Believe it or not, in the whole seven years, I have not documented a project properly at all. So I have piles of photographs and slides in my study and I've been looking for a really nice portfolio and haven't found one, so that's the task.

We had a brief discussion about funding opportunities.

K This is not specifically about floundering, but how did you arrive at that knowledge that you are actually in the middle of floundering, or waiting, and you can acknowledge it?

A It's back to that thing I was saying with Gilbert in a way, about being human. In that same poem he says, "Teach me mortality, frighten me into the present". I think in our culture there's so much emphasis and pressure upon succeeding, being mentored to succeed, achieving, putting forward your best side, being positive. It's like, well, where's

¹ Alyson Hallett blog, at: <http://migratingstonenumber3.blogspot.com/> (accessed 3 March 2009). Appendix 16 details the extract from this blog.

the space for being human? I fail at things, I have disasters, I flounder, I don't know what I'm doing. I get depressed. I despair. Not exclusively, but those things are equally a part of my practice and yet maybe we, I don't know, I don't know what a culture would be like where we put the emphasis upon failing or despair...

We discussed the idea of an emphasis in this way, and decided it could be like Marvin (a robot embodying maudlin tendencies) in Douglas Adams book A Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy.

A I suppose what I want is for practice to be transparent in some way, because I think that's more honest. There was a great article in The Guardian last week where they interviewed loads of novelists... Most of them were doing it for money and all of them were talking about the difficulty, in how they feel they are being driven mad, how they spend a day with imaginary people who no-one else knows. It was really refreshing to read, with so many courses and Universities wanting students to sign up so they've got the money, there's this tsunami of optimism and positivity and that's only half the story.

K Creative writing is really a kind of industry too now, isn't it as well?

A I don't even know what that means. Maybe there is an industrial side to it. I don't really like the idea of it being a cultural industry, it kind of annoys me. It's an erratic, penniless, difficult thing to do. So I guess the floundering – it's uncomfortable and unpleasant and it's part of a process. It's that thing of being heavy. I want to fail at some things. If you don't make experiments and try and fail you're never going to follow a path where you just go, "Ooh look, I've begun something and now it's succeeded, it's so infinitely dull." We kind of all think we like to tell a story that's really mainly focused on that side of things.

K I'm usually very positive when I talk about my "career"...last time we met we talked about telling a different story (being positive)...and experimenting with that, but sometimes...if you give a false expectation that it is always positive then it sets up the sense of it, almost being an impossible job.

A Well we were just painting a particular kind of picture. It's almost like the balloon thing; where is the room for the impolite agent? Where is the room for what you think somebody doesn't want to hear?

...

K The personal state you go in also affects it, even if everything's going well.

A Maybe that's the key; it becomes personal when we put in some of the truths of our own story, and if we don't put those in it's like anyone can fucking write it. "Oh it was all lovely, and it was really brilliant

and I'm a huge success, and I'm known in this area and this area and I know these people". That does generate something but it's kind of one-dimensional. Maybe if we could step onto Mars for a moment and look back at the pictures we made, and the implications of that, because it must lead somewhere to expectations of things always being like that. That's what I love about living here; weather like yesterday, it's mad, it's destructive, there are wrecks of ships under there, there are blood and bones in that ocean, we've seasons, we've cycles, they're bloody brutal, and then you've got the twittering snowdrops and we saw two deer on the way home so you've got both. So why as human beings do we have this overarching need to go "it's all lovely, it's all lovely, I'm brilliant, lovely"?

...

I enjoy enthusiasm. I'm very enthusiastic, even though I talk about heaviness and difficulty and floundering. Maybe what I strive, what I'm wriggling towards more and more is that each person having their truth, being truthful...Go find somewhere that suits you.

K But you need to have the right places and ways of saying that, not a negativity, yet another bit of your personality or your way of being. It's almost like we've created niches for those things. If you overstep one niche and put it in the wrong place, it's not acceptable.

A We've also created a very kind of private niche called therapy, which is fantastic, but it's like o.k. we'll keep this quiet, it's our secret domain that can be transformed. I must have talked to you about the article about the revolutionary act of being unhappy in public...It is politically unacceptable to be really miserable in public and in a way it is. You take your misery into a room, and because there's a kind of cultural imperative to be happy, if you're not happy you need to solve it instantly...But you know if somebody is always cheerful that is just so boring. It's like for god's sake go and have a bit of misery. Why don't we have misery therapy? There is a great poem by D H Lawrence about lovable people and he loathes them, he asks why not be more elemental? We are made up of the elements, the elements are alive, but turbulent. Being lovable is dull, I don't want loveable people...it's very funny, he's cantankerous.

K So have you done any professional development courses since I met you last Alyson? (laughter)

A I've never done a professional development course in my entire life, I'm so sorry. Do you think I should go and do one, what would I do?

K You talked about an arts marketing one, that was useful to have a launch...

A Oh my god, oh that day.

- K Is there anything that you would say (you might say everything is) stuck in your mind over the last six months that has been about your professional development. As soon as I ask you that, I've limited it haven't I?
- A Is there anything that I have done that's about my professional development?
- K I expect Australia is for a start.
- A You really shouldn't have picked me for your PhD, Karen!
- K No I should, I really should.
- A Well one thing that just jumps to mind. I had to write a biography again the other day just listing publications, residencies etc, and sitting back, going oh wow.
- K Bit of reflection?
- A Yes, bit of reflection. That was good. And perhaps the enthusiasm my work was met with in Australia, that was good for my soul, really really good. And this woman producer for the BBC getting in touch. For a programme on the stones.
- K How did she pick you up?
- A She saw me on an Arvon website. So again some degree of exposure and people responding to that is very nice.
- K It doesn't take that much to make the right link does it?
- A No it's often quite small, quite tiny.
- ...
- A Maybe if you ask me about a specific area, I don't know if I have professionally developed, I'm really sorry. I don't know if I have at all. (Laughter.)
- K I think you are the right person...I'm realising that even in the title; "the continuing professional....etc" of my PhD, it is already limited, then the possibility of what someone might consider to be about their practice, is limited by trying to put words on it... So by asking the question, or by saying "we're the training development agency for all artists in the South West, this is what we do", unless they are incredibly open about language, and unless they accept that they don't know, they don't always know, how can you go for a three hour session with an advisor and work out what you need to do when that advisor hasn't necessarily got the knowledge or understand your language? So by telling you what to do, or by "assisting you in getting you to your goals", (although there's a room for this; there's a

need for reflection and considered-ness and having someone to bounce your ideas off), that's different to someone articulating your needs in a language that might not be yours.

So I suppose I'm trying to open it out to say "look it's about not knowing where you're going, you can't put language on it, you can't say this is the goal in five years time"... Their whole reason for being is to put these goals in place and say that that's the way to be considered, that you have a considered approach to your practice by setting goals, and I think that a considered approach to practice can be lots of things.

- A Having goals is one part of that, that can be a good motivator but it's not the only one.

...

There is a place for goals. The other thing is having fun, and that's again, this poem by Lawrence, he made a very good distinction between writing something in poetry and writing something in prose. He said prose seemed so definitive as if you are presenting an answer, whereas what he writes one day as a thought is maybe contradicted the following day... So it's going to change. If you're going to do it have some fun with it.

We discussed our meeting together (some of which is in the main text of Chapter Six):

...So immediately that space was there, will we find each other? So I had this sense of fun of thinking up something quite ridiculous for you, and somewhere that helps my professional development, the element of surprise. You don't quite know if it's going to work... When I was in Australia there were a lot of unknowns in that. When I went to Wollongong to meet this public art officer there I was in a city I've never been in, sitting on a bench with a suitcase, waiting for her to turn up in a car.

Sometimes it's really tiny things, and how you factor that into an organisational context, I don't know, unless, I quite like the introduction of unexpected things, so maybe part of continuing professional development is having a mentor who's going to say to you "what's your favourite food? Tell me something I don't know". Rather than it just being these tramlines towards a successful future, what kind of landscape are you going to go through to start moving into that future given that it will change along the way...

- K What you picked up, it's brilliant that you ran with it, and let it evolve, it's evolved in a joyful way...
- A It's curious because in some ways I did feel in control today for the first time, in this meeting... So let's play with this, let's have an element of play in here. That was borne out with the stone going to

Australia. If there are people interested in what you're doing, that's your biggest milestone, people being interested in your work and how we can make something happen. I've got the idea, how we going to do this? Meet me on this one, work with me. I think that's the thing that refuels me more than anything, someone being interested in my work...

...

You choosing me that helps my whatever, because you're interested in what I do, how I do it, and that's really nice, it feels very nice to have been asked.

K That's good to hear because I worry about taking so much of your time.

A But come on we're completely self-centred ego maniacs, the opportunity to talk about what I do, why I do it, and often I don't know what I think until someone asks me and I say it and I think "ooh that's interesting" so just the opportunity and you being interested in what I do is great, but it needs to be in what I do, in my work, not my career. Which is what I've said from the beginning. If I died out tomorrow it means I'm actually an end of career artist.

We've ridden through those things a few times. We've had moments where we've all been about to give it up, and we've ridden those, some people can go through that in a year. My friend who's the opera singer Marie, says inspiration is such a small part, it's your ability to endure, that's what distinguishes you in the end, because so many people will fall by the wayside when it becomes difficult, but it's that thing of how do you endure this, how do you keep going and keep going that is what starts to distinguish certain people. That durational ability

...

Alyson recited her monk's poem. She said:

I wrote this when I was walking on that path. It's one of the few poems I've written as a walking poem. I'll see if I can remember it, I'm not sure what it's called anymore... That was my compositional route over there...

I had also heard Alyson read this poem at Arnolfini:

Walking The Abbey Road

To walk where monks once would have walked
to step where they too have stepped
to press these lips to the same sea-sifted air
to catch on a breeze lost fevers of their talk

To be with them is everywhere and nowhere
spinnakered against wind like a blade of grass
like a tree upshooting and rooting
a dot on the wave of a line fecund sublime

To be with them is to step out of time
to unsign the treaty that binds us to past present future
a dot on the wave of a very long line
that line a circle fecund sublime

You see I do not believe in the otherness of the dead
in my heart there is a green light shining

Alyson Hallett²

We discussed how I'd chosen the four artist case studies.

A And do you think you chose well?

