

Introduction to Contemporary Art & Open Learning

Introduction

What is Contemporary Art & Open Learning?

This course will enable you to make your own contribution to opening access to and broadening participation in artistic learning; it will inspire you to support your peers by codifying and sharing artistic practices.

Art education today is porous and ubiquitous: it exists in a wide variety of formal and informal arts contexts and in can be found in many different cultures and societies. It takes many diverse organisational forms, traversing virtual communities, small artist-led initiatives, international biennials, art academies and artistic practices.

This course combines and practises a range of peer-based learning theories and theories of knowledge production. You will consider how to extend online open access into the types of 'Third Places' (Soja, 1996) frequently produced by artists (galleries, schools, studios, workshops, public sites, virtual environments....) by learning how to practise paragogics, a set of learning principles that offer a flexible framework for peer learning and knowledge production. The course is scaffolded to begin. It slowly removes this scaffold to enable peer-support for each other's learning, then, finally, requires you to lead teaching and feedback.

Four Sprints

The course is split into four Learning Sprints:

Sprints 1 & 2

Weeks 1-4

The first two sprints introduce you to D-I-T (do-it-together) and P2P (peer-to-peer) methods of artistic practice through responding to weekly class assignments. The class assignments are short and simple to engage with.

Your work for them forms the basis of critical discussion (critiques) each week on art-as-education and education-as-art. These crits will take place in your peer-support group ('Basho'), within which you will remain for the duration of the course.

The educational rationale and context of each of the sprint assignments is supported by this Open Educational Resource (OER). Most of the assignments are metacognitive: taking part in it them will teach you how to devise and run your own assignments. You will witness and experience what does, and does not, work in different learning environments and gain a sense of how different learners respond to artistic and educational stimuli.

This OER includes flipped learning resources in advance of the workshops which can be viewed online and supporting materials which scaffold your practice and your role as a supportive peer in your crits.

The OER is a learning tool that buys valuable time for staff

and students to devote ourselves to live workshop time. Using it routinely as part of our practice also means we can focus more of our attention on learning by participating in and reviewing live art assignments.

By the end of Sprint 2: you will have been given formative feedback by, and given formative feedback to, members of your small peer-support group ('basho').

Sprints 3 & 4

Weeks 6-9

Sprints 3 & 4 of the course involves working closely as part of a team (your Basho) to design then run a BarCamp, an open framework – or 'unconference' – for artistic learning.

A working prototype of your BarCamp will be put the test by your Basho before being presented at Week 10's BarCamp.

During this part of the course, we will investigate the open learning approaches of art institutions in Scotland as well as the BarCamp model for generating and distributing open toolkits.

Summative Assignments: BarCamp & Project Book

In the final part of the course, you will showcase own open toolkit as part of an art and open learning BarCamp in Week 10.

Your peer-group (Basho) and Basho tutor will support you to develop your Basho's BarCamp and your own individual open toolkit.

Other students on this course and their tutors will, additionally, form part of your Basho's audience during the event.

Your peers will also take part in reviewing and formatively feeding back on your contribution to this BarCamp.

Equally, you will support your own peer-group to develop your basho's project and will, additionally, form the audience for other basho in the course.

You will also take part in reviewing and formatively feeding back on other groups' contributions to this BarCamp.

Reference:

Soja, E. W. (1996). Thirdspace : Journeys To Los Angeles And Other Real-And-Imagined Places. Cambridge, Mass. Oxford, Blackwell.

Back to Open Learning Course Induction

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