



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Professor Neil Mulholland
ECA Postgraduate Director

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE



What was This Must be the Place?

- Orientation Programme
- *by* postgraduate students
- *for* postgraduate students



This project was funded by an Innovative Initiative Grant



Why This Must be the Place? #Paragogy (Internal Institutional Culture)

- continuing students are best placed to socialise freshers
- student-centric scale and pace to induction
- paragogy for transition (key to masters programme philosophy)
- 1:1 scale transitions experiment (non-representational)

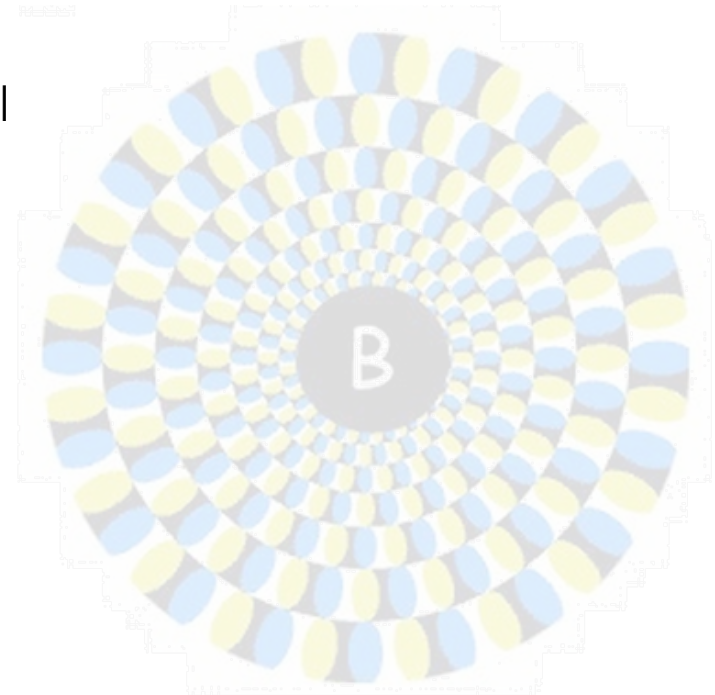




Why This Must be the Place?

#Generative (External Civic Culture)

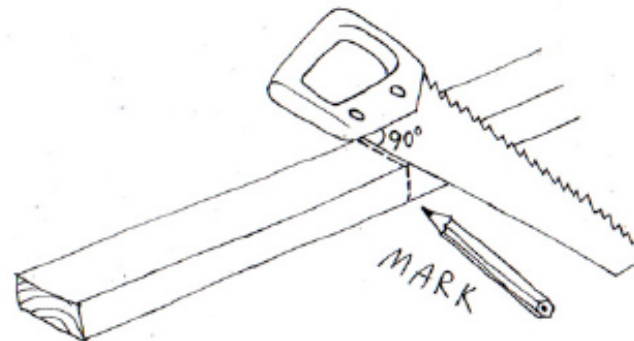
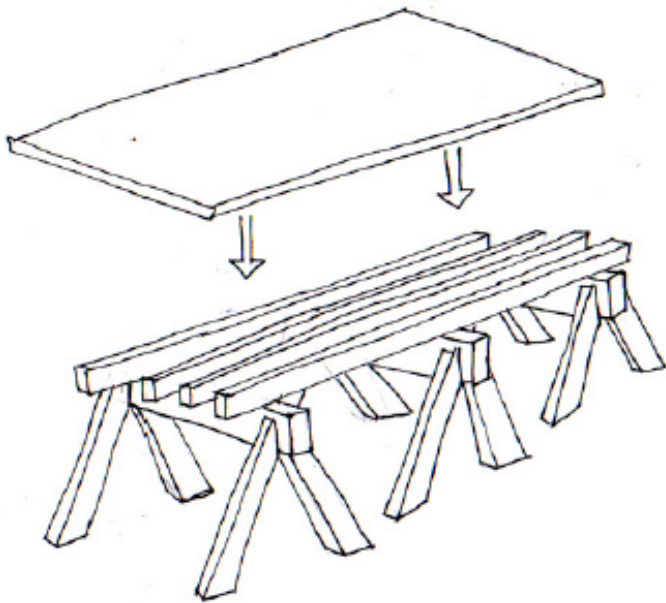
- continuing students are already place-makers & thus conduits to Scotland's (DIY) art world
- contemporary art is contingent on hosting and reciprocal exchange of resources
- immediate engagement with non-academic partners will benefit students in their chosen careers as artists, critics and curators