K Yes, without doubt. Absolutely. Fascinating.

...

A Walking in silence is also something I've wanted to do, and I started writing something that I'll write for you and give to you from when we were walking in silence before. So much of my process is roaming in quiet, and I'm not used to walking and talking, and I love to walk and not talk, and that's an interesting element maybe of CPD sometimes; what happens if you spend time quietly with somebody?

I think I said to you I did a paper at Dartington and I had a silence in the middle of it because again I wanted to play with it. What happens when you do this? Something else starts to take place and no artist or writer will ever work without silence, without solitude. Never ever ever. It's like where's the space for that as well? Because it feels slightly transgressive to go "we're not going to talk about anything".

² Sent by personal email from Alyson Hallett to Karen Smith on 16 March 2009.

There are held beliefs that not talking is wasting time, that talking is more useful than the quiet. Silence and meditation....in someone's presence, who they are, something else comes through in the quietness and that interests me...

How Saying Nothing Sometimes Says More

(for Karen)

Let's walk in silence. Let's dare to enter
the intimate space that silence brings.

All this talking, talking about things we know
overclouds the cloudless day. Let's walk

the quiet way, dumb listeners opened to sound.
Already there's the scent of gorse,

waves, crazy-paved sunshine shadows
the screech and spin of a febrile wind.

Warren beach edges with spume-white snow
Atlantic greys, curtained cliffs still growing

in the rocky slowness of carboniferous time.
Ghosts crane their necks, reach for a place

to breathe and be remembered. We speak of too many
things and do not hear this spring day singing.

Your lost baby embedded in snowdrops,
old Devonian poets wreathed with salt

and the rusting metal of wrecked ships.
A dark-furred caterpillar crawls up the hill.

Let's walk in silence, let's dare to enter
the bright spill of space that silence brings.

Alyson Hallett³

³ Sent by personal email from Alyson Hallett to Karen Smith on 16 March 2009.

Appendix 16

Extracts regarding Alyson Hallett's Migrating Stones project

Extract from Arvon Foundation

The Migration Habits of Stones By Alyson Hallett¹

Six years ago I began a project that involves carrying stones around the world. This project is called The Migration Habits of Stones and in September this year I will be taking the third stone to Australia.

The idea for the project came just days after my paternal grandmother's funeral. As I lay dozing in bed I remembered a voice that had spoken to me in my dreams. "It's time to go and climb Cader Idris," the voice said. How curious, I thought, thinking there was nothing else to it. But the idea of climbing the mountain insisted itself into every waking moment and so I cancelled work appointments, hired a car, packed a tent, some food, good walking boots and set off for North Wales.

I had never climbed a mountain before and was uncertain why a dream might be directing me to do so now. It didn't take long to find out. Half-way up the slopes of Cader Idris I came across a large boulder that looked completely out of place. As I stood there wondering why it looked so different a man happened to pass by. He also happened to be a geologist. He told me the stone was an erratic that had broken away from its motherbed centuries ago, lodged in ice and then set off on a very long, slow journey. The carriage of ice carved canyons and gorges as it moved along and when the sun next shone strongly enough the ice melted and the erratic stone was deposited in a new and unfamiliar landscape.

I was fascinated by this. Grippled. Bewitched. I felt as if a door had opened onto a different way of seeing the world. Instead of being eternally fixed in place, stones were suddenly fellow travellers and movement was an essential part of their natures. I thought not only of erratics but also of the stones we place on graves, the pebbles that we bring home after a day at the beach. Was it possible, I wondered, for that pebble to want to be picked up and taken away as much as I wanted to pick it up and take it with me?

Stones are considered sacred in nearly all cultures. In addition to this virtually everyone I meet has a special stone or a story to tell about a stone. Why is our connection to stones so strong? These were just a few of the ideas and questions buzzing around my mind when I applied to the Arts Council for funding. To my astonishment they granted it and my project, The Migration Habits Of Stones, was born.

So far I have created three public works of art for the project. Each one is a piece of stone that has the opening line of one of my poems carved into it. The line says,

And stones moved silently across the world

The first stone is a large piece of slate from North Wales. I approached the wardens of Leigh Woods in Bristol and asked them if they'd like to give a home to a travelling stone. Their response was enthusiastic and positive: they generously offered a space

¹ Alyson Hallett, "The Migration Habits of Stones". The Arvon Foundation, at: <http://www.arvonfoundation.org/static.php?pid=165&subid=589&step=4> (accessed 30 July 2008).

just off the purple path that runs through the wood and helped me plan and organise a public event to mark the arrival of the stone. Lois Rose invited the second stone to take up residence in the grounds of her retreat centre in Massachusetts, U.S.A. I flew with this stone, a piece of limestone that weighs 23 kg, into New York on September 11th 2004 and wheeled it through the streets of the city in my suitcase. I wanted to be there on that date remembering not only the terrorist attack on the twin towers but also Pinochet's coup in Chile on September 11th 1973. I wanted the journey to be a small gesture of peace in some way.

Whilst staying at the retreat centre I dreamed the name of the location for stone number three: Koonawarra. I returned to England and typed this word into google. It is a bay just south of Sydney in Australia. More than that though, in the Aboriginal language the word means high point of land with smooth white stones.

In all, I imagine making seven stones in my life-time. I have a website, www.thestonelibrary.com where you can see more pictures of the stones and read poems and research in relation to the project. I'd also like to mention Alec Peever, the letter carver who works with me in creating the text on the stones – his excellent work is integral to this project.

Radio 4 Nature extract, Alyson Hallett, "Migrating Stones"²

Poet and writer Alyson Hallett travels to Australia with a large piece of limestone as a companion, inscribed with a line from one of her poems. This is the third journey Alyson has made with a stone; each destination has been different, each stone has been different, but each has been similarly inscribed by the sculptor and lettering artist Alec Peever.

It is a project which began seven years ago, inspired by a dream and an encounter with an erratic - a huge boulder that had broken away from its motherbed centuries ago, lodged in ice and then set off on long, slow journey, until eventually it was deposited on a Welsh mountainside. It was here that Alyson encountered the boulder.

Fascinated by the idea that stones are fellow companions and movement is an essential part of their nature, Alyson started to explore the cultural importance of stones, and embarked on her project, *The Migration Habits of Stones*.

Alyson takes a journey with her third stone to Koonawara in Australia. We also hear from stone letterer Alec Peever and Bill Morris, warden of Leigh Woods in Bristol, the site of the first migrating stone.

² BBC Radio 4, *Nature*, "Migrating Stones", broadcast on 13 October 2009, at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00n52kz/Nature_Series_3_Migrating_Stones/ (accessed 13 October 2009).

Appendix 17

“floundering”

Shaded extract from Alyson Hallett's blog¹

Monday, 29 December 2008

So, more than two months have passed since my last blog and what have I been doing? Readjusting to life in the UK after being in Australia and Hong Kong, wondering what comes next and finding no answers.

Really, none at all.

And then this morning I rose at 5 a.m. to meditate. In the deep stillness of early morning I finally realised that this 'not knowing' (also known as floundering) is as much a part of the creative process as anything else. I'm unsure whether to repeat what I've done in the past or whether to sharpen up my receptive faculties and see what arises. I've decided on the latter and will wait for as long as it takes.

The stones project has never been about speed - it moves with the velocity of a snail and now is proving to be no exception. Floundering is only uncomfortable when I'm pressing myself to move forward and expecting something to happen. Waiting for the next instructive dream, or an idea that rockets me into action. But there is no idea for now and no dreaming, apart from one small glimmer of an A-5 book of stones and stories.

Beckett had a lot to say about waiting. Various railway companies also have a lot of announcements to make about waiting. There are waiting rooms and waiting times, people who wait on tables in restaurants, waiters and waitresses. Ladies in waiting. Artists in waiting. I am waiting on something and have no idea when it will arrive.

Meanwhile then, I am returning to play, something that has been almost edited out of my life over the past couple of months. I'm painting again, writing little things of no consequence, staring at blank walls and dreaming. Lying in hot baths until I'm wrinkled like a prune. The only thing of note, at least the most interesting thing of note, was the liberation of a lobster on the 20th December. Since then, lobsters have begun to crop up all over the place. I'm not sure what this signifies - although it's probably something fishy and profound - so if you have any ideas please let me know.

Until the next blog, I wish you all a magical new year.

¹ <http://migratingstonenumber3.blogspot.com/> (accessed 3 March 2009).

Appendix 18

Mariele Neudecker, 9 May 2008, Walk One

I picked Mariele up at Spike Island and dropped her back off at Spike.

We walked around Ashton Court, Bristol, in the bluebells and hedge garlic, a hot, muggy day. We picked Weston Hemlock pine cones, a particularly small pine cone in order to put them through a resin bath and cast in Mariele's studio for a spin-off of a project which Mariele had installed in Japan. I observed that the Japan installation "sounds like a monumental thing to be doing." Mariele said: "It is monumental. They'll never get it out of there. It's huge. I'm in a group show in London, and I've promised them two trees, and one of them is a Weston Hemlock and I haven't got any cones left, but we've got the moulds of the trees, so I'm just lacking the pine cones to go round them."

Extracts on place: London and the South West.

Mariele (M):

...I'm in London loads, especially recently. I've been working with a company in London on a big project and there are a couple of things in the pipeline, so I'm going to London regularly anyway. I always have, but probably more so in the recent year, because the work was made there, and I had to go there and make decisions, or work on it.

My choice to move out of London initially it was a really practical thing. Getting the Henry Moore Fellowship at Spike Island in 1998. It was a sort of odd decision that I figured that every time I went back and forth, I took another car-load to Bristol, so I ended up being in Bristol rather than London, and I had been in London for about thirteen years at that point, and was probably just ready to leave, and enjoyed being out here.

I asked, "Do you think if you hadn't been in London that would have made a difference? Do you think the South West would have supported you from the start?"

Mariele answered:

I can't imagine it really. I had a chat with Richard Long recently, and I was really surprised how he then explained that he's never left Bristol. I couldn't believe it, I was just quite impressed, he was born in Bristol, he studied in Bristol, he's a Bristol boy. And that surprised me, my god; I presumed somehow that he was in London or somewhere like that.

