

***Uncomfortable Encounters, Disruptive Pedagogies:
Critical Explorations at the Intersections of
Art, Research and Education Practices 2015-2016***

Increasing collaborations among artists and academics reflect a heightened interest in the overlapping fields of critical inquiry, creative practice and education. However practitioners in different fields can often find that they have different expectations, values and vocabularies regarding the fundamental nature and outcomes of their work in relation to practices of research, artistic creation and pedagogy. Collaborative work, by its very nature, provokes (both productive and limiting) tensions arising in the confluences of these forms of practice as well as critical questions about the art-research project as a whole.

Funded by a seed funding grant through the NCAD+UCD Creative Arts Critical Cultures Centre, this two-part project – comprised of a national workshop and a follow-on symposium – was conceived to explore some of these questions these from the perspectives of the researchers, artists and educators. It was our aim to contribute to

(1) a greater understanding of this community of practice in Ireland by

- cultivating shared understandings and vocabularies, and map the domains of praxis currently arising in Irish research universities, art colleges and studio/non-studio settings, in the contexts of collaborative and transdisciplinary work.
- drawing together an interdisciplinary, cross-sector network of practitioners and students to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, and stimulate new funding lines and development of new teaching, research and practice partnerships or projects.

(2) locating Irish practice internationally by:

- exploring particular examples of this type of work, a workshop in October will begin to map and articulate the contours of this field of practice in Ireland. This, in turn, informed the hosting a national symposium planned for December 2015.
- Given the unique particularities of the ways in which these practices have evolved domestically – the creative, intellectual and activist histories and circumstances shaping this emerging field – we felt much could be gained by clearly positioning Irish practices in relation to international paradigms and counterparts. The symposium extended participation in this discussion to a wider group of colleagues and students, towards locating Irish practice in the broader international context.

The field:

- We define the ‘intersection of art, research and education practices’ as involving multiple forms of collaboration and interaction. These include artists/researchers/educators working together on tangible projects; artists pursuing

PhD and research degrees; and any such practitioners working toward transforming essential elements of their practice through transgression of traditional disciplinary, institutional and/or sectoral boundaries.

- We recognise that many practitioners operate on the peripheries and in the margins of their respective fields; their work interrogating disciplinary and institutional conventions, paradigms, and the evaluative criteria that underpin the contexts in which they work. This presents challenges (sometimes uncomfortable, and often disruptive) in terms of positioning, developing and communicating such work within institutional and disciplinary settings.
- We believe that the confluences of these collaborations/interactions have galvanised an array of innovations in scholarship, teaching, arts practice and activism/community work. These include new forms of cultural production and social analysis; of knowledge and activist politics; and alternative methodologies and pedagogies arising from these explorations. These outcomes make visible exciting and mutually informing fields of professional practices, which deserve further critical exploration, mapping of terrain, and sharing of experience.

Project organisers included:

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create national development
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