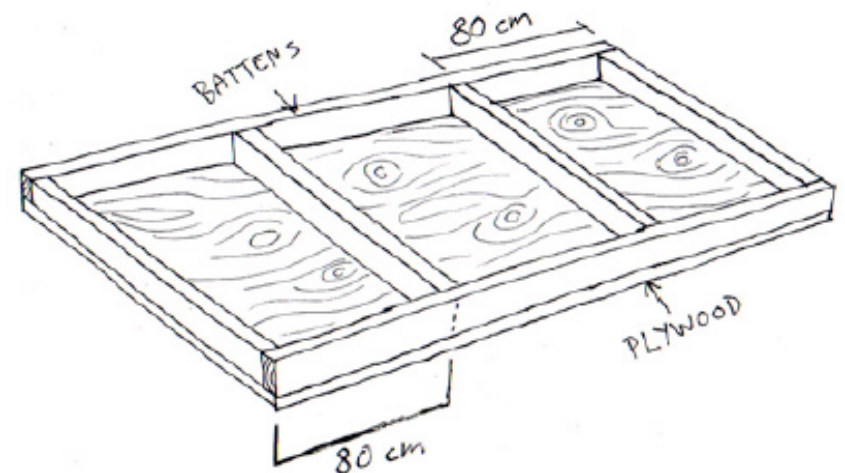
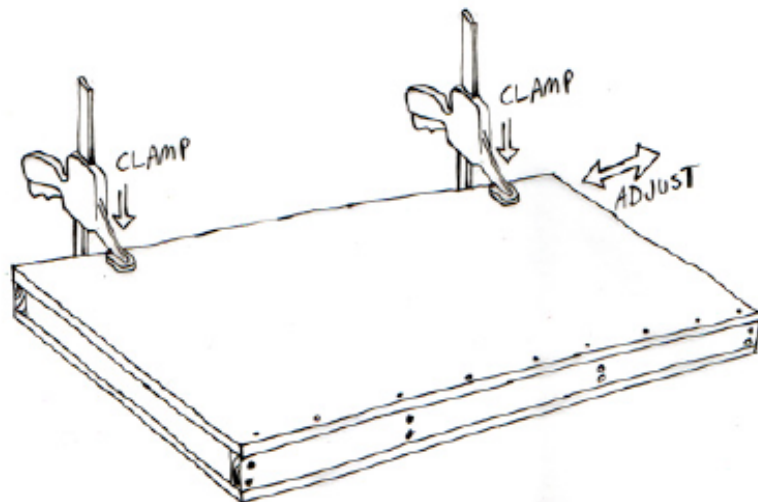
What happened?

- self-allocation of studios/space/resources
- establishing studio committees



What happened?

- learning to build studio spaces
- students purchased power tools, materials and organised health and safety
- students employed Berlin-based artist Tobias Sternberg to direct them





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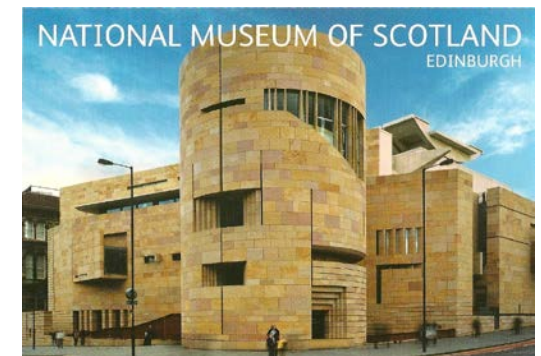
What happened?

- visits to key art organisations and partners in Edinburgh
- talks for the students, membership opportunities, etc.



COLLECTIVE

EMBASSY





What did not happen?

- no programme / course inductions
- no 'teaching'
- no assessment
- no feedback
- no technical assistance
- no learning outcomes





What did students learn?

- construction and fabrication
- negotiation and collaboration
- socialisation and hosting
- external and professional engagement
- double-loop learning ('meta-communication')
designing and constructing your own learning
environment radically transforms learning



What did staff learn?

- students have a very strong DIY ethic but relatively poor fabrication skills ('de-skilled')
- continuing students have variable engagement with professional domains (many benefited from re-induction as transition *out*)
- socialisation and hosting triumph over individual jockeying for space, resources and personal attention





What did staff learn?