So in a way, there's the proof that it could happen in the South West, or in Bristol even, but it's difficult. I'm really glad that I did what I did when I did it. Because I'm German, it's slightly more complicated. I would have had to leave Germany for Bristol... my route was going from Germany to Cork, and then realising in Cork that it was too provincial, and that art magazines got there three

months too late, and there was one gallery that showed work after the 60s if you were lucky.

I asked: "So Cork wouldn't support your practice in a way that you needed?" Mariele answered:

Well it was very definitely supporting Irish Nationals very well. There's a great system in place, where you get tax rebates and this and this, but as a foreigner, I think, no, you can go back to Cork possibly, just at the time I didn't see it would happen there. The trend in Cork was if you got out of Ireland, you'd go to London, so I followed that trail.

... Cork was incredibly academic and old-fashioned in terms of going to an art school. They did the full on life drawing and landscape painting, field trips, and it was very conservative in a way, but I really really enjoyed it. It gives you the basic skills, and it was very supportive on materials, and you could just get on with it. There was also a bit where I applied in Germany, at that point, not being sure if I'd get into London, and I applied to Munich and Düsseldorf academies. But in the end I got into Goldsmiths and went there to do my BA and MA in Chelsea.

I pointed out that I was interested in why Mariele was in Bristol here. Mariele said:

I met a man. [I observed that was how I had ended up in Bristol too!...] it's usually the reason isn't it? To be honest, I went to Cork in spite of a man, and then we decided to go to London together, and then I didn't ever go back to Germany partly because there was always somebody in London, and then, anyway... so Bristol is great, and I met a man, so there you go.

I asked Mariele if she felt there were enough opportunities to push her practice. She responded:

In the South West particularly? It's a difficult question to answer. It's difficult because I'm not sure if I can't even think of one example exactly that is South West specific that I get any support. Nothing. I can't. Apart from the sort of overall availability of cheap accommodation and spaces, that's a support, but it's not specific enough is it? I'm not quite sure what possibly it could be. I don't think so, because it's email and internet that supports me mostly, people don't really know where I am. I get a phonecall and people say can I come and visit your studio and I say, "I'm in Bristol," and they say "oh, I thought you were in London". So there's a lot of that going on and because I have an inconspicuous email address people presume I'm in London. I've had that happen quite a few times. So I don't know probably unless you point at very specific things I can probably scramble something up...

- K Well whether you've had funding particularly from a specific South West funding organisation?
- M Well actually no – to be fair, of course, Picture This, through the museum (Bristol), South West Screen, those two projects. A lot of funding for Picture This comes through ACE South West and so on. So indirectly yes, of course, and Picture This have been really great and important to my projects. They did the two DVD publications, so that's a great support. So sorry Picture This, South West Screen, thank you very much!
- K Again that's South West organisations supporting you, like Spike as well. If you hadn't done the Spike residency, do you think that just happened to be in the South West, it could equally be in Yorkshire or Scotland, or....?
- M Yes although, there was a lot of self initiative going on. It was a great residency, but they didn't support the exhibition that much. I did all the fund raising stuff myself, but it was good. I was quite experienced with that because I was partly running a charity in London and a studio and I found it relatively easy in the South West to approach companies and get results and get their time.
- ...
- K So you're kind of saying there isn't anything particularly distinct about the South West?
- M No, it is the companies, that is a difference. I had totally forgotten about them. A large scale project like the Unrecallable Now piece I did was possibly unusual for the South West, and possibly wouldn't have shown up that much in London because there's loads of stuff going on...It was a big big project and I was able to get loads of people from UWE to help. That was great, there are subtle differences like that and I'm sure they do make a difference.

Extracts regarding working project-by-project and layers of projects

I asked Mariele if she planned her next project, Mariele answered:

It doesn't work like that. You get the show or you don't. There's probably situations, for example, because I've done the work with Opera North¹ and so on, and there's some bid going in in London, and

¹ Mariele here is referring to *Winterreise* (A Winter's Journey), a series of twenty four short films commissioned by The Contemporary Art Society, for Leeds City Art Gallery and Opera North, as a filmic response to Schubert's song cycle, an iconic work from the German Romantic "Lieder" tradition. Mariele

I'm nurturing some things more than others. I think "I'd love to do that project", but that's about all you can do, just go to the meetings, rather than say I'm too busy, because you could be too busy, or you probably are too busy, but, just to nurture the whole context, there's nothing you can really plan.

I asked "Is that riding on the back of the longevity of the work that you've done for them? For example, the Wintereisse?" Mariele said:

Yes, although it's totally disconnected to Opera North, it's just a music related thing. Well, there's a connection I suppose, when the show was in St Ives, (they're musicians at the Royal Academy of Music and they came to St Ives to do this project weekend which they do regularly with different shows down there anyway), and that was how the contact was made and they got back to me last year. At the moment I'm just hanging to see if they got the money or not. But it's a sort of situation where I could easily have just blocked it and said "No I'm sorry I can't. I don't want to". It depends; shows are quite different to these research commissions that can come your way, or not. It's quite difficult to seek them out.

I asked "so do you think most of your work has just been spontaneously done? Or serendipitously accessed somehow? Like Saatchi coming to the Whitechapel?" Mariele's response was:

Well as you said earlier, you have to look to find things, or you have to be in a lot of places to be in the right place at the right time. Somehow at some point, because it's that kind of situation, if you've got a sore foot then everybody stands on it, you don't notice it normally...and it's like when you make a piece of work which uses fluorescent string and water or something and suddenly you start seeing it everywhere. You think you're going through an evolutionary process, but these things around like Saatchi going and buying work, happens all the time, it's just a good coincidence.

...

I think I'm really lucky that I've got this situation that I'm in with family. I've got the freedom to do what I need and want to do now. There was a phase where I had to get three diaries out and compare everybody, it's that kind of freedom to do that.

I go through phases of working full on in the studio, and at the moment because I've been travelling a lot over the last couple of months, three months, I just need to lock myself away in the studio, model up this clay thing, and that's all I want: focus. I'm absolutely gagging to just get in the studio and make some more things. Make that work that I want to make...

created a film for each of the twenty four movements using locations based on the sixtieth degree of latitude. This included the Shetland Islands, Helsinki, Oslo and St. Petersburg.

...

There's this slack time coming up and I can just be experimental and make work that no-one ever sees. It actually rarely ever happens, it'd be nice in a way. Maybe that's one thing I'd like, to be able to afford to buy myself that sort of time where I can just mess around in the studio and keep the door shut...Just not have this sort of deadline pressure. I can't see that happening too soon, but it'd be nice.

I asked "Have you got things lined up for quite a long time?" Mariele said:

There's always something. Well at the moment, probably the main pressures are that they are all happening in September. I'm trying not to think further than September because there's three projects. Once they're gone I'll realise what I've ignored. It's good, I'm really happy when I'm busy as well. It's this sort of contradiction; on one level I just want more time and more messing about, freefall time, and on the other hand, I'm functioning really well when I'm under pressure, and I just like it.

I then asked: "Have there been people that you think have been important in terms of supporting your practice? Mariele:

Yeah, yeah, oh god yeah. Definitely. I'm not going to name names; it could be certain gallery directors who are really great at getting me into conversations and everything, or friends. In Curtain Road for example, there were friends who I would have been talking to a lot about their work, and about my work and about the whole London thing, and that's really helpful. If you've got a continuous conversation with somebody, if you know after a while what they're talking about, you get a lot out of those things. To have the one-off chat here and there is quite tricky to be really supportive. It's one thing that I haven't really managed to get organised in Bristol, this continuous dialogue with someone about work.

...

I've got a really supportive gallery in Berlin.² I've been working with them for a long time and I did work with a gallery in London for a while and then they closed down. Probably, over the last few years I've done a lot more commission work that almost keeps the gallery out of the loop, and I'm really grateful that the gallery are happy with that. I've just had to look after getting an income because with a commission you get fees and everything and they support making the work, and I've been quite lucky to get quite open commissions, so it wasn't too restrictive in deciding what to do, so it's really nice actually. I mean there's the odd commission where I've just been

² www.bthumm.de website for Barbara Thumm Gallery who represent Mariele, (accessed 4 January, 2010).

quite happy to work out the idea and then farm it off to someone else to make and just forget it, and then others like the Opera North stuff where I was totally involved and made it all myself. So there's commissions and then there's commissions.... But it could get too much, if for example, the gallery sees that I spend all of my time making commissions, and do not develop proper shows for them.

...

It's a gamble a little bit, and there are different situations like the piece in Japan now, that was a commission. It's a permanent installation, it's great for the gallery to point to that and say well she's got this piece in the museum, but at the same time it's knocked me out for two years, a lot of the time I was working on that, parallel to other things.

...

K The collaborations you've made have developed lots of different skills, and you could have spent your life doing tanks...³

M Yes...they're all out there, it's like having this needy family out there and they ring you up and say look something's going on, so I don't think I would want to, no.

It's also nice, for example, when I worked with this professor at Cardiff. He taught me quite a lot of things about sterolithography and that kind of technology. I know if I had the need to make a piece using that technology, I could ring him up and he'd be willing to do it, so there's always this dormant network as well. I've met him again, and we said it would be nice to do something again. The day will come one day...

K And have you ever done any training courses at all?

M I have done some really basic Photoshop programming and editing. I did a year in London on a course which was all new technology stuff.

...

K Would you say your professional development has come through more of an academic university field?

M I always think I'm not very good at teaching, I know with certain students I can be sure they get a hell of a lot out of it, not with all of them of course. But I just think I'm much more hands on and

³ Mariele has made a significant number of "tank" works for over a decade, for example, *Pressure Exerted by Atmosphere*, 1997 and *Heaven, the Sky*, 2008. The tank works are time based sculptural installations set in tanks (usually glass) and suspended in liquid (usually salt water). Although the tanks form only one part of Mariele's oeuvre, she is well known for them.

practical when it comes to teaching. I'm always slightly unsure of how good I am on an academic level, but then again, it is hard to say.

I asked Mariele, "Do you consider yourself to be successful? in your terms?"
Mariele answered:

Well successful on certain levels, I would say yes, and then I look, it's so totally relative. I'm quite happy where I am, in both directions there's lots of people I know that make much less money and much much more money, and I feel like, ok, I'm getting by, it's ok I'm doing pretty well. There's five of us, it almost depends on my mood. I'm quite glad that I maintain the openness of changing things, and there's lots of interesting projects coming my way. Some people might earn lots of money but they're on a track with that, and they're quite jealous of me doing lots of different things – the grass is always greener on the other side. I'm sort of thinking, oh well, that's just how it is, it's fine. I'm sure if I earned a whole load more money, I'd probably do boring things! (laughter). Even though that's not true about some friends of mine who kind of manage to do both. But then a lot of people have stopped altogether. You think God, I'm glad I'm doing it, it's all very relative... You move onto the next thing.

...Each piece you wonder; was that a good piece or not? I'm not really sure about the piece in Japan just yet, because I haven't really had much time, just looking at it or thinking about it as yet, and you're never really 100% totally sure. There's probably a couple of pieces where I've thought I probably couldn't have done it any better, but actually I could always do better. You're always slightly unhappy about how it turned out because there's always that little compromise here and there that you end up getting sucked into because of money, because of time, because of circumstances. So in a way, that would probably stop me saying I feel completely successful, because every piece is slightly something wrong with it, but then that keeps you wanting to make another one.

For the next year, Mariele observed:

I know pretty much what's going to happen. The thing I'm doing in London is going to be quite interesting as it's probably the most public opportunity to embarrass myself if it doesn't work, because it's on Millennium Bridge for a month... It's the sound piece. I need to get my head around some of the technical issues. It's really exciting but also very frightening because it's so flipping public. So I'll see how that works. So in some ways it's not a major major piece. I think if that works out really well, there may be a similar piece coming up. If it's a disaster, there won't be. It's working with sound, but on a very different level to the music pieces.

...

I'm about to hear if I'm embarking on this big music project with the Royal Academy. I might, might not. I might be able to chisel out some research time with Aldeburgh Music. Maybe something, there's a few maybe things like that. I quite like the idea of a bit of research time with them.

K Do people seek you out now do you think? Do they come to you?

M Yes they come through the gallery or directly to me, yes.

K And does that also limit how wide you look, do you think? So if you're already having to choose between, I don't know, three possible commissions, or three possible collaborations, that there's actually something off here... that will appear that requires total individual development from you, does that tend to get lost in the other stuff, or do you manage to balance?

M I tend to just try to balance it. Or like with Aldeburgh, they would have probably started doing something with me last year, and I said look I can see until next May, there's no way I'm going to do anything other than what I'm doing, so let's talk again then. So this is one of the phone calls on my little list of phone calls to find out if we should meet up again. Something will work... I feel quite saturated as it is, so at the moment, I'm in the lucky position not to be too worried if one thing drops off or not. There's enough going on.

Mariele had been shortlisted for a film-making award; she was considered a film-maker by a certain section of the arts ecology. As she observed, in certain exhibitions, certain people view her work within certain frameworks.

I asked Mariele how she found support, she answered, "You just talk to people, you just have to." I observed: "You can't really teach that can you?" Mariele said:

It was quite funny, there was a little stint for example, before all the forest material went to Japan on the containers. There was this huge panic about contamination and fumigation and the bugs in the bark, and I had two or three days full on, researching that problem, and you suddenly talk to Professors in Oxford about bugs in containers, and Japanese Customs. It was just weird, and quite interesting how some of these total experts kind of ring you at home, and talk to you about bugs in bark. It was quite funny, but I quite like this.

K That's a whole way of working in itself, that's different to being someone who visually... I'm just thinking about someone like Peter Doig, he's a *painter* – he paints. I'm sure he does think about other things in different ways, but he's not actively investigating and researching new projects in the way that you work, or the writer that I'm working with as well. Her work is very much project to project to project.

M Well it's sometimes, it's sort of scatter... Well again, I think I've probably said this three times now in different ways, it comes in waves. Sometimes I do too much of it and then I think god I wish I was just painting. "Barbara I'm going to start painting, forget that sculpture show!" (laughter). I started off as a painter and printmaker in the early days, in Ireland and I sometimes think it's such a luxury to be that contained. I'd probably be bored stiff if I did it actually, so I don't know, but I think sometimes I'll probably start little stints of doing that a bit more, I think it'd be really interesting, for my head...

I sometimes think, people say "how many tanks have you made?"⁴ And I think how many tanks have you actually made? I've never really counted them, something like 25 or 30 and then they'll be kind of going "oh is that all?" And I thought well actually that's quite a lot, some of them are quite big, what do you mean? And there's some that are editioned, so with that project I was continually trying to find out just something slightly different in the set up or in the mixture or in the timing. There was a point where I felt I've explored that now, and I know too much about it, so it became a bit too known to me, and I lost interest. It's like that with most things. It's the excitement of not knowing something, then you feel like you're repeating yourself and then you have to change it.

⁴ See footnote above.

Appendix 19

Mariele Neudecker, 27 August 2008, Walk Two

We walked in Leigh Woods which were full of blackberries. Since walk one, Mariele had sorted out a new studio space and had got an assistant. Some projects had begun or were in the planning stages, and a sound piece we had previously discussed had been recorded and edited in Cornwall and Branscombe, Devon, and was being re-mastered to be wired up to the Millennium Bridge, London, that week. Mariele had also been to New York and to Singapore and had finalised her Aldeburgh Music project. She was planning a show in San Francisco opening in early January 2009. Some of her "maybes" that she had discussed in walk one had become confirmed projects.

On this walk Mariele said: "I need to find a really good big rock, last time it was cones...they are in the studio...I'll show you when we get back." On walk three, she said: "I'll have to send you a picture of that, when we were looking for a rock, and that sculpture is now made."

We finished at Mariele's studio at Spike, which had a strong smell of resin. Mariele had been away and in the meantime the plastic tree trunks (cast in resin from real trees, and then sprayed to look like tree trunks) had been delivered. The Weston Hemlock pine cones were on the fake forest floor. Mariele was also making a piece for Singapore, and her studio was part-storage, part-research, part-potter and make space. A Studio visit was due at the end of September. Mariele commented that the studio was due for a tidy up: "I need to get my act together, get my work out."

Extracts

K Who is funding and supporting each of your projects?:

M I might have ben whinging on last time, because Singapore and San Francisco have no money, so I ended up sitting down and writing my own fundraising application to pay for a flight to Singapore, which is something I haven't done for years. I so want to go there. The British Council has coughed up too, but it's hard to get money out of them, especially for the Biennale; the British Council is mainly supporting young artists in group shows now. San Francisco is a similar scenario, all they were hoping for was that the British Council would support travel and shipping etc., but because they've already supported me for Singapore, they're unlikely to support San Francisco so it is swings and roundabouts...It's a new gallery and they haven't got any money yet so we'll see.

Aldeburgh music – I think they're just funding it themselves. Who funds them I don't know. They committed to fundraise for the project once I'd developed it... Developing and researching it was great. There was money for that and they found money from wherever to make whatever I decided to do...They are handling it all really openly, I can come and go and do whatever, I can decide myself, it's great.

Mariele is also making an outside permanent public art commission for the Harbourside in Bristol.¹ She observed:

I need to chase up the meeting with the landscape architect, as expected there are lots of health and safety issues and stuff like that can be quite a pain. I've had a couple of meetings about the site; I'm slowly easing into it. It only has to be there from November next year so it's not on top of the pile at the moment but it will be. I'm casting another tree for it and I need to do it February / March...I've got that much on, I need to find the right tree...But it's quite nice having something nearby, it's really near the studio as well so I can just walk along.

K Can you see that your work progresses? That you're more competent now than you were ten years ago?

M Hard to say that for your own work isn't it? It probably should progress more, should consolidate more. I feel like I'm at an odd point at the moment, partly because I've done probably too many commissioned pieces or things a bit like the Harbourside, where I'm limited in certain ways, health and safety stuff etc., things which are distracting from your work...Of course you move on and one thing leads to the other, but there's always this slightly annoying knowledge that you should be further on or you should have focused on doing more work. Right at this point, probably because I'm going away next week, I'm feeling quite spread out. I want to come together to focus on new work in the studio which doesn't have a particular place attached to it yet. Wherever it goes I don't quite know.

We discussed making bespoke projects, not off-the-shelf ones. Mariele said:

I think, possibly because the tank pieces, there was a sort of string of them that got me into a huge amount of shows and everyone said "can we have a tank, can we have a tank"... and there was a point where I just got really fed up with "can I have a tank"... Funnily enough, I'm just setting out to make two tanks especially for the guy for the Singapore Biennale. I think they are really suited, so I said "o.k. I'm ignoring my promise, not to make anymore tanks. You're going to get two tanks", and I'm quite looking forward to making them to be honest. But there's a definite big break in doing that: no more tanks! with that exception, because for that particular show it's perfect, so I gave in!

K Do you think there is a through line? I think there is...

M Yes, I think what I always have enjoyed, and it is partly why I was so fed up by this chimera of a tank, because I've always worked parallel on different strands and ways of working, and some strands like the

¹ In my fact-checking discussion with Mariele on 26 January 2010, she noted that this project is now frozen because of the "credit crunch". She observed "I don't know what's happening."

music work with Opera North got quite strong for a while and it allowed me to think about similar things. But physically, to be in overalls for weeks, and being behind the computer for weeks, but shuffle it so it wouldn't drive me mad either way, and in a way I really need that kind of pattern, of flexible kind of practice...

The Unrecallable Now piece for example that I did for Spike, that was a monstrous grinding job, and working really horribly with resin and that went on far too long, and that probably encouraged me to do much more sort of animation and film work, to get out of the overall. But then after a while, you know, it kind of takes turns, and it's nice that I am able to do both. I'm sure it feeds into each other as well, the different practices.

K You said "consolidate" earlier. If you did consolidate would it mean that you are going to be doing tank pieces for the rest of your life?

M Oh no no, definitely not. The fact that I have done two tank pieces for Singapore is a bit of a defeat. The exhibition is called Wonder. I'm happy to do that but it feels like I'm showing an old piece even though it's new, so that's slightly frustrating but at the same time it's finding that context, under the circumstances because there wasn't any money so I couldn't do a new piece.

I've been in the studio a lot, trying lots of different things, managing o.k. I'm really looking forward to doing another music piece because I haven't done one for ages, but it feels like I have too many balls in the air. It will be good to do the presentation in London about the millennium piece.

...