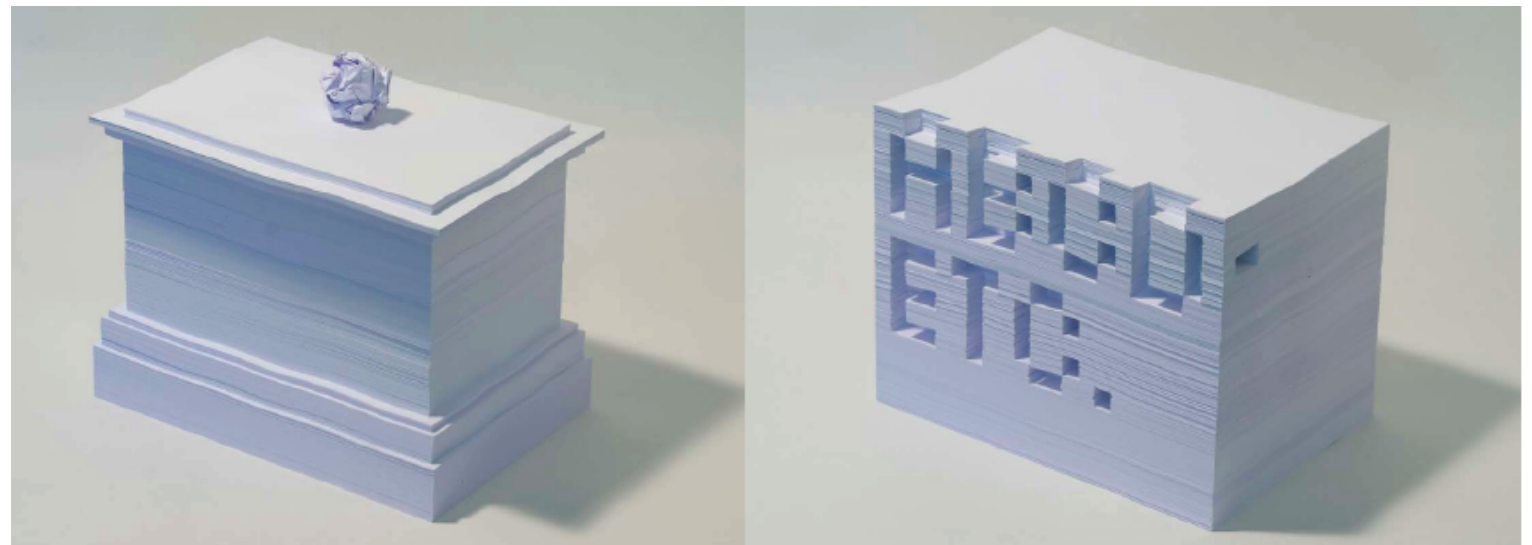
- institutional memory in postgraduate studies is goldfish-like; external social and economic networks must be nurtured by staff.
- students do not read Orientation Documents. Transition is 'live'; 1:1 scale, *it can't be represented.*
- participation is ludic. Play is socially productive. Allows students to test out transitions and observe themselves doing so.
- student design and construction of the learning environment shifts attention from teaching to learning





What did we retain?

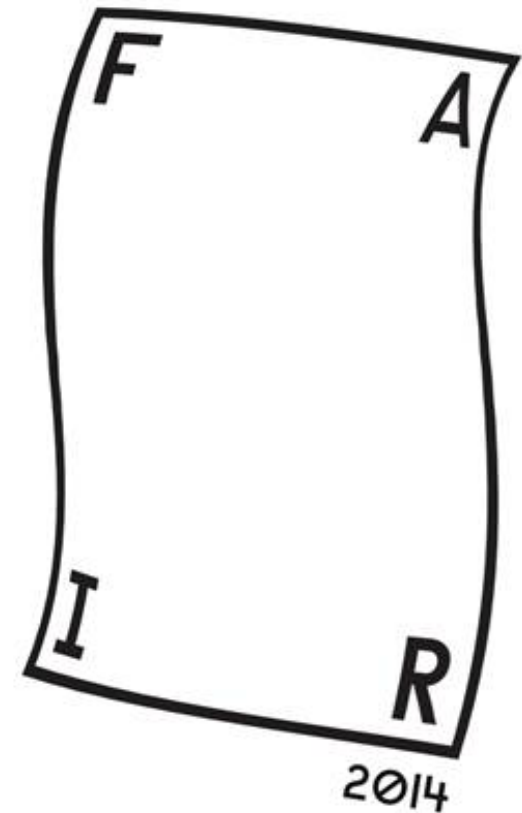
- the studios that survived to the end of the year were built professionally by University Estates (places rather than spaces)
- the visits programme
- the self-allocation of studios
- emphasis on 1:1 scale learning and transitioning





What did we develop?

- students ran a number of paragogical projects that facilitated further transitions, e.g.:
 - annual international art **FAIR** for masters students
 - transitional, temporary curricula (e.g. *shadowing* Collective Gallery)
 - ludic participation (workshops, project spaces, 'magic circles')



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www.neilmulholland.co.uk

NEIL



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