There is supposed to be another project in September now in Belfast which I've moved onto next September...that'll be something I have to develop. To do with waterways and docks and water, called Influence, mainly in the centre of Belfast. The Titanic Dock has the big drawing halls where they did engineering for the Titanic. I want to make a film for the Titanic Drawing Halls... I really like the sound of those drawing halls...the budget isn't great but with film I could work around it...

I am amazed by the scale that Mariele works on. She said: "With the big piece one thing I really enjoyed about that was that you had to circumnavigate physically which took quite a long time. So you have to spend quite a lot of time even just physically engaged with it. That has become an element of the piece."

Extracts regarding the new studio possibilities

M It's got windows on the wall at work level so you can see the trees, and in Spike there's no view, there's no way to ventilate ...It's driving me nuts because you can't ventilate it. I suppose I could put extraction in there. There is actually a resin room, but it's often very busy... So that space I'd be much more inclined to work in in a different way because I feel more comfortable already just standing in there. It'll be a really good move I think...It has better light, better air, better everything. It's considerably bigger...I can always walk there, cycle there... I'm being stingy with my time.

I asked what was stopping Mariele moving into it now, and it was because she was busy, and has a:

serious heap of stuff I need to move. I'm sub-letting it...They're happy for twelve months...I can either support them with some tubs of paint, or be there for a few days doing the walls...They can make it all nice, (laughter) It's perfect with them, and then they can possibly stay there in another studio...I'd like to just see that the rent is what they say it is. It is a bigger space and it would be quite a lot more rent...but worth it I think.

Mariele trusts the developer:

We'll wait and see. So that's really exciting. I'm surprised at how keen I've got to move in there straight away. I didn't quite expect it to be that much of a different thing that it is, it will be really nice. It's a beautiful space, they've done a really good job.

Appendix 20

Mariele Neudecker, 8 April 2009, Walk Three

I picked Mariele up at her house, drove to Pensford, and we walked to Stanton Drew stone circle returning via the same route. We finished our last walk by having lunch in the pub at Pensford, and I dropped Mariele off at home. A windy sunny day, Mariele was winding down for a week, and was going with her family to Branscombe for Easter. We checked out the trees, looked at tree fungi, and estimated the height of a tree for a project. The stone circle has not directly influenced Mariele's work and I asked Mariele why she'd chosen to come here today. She replied:

Probably it's the closest spot you can come to where you feel you are out in the sticks, more than you do in Ashton Court or Leigh Woods. You rarely ever meet anybody here; I've only ever been here a couple of times.

The San Francisco project and the Millennium Bridge piece were finished. Mariele commented on the Bridge piece:

That was fun. It did break down a couple of times, I suppose one would have to expect it. It was a lot of work for the guy to organise it and maintain everything. It needed quite a lot of attention, but when it did work it worked really well.

Mariele was feeling pressured, she said:

I'm working on a mixture of differently paced projects, like the one I'm spending most of my meetings, emails with, just now, and for the last couple of months probably, on and off. It is something that happens in May next year which is mad, because in July there's an opening for something that isn't even decided what the piece is, that's sort of two outdoor pieces actually.

In the studio she was physically making work for a solo show in London at ROOM.¹ She observed:

I'm making things for that but knowing that I should be making my piece for Aldebrough as I'm still doing that residency for Aldebrough, so I'll be going up there in May and June for stretches... There's probably sort of five or six things going on and sometimes I'm unsure why the priority is furthest away at the moment. Perhaps it's because they need to go through English Heritage and various panels, and they're on the case.

Some things are much more relaxed and there's possibly something in September, and at Easter on standby. There might be something happening which would be a big nice opportunity to do something in Belfast so I'm feeling under pressure with not knowing a lot of things and actually feeling constantly that I should be doing something else.

1

http://www.roomartspace.co.uk/past_detail.php?eventID=145&eventType=exhibition&theartist=MARIELE%20NEUDECKER, (accessed 5 January 2009).

The piece Mariele was working on for the drawing halls in Belfast, “might not happen...To a point it’s nice to do something spontaneous and then there’s a point where it’s too late. So we’ll see.”²

For all the artists, the everyday activities and challenges that need resolving are part of their ongoing practices. Mariele told a story of getting to the San Francisco Art Gallery which was showing her piece, and realising that the whole floor needed reinforcing in order to take her installation:

David, the gallery owner, had done a really good job of covering the wooden floor with sheets and painting them, and the first thing I did was stomp on it and realised.

We also discussed age. Mariele had attended an exhibition opening by Glenn Brown in Liverpool. She revealed:

They were talking about it in the speeches, about it being his mid-career exhibition. They were talking about it being mid-career because of his age...I suppose late career is really only after sixty or something. You couldn’t possibly talk about late career really with Glenn, and it is an early big retrospective, it’s a massive massive show, it’s really surprising. So it’s worth saying that it is actually a mid-career thing.

² In my fact-checking discussion with Mariele on 26 January 2010, she noted that this project has now most likely disappeared because of the “credit crunch”.

Appendix 21

Mariele Neudecker, mentoring

Mariele and I discussed mentoring, co-mentoring and available advice. In walk one, I had asked Mariele if she used a-n or Axis for example?¹ Mariele had said no, as they were not relevant. She had commented: "In London there was no need to worry about it, because there was always this, can I ask you this, can I ask you that? Or there were magazines on the table, or books, or, it was just sort of a natural thing."

Extracts

Karen (K):

You said before, you'd never had a mentor as such?

Mariele (M):

No, in London, there would be people I'd talk to about work more. Mentor seems to imply that someone is more knowledgeable than you. It is not always necessary to talk to somebody who knows more, they just know other things.

K That's co-mentoring! (laughter)...Do you think that's something you'd like more of or will you just find it when you need it?

M There's always phonecalls to my old friends in London. It's very different if you actually hang about each others studios a bit more. There's absolutely none of that going on in Spike at the moment. Certainly not in my area...I don't talk to anyone about work in Spike, nobody does, it's odd. That's what I miss from London, it was much more normal to just talk about what you are doing...Spike does have an associate scheme; however you are not automatically an associate when you have a space at Spike.

K It's quite hard, isn't it, because I suppose if it's not a structured time when you know it's there, like with FORMAT you know you can make it or you can't. If you don't have that structured time, how do you? Unless you hang out in a café together or something.

M Well, no in London it was much more unstructured. Certainly I felt much more relaxed about it; just occupying the same studios you talk a bit more.

K And do you prefer that way, Mariele?

M Well, I think my attitude has changed probably since I got family, I'm in the studio with different time pressures. I have a different timetable, I know I leave the studio at half five at the latest. It was never like that in London I could just work until really late.

¹ AXIS and a-n are discussed in Appendix 1.

- K If you could pick your own mentor, would you go for that? Or would you rather do it more ad hocly?
- M That's an interesting question. I don't know, I'd have to think about it in quite specific terms. I think I need to find my own little handful of advisors for the music project, for example. That will be interesting to talk to people I know and people I don't know. Even on Monday I found out a couple of things about certain software and bits and pieces that will feed into the process in one way or another.
- K That was talking with the editor?
- M Yes, the sound guy. He's just got the right knowledge about sound editing options.
- K So they're like everyday mentors – they are people you need to talk to, you're making knowledge as you go on.
- M Yes. It's quite interesting, at the moment there are two model makers, (one is an artist at Spike), and they collaboratively lead this company and they make a lot of work for Daphne, for me, and for artists and they've got to this point where they've reached a certain level and are onto the next level of really pushing the business side of things. They're getting this mentoring or business advice. It's quite interesting, not on any creative or artistic level, it's just pure business advice. There was a point where we were all going round the table saying "I need some of that, can't we have some?!" People are inevitably worried about the financial-side whole situation, but you're talking about the more philosophical side?
- K Yes I suppose I am, or the kind of need that you identified that you miss from London.
- M It has to be a continuous conversation with certain people, somebody that will challenge what you do, or think. It's partly sort of an inherent likeness everywhere as well. I feel that if you go to Germany or America, or anywhere, like Japan, people are more curious about things and straightforward with questions. Maybe much more curious is not fair, but there's a reluctance to criticism here. You get it in reviews maybe, but you can always brush them away and say "oh stupid review!"
- K Reviews are also very selective, aren't they? The thing about mentoring is you only get one person's opinion; they have a consistent time with you. A timeframe that you've set up and what you've discussed you are going to do or want to do.

We discussed ArtsMatrix' past mentoring scheme. In this scheme, artists could apply for what they felt they needed, so for example, some people wanted marketing advice on furniture making, and others wanted more critical discourse on their actual practice.

That seemed to be very successful, but the question arises, how do you know who is good as a mentor if you don't know who is out there, if someone picks one for you?

M: It's a bit like picking a writer for an essay in a catalogue, it's really really important. It probably ends up a bit like a mentoring relationship anyway; it's really been very useful to have some of these essays written where you see a completely different perspective on it all. It has often been a suggestion from various people and then I choose one... There's always new writers out there that you don't know but you probably should know, but I'd say that can be really helpful to have a really good essay written, that's almost as useful as having that conversation, because usually you've received their essay writing anyway. If somebody has got a really good academic head on and a particular angle of interest and you have a good conversation with them in order to write that essay, that's really useful because, well, it just is.

...

It's always interesting to meet people who are really specialised in one thing, it almost doesn't matter what they do. It helps if they are related in some ways to what you do. I'd say if somebody is really good at what they do, it probably doesn't matter what they do. It's just really interesting to meet them and hear them, and pick their brains.

The above conversation in walk two led to a further discussion regarding teaching and lecturing following on from our discussion in walk one: Mariele observed that herself and a colleague had been "having a moan about teaching and exhausting ourselves teaching... it was like 'Where's my tutorial? I want one!' You're constantly mentoring them (students)." Mariele thought "it's one to one conversations really that I'm lacking."

K I'm interested in whether you try and speak through your practice and whether words are secondary to it, or are you able to adequately convey in words?

M It's a tricky one. I'm involved in so many different types of projects. I'd say with some of the commissioned pieces I probably talk about them less and don't want to talk about them more. There's a core body of work that feels like it's more my work and more the sort of stuff I'd write about or read about or talk about, and then there's the fringes of commissioned work that helps with the money, which at times takes over too much of my time I think and I lose the plot a bit with the core work. That can be a dilemma but I'm usually always up for talking about my work and I'm never really put off by being asked to talk.

...

You're obviously always developing work, and there's always bits you couldn't possibly talk about yet. It's a delayed knowledge that

you maybe acquire, that you get a bit more articulate about putting it all into words. What I find quite difficult sometimes, when you're teaching and you're confronted with a whole range of very different things that someone else has obviously thought about a lot and hasn't talked about a lot yet, but you have to sort of mentor them, and think about it ad hoc. Sometimes that's quite tough to contextualise it for them, and all that stuff. We try to train them to do it themselves really.

K Alternatively, by talking you're actually advancing what you're thinking about doing onwards. By chatting with someone it often moves it on a little bit.

M It is really helpful to have a conversation with somebody that's ongoing where you easily can talk your mind, with them knowing enough to understand the context and why you're saying certain things.

K And pick up where you left off...

M That would be the best mentoring thing really.

K And do you think it has to be someone who comes from an arts world?

M Probably yes, it depends, but probably yes I think.

Appendix 22

Helen Poynor

“Non-stylised movement practice” and “Scores”

Helen describes non-stylised movement practice in her MA Thesis as:

a process-orientated, rather than style-based approach to movement. It is not prescriptive and is concerned with movement unfolding over time, a journey which is different for each individual reflecting the uniqueness of their body and personal history: *Non-stylised* indicates that the work lies outside the parameters of prescribed dance forms. It is inclusive of all potential movements, there are no steps or sequences, no pre-set vocabulary. The work is based on the structure of the body and evolves out of simple movement tasks which serve as a springboard into movement.

A "score" is the structure which Helen gives to participants as:

a starting point, a focus or a direction, which supports them and gives them something to fall back on if they feel confused or stuck...the scores are created in response to a particular place and support different aspects of movement practice, for example being able to put one's feet clearly on the earth or a sense of grounding in the whole body.¹

In our second walk, Helen described scoring and the Halprin RSVP cycle in more detail:

The RSVP cycle is cyclical, and stands for

Resources

Score

Valuation

and Performance

Helen observed:

You don't have to do them in that order [RSVP]; that's one of the things that is important. People give scores in different ways. Most of what I present to people is in the form of scores. I don't articulate that verbally, but if I'm giving people a task, I give them scores.

The scores I give are either verbal but I've written them beforehand to clarify them, or they are written with very simple graphics. On "Dancers on Site" which I'm not running this year, where I've specifically been teaching the RSVP cycle, and giving that as a tool towards environmental performance, I make a point of presenting the scores in graphic and written form because I'm also training people in

¹ Helen Poynor, Women – Body – Movement: Non-stylised movement practice as a process of personal development, empowerment and expression for women. MA Thesis, University of Bristol Department of Drama, November 1998, p. 3 and p. 40.

how to write them. But basically you can think of them as a map, as a set of instructions, as documentation.

Some of the teaching that I'm doing is ongoing where I might give participants a task through a simple score, but then I continue to give them input. From Anna's [Halprin] point of view she would say that you are continually scoring. I don't think of that as continual scoring, I see that as feeding into the practice. I wouldn't call that a score.

When we're working outside, I always give a score; because what I'm doing is giving people something and saying go off and do this in your own way. Then the score has to be sufficient for people to work with without any further input from me... I'm not going to interrupt their work.

What the scores are designed to do is to support the people to engage kinaesthetically with the environments that they are in. But the other thing that supports people to do that apart from having done some indoor work beforehand, is the environment itself. So the environment itself becomes the partner and the teacher and the score is like the holding vessel.

...

It's much more for me a question of a process evolving. Sometimes I'll start a score with a particular intention in terms of why I think I'm doing it, then when I see what's happening in the room it gets steered a slightly different direction by the input I'm giving. That is experience but it's not at all a recipe, there's nothing that can be written down about "this is what you do". There's a sense that everything that I'm doing is about movement, not just about physical movement, but about what's moving in the space. It could be a change of atmosphere in the room...I do have a sense of something else that then comes out of the decisions that I make, if I'm quiet enough internally to let those decisions come to the surface.

Appendix 23

Extract from Helen Poynor MA Thesis

Extract from Helen Poynor, Women – Body – Movement: Non-stylised movement practice as a process of personal development, empowerment and expression for women. MA Thesis, University of Bristol Department of Drama, November 1998, Appendix 4.

In Appendix 22, Helen described her approach (which was extracted from a previous statement she had made in 1995) as follows:

My approach is based on forming a relationship with the land and the sites in which I am working, endeavouring to find, through movement, stillness and voice, physical responses to the challenges presented by different terrains and conditions. Moving on hills and in valleys, on cliffs, moors and mountains and in ancient sites. Responding to rock, earth and ocean in wind, rain and sun. Working with respect, learning the body with the land and the land with the body. Looking, listening, sitting, walking, lying, crawling, running, waiting, singing, creating. Seeking to meet the physical reality of the land with the physicality of my body, bone to bone, muscle to muscle, nerve-ending to nerve-ending in a mutual exchange. Each element of the land teaches different skills and elicits different qualities of movement. Each location has its own atmosphere which may change in different weathers or different times of day. I seek out ways of entering, places of stillness, pathways of movement. Exploring the relationship between the form, scale and direction of the place and of my body and movement.

In performance this translates into a particular approach and quality of work. The landscape is seen as a partner or protagonist in the piece rather than as a backdrop for the action. The performers are not the sole focus of attention. The work emerges out of the place, as a response to it and to the images and associations it evokes, there is no sense of 'using' the land or of imposing on it. Technical requirements are kept to a minimum. Part of the intention is to honour the place, to bring the landscape into sharper relief, inviting the audience to see and experience it in a new way, and to glimpse a different perception of our relationship to it.

Appendix 24

Helen Poynor, 10 July 2008, Walk One

The three influences on Helen's practice

Helen trained with Anna Halprin and colleagues at San Francisco Dancer's workshop and the Tamalpa Institute (1980-1981). Specifically influential to Helen's practice is the Halprin Life / Art Process; the RSVP cycle developed in collaboration by Anna Halprin and her architect husband Lawrence Halprin, and Anna's work in natural environments. Between 1985 and 1992, Helen also trained with Suprpto Suryodarmo from Central Java who developed Amerta Movement practice. Particularly influential is Suprpto's understanding of the human being in motion and his work in nature. Both Halprin and Suryodarmo influenced "the evolution" of Helen's movement work. Helen observed: "Both have a highly developed understanding of movement as life-process and both work extensively in natural environments." Helen describes Gerda Boyesen's work at the Boyesen Institute for Bio-dynamic psychology in London where Helen studied 1978 – 1982 as "a lesser influence" but influential nonetheless because of "the way of seeing the subtlety of bodies and understanding of how personal emotional history is carried in the structure of the body."¹

Helen Poynor, 10 July 2008, Walk One

Helen described her experience of a piece of movement which took place in the context of a group at a Sumarah workshop:

I've worked with movement and personal story, autobiographical work, the life / art practice that is fundamental to Halprin's work. I'm trained in Suprpto's work and yet I have never worked on a level that I worked on that day. I've worked with emotional material that has been very hard to handle, I've made work from it consciously or unconsciously. I've made pieces about stuff that I haven't been able to talk about...but this was different...it wasn't a performance and I was really clear that I wanted to not go into performance mode at all. I think what was different about it was the fineness of the connection between the feeling in my body. The subtlety of it was of an order which I'd never conceived of or never touched, experienced...it was like if I really listened, that's my practice anyway in movement, but it was *finer*, so I could feel the possible routes the very dramatic route, the very emotional route...*but* I could feel it was a different order. I can't really can't say it in language, it was so fine tuned.

As I attempted to move with the grief...it was non-negotiable. I could have avoided it; I could have escaped it; I could have crafted it; I could have *not* crafted it but have done my normal following the body; I could have acted it out; but it wasn't that; and it was a complete gift. So it was a pivotal moment for moving my movement practice on.

¹ The information detailed is from Helen Poynor, Women – Body – Movement, November 1998, p. 4.

I brought it to the...group because I needed to personally. Afterwards I thought there's something in this artistically... This situation could be clearly seen as professional development but it was not intended as such.

Extract relating to the idea of "power"

Helen discussed the idea of "power"

I think if I'm really honest, there are issues about power. A lot of it is well meaning...but if you look at collaborative or feminist models of practice, they're very different from mainstream models of practice, and although I don't often publicly identify my practice as feminist, it permeates the way I work... So I'm rather shocked when that isn't the norm, a feminist or collaborative model of practice looks at facilitation, looks about growing what *is*.

Helen used a community dance forum that she had worked on in Australia as an example:

Bringing in practitioners to facilitate – not an economic model, it was a model that reflected the principles of community dance practice. I think the principles that arts organisations are generally run on these days are *not* that sort of model, (I'm not talking about organisations that actually do the practice), and so the people running them even if they are well meaning, don't have a facilitative collaborative model, they have a hierarchical model which is based on power.

Appendix 25

Helen Poynor, 10 March 2009, Walk Two

Extract relating to Helen's response to the question of CPD "need".

Last week...as an example, I needed to update the B&B list for the Charmouth area, that's a lot of work. Anyone could have done that. I needed to confirm places on both two workshops. I need (and have not done) to be finalising the copy for the first year training programme, writing it up and sending it out. I need to be thinking creatively about the second year training programme, investigating it...That's for starters. I had to negotiate with my collaborator on the spring workshop because we hadn't confirmed her flights etc.

So what have I done? I've confirmed two workshops and done the B&B list, I haven't done anything on the training programme. This week I need to do the things on that list that I haven't done. Plus I need to prepare an article for publication. I'm going to teach in Coventry on Saturday.

It's too much, and none of it puts me in the right headspace to do my work. What I've realised is, the Walk of Life, that side of the admin, I mean the public programme – I was negotiating with the woman from Greece, who found me on the net and wanted to come and work with me, which was great but who was suddenly arriving for two weeks and wanted to work with me every day. Fantastic, lovely work, I'd never met her. I'm fine to do that, I love doing the individual work, but then the admin that I thought I was doing that week doesn't happen. Working with her was far more important than doing the admin because I'm doing my work. Somebody else phones up who's done the training programme with me who's studied movement ritual movement one with me privately and has arranged with Anna Halprin to go to the States to document movement rituals two three and four which have never been documented, and now Anna's using her as a stimulus to get together other people who have been living near her, working with her for years, who've been saying we want to document it. So she suddenly phones me up saying can I come and do three sessions with you next week? So suddenly I have all these individual sessions which *I love*. I don't have my own studio. So I'm suddenly using the hall every day. So that's when I suddenly realise that actually the public workshop programme could be administered by somebody else and I need the wherewithal to do that.

My study is an upstairs bedroom in our house, we can't have people coming into that. That doesn't work for my partner or for me. I need an office, I need a part time administrator, and I need help with the workshops. There is a notice in the brochure, it's not in the right place, I need to make it more prominent, but I haven't got the space for it. I need somebody who can help, saying I offer bursary places for help. Not having my own studio, it's a hell of a schlep loading the car up. I know it sounds like a complaint, it's more like, as a mid-career artist

this is what I need, not a lot of money being spent on infrastructure and organisation to set up fancy courses.

Helen observed:

I think that people who have salaried jobs for institutions and organisations need to understand the difference financially with the precariousness of artists even who are very established over time...I'm delighted to do what I'm doing; I'm totally delighted to be doing only my own work now. I feel returned to myself, absorbed in my work, but I'm living on peanuts, happily...

But if someone is going to ask you to do something whatever that is, and that somebody is representing an organisation that pays them a decent living wage – they have to pay a decent wage for time as well as expenses because it's no good them thinking they're doing the artist good, because that's not the point, and I do think that people who are on salary need educating about the reality of artists.

I'm not griping, I think part of what goes down is a self conscious cultural thing. I think people still begrudge artists the freedom of lifestyle and their freedom to do what they want to do and what makes their heart sing, and I think that begrudging gets expressed as thinking that we shouldn't expect to receive financial remuneration and I don't think that's o.k. I think culturally that needs to shift, and as a freelancer (not in my practice as a member of a University team) but as a freelancer when I've been working with Universities I have felt that I have had to educate them and have done successfully with University colleagues, less successfully with people that I've dealt with in publishing or in other funding bodies; that there's no reason why they should expect artists to be free, that they pay their staff a decent living wage to do. That cultural shift has not been made. I think that needs to be made very very clear.

Helen observed that organisations may try to “package” artists:

So what I need is support so that I can go on growing. That sense as I'm working without being so burdened by all the other stuff that I can't see the wood for the trees, or I can't feel my way through. That I don't know how things need to evolve because that for me is a very subtle and deep and personal knowing... I can't feel that if I'm working against the clock, if I'm overwhelmed, if I'm constantly at the computer. I can feel it when I'm out in the environment, I can feel it when I'm lying in the bath, but I need a lot of space, so to do this planning for the second year of the programme...and achieve the money, but actually more importantly to get it right I need that time and space to let it come through, and that's also why I tend not to be very enamoured with the idea of going to meetings or you've got to do this and that, because the space that those things take up, it's not a priority, it's not a growing space... It might grow things in terms of contacts. Some things do come out of meetings...

It felt like a risk for Helen to present her personal practice in an academic research presentation whilst working at the University of Plymouth:

I was really laying myself on the line, it was personal, a practitioner's view on the relationship between life and art....I'd shown my true colours perhaps for the first time and felt validated, and that together with the University research ratings, made me realise that my practice could be recognised in those settings if I dare risk it.

Appendix 26

**Karen Smith, reflection on Helen Poynor in
collaboration with Beate Stühm workshop 19–21
September 2008: “September Seas and Skies” at
Charmouth, Dorset**

This workshop comprised of movement and stillness work, and Sumarah Meditation (a Javanese form of meditation). We began on Friday evening with meditation in the Community Hall, Charmouth. Saturday morning consisted of movement with Helen in the School Hall at Charmouth School. The afternoon took place at Lower Eype Beach working with the rocks and feeling our way through a "score" given by Helen, this was followed by a return to the School for evening meditation then finish.

Sunday was as Saturday, except we began with meditation, then movement, led into by the meditation. Sunday afternoon took place on cliffs working on a different "score". We worked on Chardown Hill at StoneBarrow looking over to Golden Cap, with a 360 degree view, and carried out a personal salute to the four directions, earth and sky. This was followed by a return to Charmouth School for evening meditation then finish.

Some comments by Helen I felt were important with regard to her working practices with other people, and they are: "Be generous with what you have", "Be gentle on yourself".

Helen's work allows people to find their own path, it is non-stylised movement yet there is a direction, a structure to it, a "score". Helen observed: "At some level what I'm asking you is impossible." Helen creates a workshop space which feels solid and grounded, yet knowing and open, generous, yet with boundaries which are clearly set from an accumulation of experience of working with people.

It seems to me that Helen's workshop forms a "considered" sort of CPD led by the artist; it has a structure which is considered by Helen as an artist and given to the people who choose to come. The workshop I attended was a public workshop programme, and some of the participants also practised as artists (e.g. dancers, dance therapists) but not necessarily. Some were there for their "hobby", others to keep up with their body, and maintain a sense of being alive and being in an embodied practice. Some people were retired professionals (for example, in performance and dance). A diversity of people and approaches to dance were evident. Most people were not funded to be there, a few were. On the more intensive movement training which Helen runs there will be more people who possibly are funded to attend, or who take Helen's course as part of their own professional training.

Exploring and experimenting with a sense of body, with all the little fragments of body feeling and how those little pieces make up a whole and more, I had a sense of starting to feel parts of my body which were locked, unlocking out of particular movement stances, and being encouraged into unfixing and moving through a layering of stillness, stretch and release.

Helen needs to be outside for quite a lot of time, like I do. Her body/mind locks if it spends too long inside and for me, if I spend too much time inside, it is almost like I only have a mind, rather than a mind and a body. My body feels like it belongs outside. It is curious that writing aids thinking, and reflecting, and sometimes it is useful, necessary, to write down and refine thoughts, think whilst writing, as a partner to body movement. But, the very act of writing down, can disassociate the body, it becomes about the head. I write this from my own experience, especially given our email, computer culture of writing everything face forward, hands on a keyboard, staring at a bright screen. My own martial arts practice, long since neglected, used to start with a comment from my teacher: "listen behind you". How do you maintain your body,

(and your body may well be your tools for your craft, for your income, for your work) and narrate your body, tell your stories, tell your experiences, walk your life, if the predominantly acceptable way to do this, is in writing, and also possibly in a defined way which is deemed appropriate. How do you hold onto the embodied knowing? How do you hold onto the confidence to go your own way? It is not something one appears to be able to do lightly; my own "listening behind myself" had become forgotten.

Appendix 27

Phil Smith, 8 July 2008, Walk One

On our first walk, we passed the private burial area of the Hoares, and walked along the edge of the Hoares' estate. Phil commented, "basically a lot of what I tell you is a lot of old nonsense, and we reinvent our own history." Throughout walks one and two, our walking conversations were fragmented, necessary diversions such as landmarks, or discussion on our general direction, distracting our attention. Phil said later:

I would say there was more to it than this – I was constantly seeking for those affordances in the space we were passing through to find elements that might support or disrupt what we were saying to each other – and I was all the time thinking of how to make shapes from the overall walks – seeking for repetitions and patterns, so there was accident in what we came across, but not in what I seeking to address or ignore.

Phil related stories linked to his performance pieces – for example, as we were walking through foxgloves, Phil said:

We're very close up here to the church of St Nectan who had his head chopped off. I think I mentioned it in my performance. But the other part of the myth is that as he walked, and the blood fell from his head, foxgloves grew from each drop of blood.

At one point we rounded a corner and were astounded to see a peacock looking at himself in a road corner-mirror (see *Figure 7*). Later when I asked Phil what would be an appropriate image to use in my thesis, he said: "The peacock. It's fairly ironical, isn't it, of what we were doing."

We walked through Chudleigh, past the St John's ambulance office. Phil told a tale of the Knights Hospitaller, back to the crusades, past the funny owl, The Globe Public House. At one point we saw Lawrence Tower on top of the horizon, viewed Haldon Forest. We went past (and went in to investigate) a "Canine Hydrotherapy Centre", at the top of Hennock. Our walk moved from a peacock admiring its reflection to canine hydrotherapy. We found a well at Ladywell, we went past a holiday village, we could see Hay Tor. Finally we reached Bovey Tracey. We discussed wartime stories, Pembrokeshire ice cream tanks, our dads in preparation for war, Phil's stories of his family holidays, and serendipitous findings which happen in artistic practice that have a considered aim in mind – for example, Phil told a story of attempting to film at St Austell's claymines and not taking a map. The following extract is an example of the fragmentary speech which was part of our walk, which was part-tour guide, part performance:

I am sort of aware that I have to do an awful lot of time consuming work which I feel very ambivalent about, because there is a sense, we're just walking past a very ancient way here, the Port Way...

On working with Katie Etheridge and Anoushka Athique on the Mobile Machinoeki, Tales from the History Hut, and the Fabulous Walks

Last year [2007]...I got people together and I worked with Anoushka and with Katie, and that was three-pronged. We each created our own misguided tour, a performance walk which is kind of what we're

doing again this year, and we also did an equivalent to the Crab Walks, Rescued from the History Hut, and we might go near there, and then we did the Mobile Machinoeki which was a bit like how we were talking earlier about things curling back on themselves. At the beginning of the whole process what I was setting out to do with Sanjay really was a Mobile Machinoeki that we would carry with ourselves the resources to create that performance, and at the end of the Mobile Machinoeki that's what we did with Katie and Anoushka. So we walked and were dressed, we all had these red and white striped sticks, red and white striped camera case type things, but inside each camera case was a little world that we could open up and show, like a little set really, one was full of eyes and had a pair of binoculars in it. Another one Anoushka designed, she had a little landscape in there, with little silhouettes so you could place the Taj Mahal or the Eiffel Tower onto the Devon landscape. You could take it out and reimagine the Devon landscape.

Phil, thinking about the pending Fabulous Walks and working out how to do his walk, said: "This is going to be our big question, 'where the hell do we take people?'"

Phil had explained about his relationship to place, and his partnership with artists for Rescued from the History Hut:

The history hut was very important to us when we saw it. It was the ideal space. In the performance, Anoushka created a museum that I had on my back, and I wore it like a rucksack and then at times I would turn round and the other two would open it right up and it was like a little world, and they would take things out that would become used in the piece...

When we were walking Phil said:

So on a walk like this I might get an idea, for example, say with the peacock; "Why don't we do a thing while we get a load of peacocks and create a huge load of mirrors for them?" But I wouldn't know where to begin the physical process of doing that... I would really like to have more partnerships where people go "no don't just run off like an idiot, grabbing the first bit of mirror that you see" which is actually what I'd do, but say instead "There are 285 types of mirror you know and I think what you need is a 'lilllerrmmmm', and I've got a cutting tool here and actually if we shine these lights like this", and I go "How the hell do we get to shine them in the right way?", and they go "Don't worry I've done this lots of times", and you need that sort of skill.

Appendix 28

Phil Smith, 7 March 2009, Walk Two

We moved from the quiet of Baring Crescent where birds were singing to the St Michael of All Angels in Heavitree (the Yew tree from which Heavitree gets its name sits in the churchyard). We walked some of Exeter's Green circle route, which as Phil said: "suddenly it feels like you're in the middle of the countryside." We walked to Earl Richards Road North, where Exeter art college used to be and has now closed, and expressed some sadness. Here Phil told a story about being attacked by a dog in the dark whilst crossing the small park towards Exe country park (called Duck's Marsh).

We discussed the red mud and observed place, street and road names: Ide Lane, Barley Lane, Exwick, St Thomas. Whilst we were walking, we bumped into visual artist Tony Weaver who has a longstanding collaboration with Phil and with Wrights and Sites (for example, with the "misguide" books and currently with Phil's "Mythogeography" book). I asked Phil how he'd chosen the three St Michaels and the walk we did:

It was a stab in the dark! What's been very interesting this morning is we've walked places that have been other walks which is not perhaps surprising.

Phil commented afterwards: "I don't think I did 'choose' that - I think I started to notice that it was happening and fell in with it."

Extract relating to working practices

For Wrights & Sites Phil observed:

Basically people have got a lot of different things on ... So that's a waiting thing, people are re-orientating themselves to certain kinds of ideas, and don't have the time, or the times don't coincide, so we'll see whether that progresses... In the past what's interesting, the key operating principle has been that there's been some loose frame within which people make their own investigation. We do joint things, but even the joint things, everyone has their own terrain inside it. I think possibly the problem at the moment is that everyone doesn't have sufficient agreement on their own loose frame. And they're just disparate. In the past it hasn't mattered because we've had a clear enough objective, so with the misguide (the book), once the idea had been taken up, it was like "yes, that's a good idea, we'll make one of those", then it really was a matter of setting some deadlines, and it didn't matter if people were going at different speeds, because basically it got completed when the slowest person was finished, and then it was put together, and then we did the second book. Again we knew what we were doing and it was very clear. Now at the moment there are no agreed outcomes, so it's not possible. There's nothing to set a deadline for, so in a way, it's as long as a piece of string, the ideas could last forever! So I don't know, we'll see if something naturally or just accidentally emerges or whether at some point it will be necessary to put an artificial structure onto it and say "no we're going to have to make this or make that". It would take everyone to

agree, I think it's already being pointed out that there's no general acceptance of that, what is the right way.

Extract relating to Eugenio Barba reflection

When I did the research for the physical theatre assemblage module I went back and looked for the first time at a notebook that I kept during a workshop with Eugenio Barba in 1982 which had been literally sitting on the bookshelf (one or two bookshelves!) during that time. I don't think I'd ever looked at it, and I was absolutely amazed at what I found in there, at how detailed the notes were and how coherent they were, and he was obviously a very good teacher because it absolutely made sense and completely cohered with everything that I was reading both in his writings and in writings about him. It was obviously a very good workshop, a very clear workshop. I was also surprised, they weren't notes I'd taken in the heat of the moment so I think what I must have been doing was, at the end of the day, sitting down somewhere, and writing, perhaps from other notes, writing up this stuff, so that was immensely helpful, but it also took me back, I knew this stuff.

It pointed out that there were several things that I *knew* but I just assumed I'd sort of, I don't know how I thought I'd arrived at them. I'd used an element of his dramaturgy before in these kind of neo-symbolist pieces that I've made and I knew that I was using something in a way that I'd vaguely understood him in the way that he was doing it, but in the notes there was quite clearly a detailed understanding of that. I didn't really know where that had come from, so presumably that had come from a half remembered something from those workshops.

Extract regarding the Fabulous Walks

Well that piece that Nicola and myself made in Teign village with help from Katie and Fumiaki was very high pressure. In five days or something we put it together. It was high pressure in all sorts of different ways, like with two days to go I was ringing a farmer up to check it was alright to use his field. He'd been softened up by somebody, but still. We were using the allotments at the back of the village, just down the road, with permission, but we were slightly pushing what we were doing there. Some people were very very keen and incredibly helpful and others thought we were weirdos and really wanted to see the back of us. And there wasn't the time to do the community project kind of things where you go and hang out to chat to people to talk about what we were doing, there was that sort of pressure on it.

It went incredibly well. It was wonderful and people loved it and it was great to do it, but also the thing was it was part of a bigger, a wider thing, which I also semi didn't have much control over, or in some ways I relinquished, or didn't have time to have control over. So Anoushka and Rachel were doing Teignmouth, Katie and Fumiaki were doing on the edge of Teignmouth (Kingswell), and Simon and Chartwell were supposed to be doing Newton Abbot. But Chartwell fell ill on the first day, seriously ill, he's alright now, so apart from some strange communications to Chartwell in his hospital bed, Simon had to basically create it himself but having spent a day with Chartwell in a very odd place. It was a very good piece that they made, but again, I didn't see any of them before I actually saw them in performance, which wasn't good.

I think I could have helped some of it, and I never saw Fumiaki and Katie because I was in it. I was doing a bit of it, so there wasn't any time for them to take me on their thing and really show me what it was...I applied to do a new piece with Nicola, but perhaps what I should have done was apply to do a new piece with Nicola, Katie and Fumiaki.

I observed "it almost sounds like there's a thing there about finding something that you haven't yet got from that, having the walk that you didn't have." Phil said:

The other aspect was it was very rushed, a lot of people were involved. They (the funders) got a lot of bang for their buck: eight people's wages for a week and out of that they got four shows. What I was trying to do (in the funding bid) was to get money for less people for longer to develop it more, so in that sense they were getting two things made by the same people and perhaps that looked a lot less appealing to them.

(Phil observed afterwards: "This is unfounded speculation on my part!!")

Extract relating to mythogeography

It was a great day.¹ All sorts of useful stuff came out of it and lots of contacts and networking and new bits of stuff will happen as a result of it. It was great, and it might have been the right thing as well, the mythogeographical idea might work much better as a sort of provocation rather than a world theory that just gets in the way because we've got loads of those anyway...it's more interesting in that relationship as a provocation.

¹ Phil is referring to the Mythogeography Symposium at University of Plymouth, 4 October 2008, and to the boxed Mythogeography Manifesto that was created for each participant.

My feeling about the manifesto is very much that one should let people do the thing they can do, so I don't like going to people and saying can you make us a manifesto, and now I'm going to tell you the idea of how it supposed to be. So I didn't say anything about books or cards, or boxes, I just gave them this thing and just let them get on with it, otherwise it's an insult to start laying down the rules of how to get on with it. So I just gave them the text. In some ways perhaps it operated as a piece in itself than as the function that it was supposed to have in terms of the conference, but anyway, that's beside the point, what's more interesting is where we are at now. And I think that actually might have been for the better, because let's just say that that did put it forward as a very conventional type of manifesto and if four or five people had gone "ooh yeah I want to be part of the mythogeography club" then that might be a real dead end operation.

I observed "Or it might limit what you then can put under the name of it. At the moment what you've got is your thing, you can play with it, and people can't say 'that's not what we signed up to do'." Phil said:

Yes or "we're going to change the manifesto now..." Or rather than trying to reinforce it as a manifesto, at the conference, it's obviously a joke manifesto, it's obviously undermining itself, not a political manifesto, so it may well be that it was very good that it didn't get picked up in that kind of way. So anyway, the upshot is that I will push that as a series of provocations.

In a way, what I'm probably trying to do with mythogeography book, is bring a whole raft of work to an end and wave it off, so I don't have to keep rethinking this stuff anymore. After doing some work on two or three different papers, I came to a point where I was trying to theorise what mythogeography was, to locate it in some ways and to give it a depth. So for example, what is the role of myth in mythogeography? (one of the research seminars I'd done on it). I felt at the end of all that, that I'd got it. That the theory was all there, and it works, and it made sense, and I just thought right – I don't want to go on and on pestering people with papers, referencing it. It feels that if I can get the Triarchy book sorted, then that will be something to float it off into the sunset and let people get on with it.

Extract relating to loyalty

Phil discussed his partnership with Paul, the Artistic Director of TNT, the theatre company based in Germany.

I've known him since 1974 so that's 35 years. We've worked together, we set up our first attempt at a theatre company in 1977, so 32 years ago, and the present one we set up in 1980 so that's been going nearly 30 years.

Phil is also loyal to his artistic practice, respected colleagues and his students and to Roberta Mock. Phil observed: "She has been incredibly loyal to me, supporting me and getting me posts and work and always feeding me with ideas. I feel a corresponding loyalty to her."

Comments on not knowing

I think in that sense one has to cultivate a certain unpreparedness because otherwise you're spending your whole life being disappointed by things that don't happen.

On our second walk, I asked Phil about turning down interesting-sounding work in order to do existing work (for example, lecturing) or, in this case, more work on mythogeography:

This is the thing. It's partly perhaps why some of the people you talk to *can't* predict because part of them doesn't *want* to predict, and the moment that they can, when they're in the position to be able to predict, is the moment where they're going to lose interest and motivation... This artless kind of wandering, apparently aimless, certainly destination-less journey, that it's only by allowing it to be aimless that you realise the shape, that you realise the narrative. But if you try to force the narrative, if you've already set up what ever it is, if you've already written the book before it writes itself, or before you write it, then you're in the process of forcing material into the shape, and you literally lose the chance of allowing the sort of moment by moment leaps of imagination and decisions to form... So you will essentially reproduce somebody else's or a pre-existing shape that's what you'll do, rather than allowing the arbitrary elements to produce something which is for that thing.