

# **(In)Significant Conversation**

**Wednesday 14 July 2021, 15:00-16:30 BST**

**A provocation event curated by the Material:Pedagogy:Future research group of inter-institutional research into the future of HE Art education.**

At this online event Gilane Tawadros, Chief Executive of DACS and founding Director of the Institute of International Visual Arts (Iniva), will share her response to a series of conversations which critically appraise current pedagogical practices and speculate on relationships to art making, art works, societies and cultures more broadly.

Gilane will be reflecting on closed conversations held with Prof. Magnus Quaife (University of the Arts, Helsinki), Ana Laura Lopez de la Torre (Universidad de la República, Uruguay), Dr Gurnam Singh (Coventry University) and their respective invited guests, focused around the question:

*Post pandemic, how can we imagine, critique, and challenge conceptions of art in the future without confronting the hierarchies, systems, structures, and relations which form its present?*

Taking the grammatical function of brackets as a metaphor for the art school within the 'art world' and society more widely; looking to the minority within the majority; to the 'folds' within the institution in which transgressive practices and dialogues challenge the broader status quo, this event seeks to coalesce plural discourses around institutional change. Gilane's external position to the 'art school' enables her to reflect on these conversations from outside of the debate, and to bring them back into significant conversation.

**To find out more about the event and register please visit Eventbrite:**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/insignificant-conversation-tickets-159827557527>

## **Guest Speakers**

**Ana Laura López de la Torre** is an artist, writer and educator based in Montevideo. Her practice is community-based and involves collaborations with artists, community organisations and people from all walks of life, gathered around the protection of the commons. After training as a woodcarver she transited somehow accidentally towards conceptual art, seeking a happier marriage between art and political compromise. She studied at the University of the Arts, London, the city where she lived and worked from 1996 to 2012. She is Head Professor at the Universidad de la República, Uruguay and works on several collective long-term projects that blend art, community organising and learning in neighbourhood settings across Montevideo.

<https://www.facebook.com/TallerLopezdelaTorre>

**Rosalie Schweiker** is a conceptual artist based in London, who uses social exchanges such as conversations, economic transactions and jokes to find new functions for art in society. She studied at Dartington College of Arts and Camberwell College of Arts and teaches at art colleges in the UK and abroad. Recently she was the first Art in Industry resident artist, working at the McVitie's factory in Harlesden. Her work is mostly self-funded and realised in collaborations which are often based on long-term friendships that defy common notions of individualistic authorship. Rosalie also reads Tarot cards for 5 Pounds a session.

<http://rosalieschweiker.info/>

**Taniel Morales** is a visual artist with training in mathematics and music. His art practice combines dance, performance, radio activism and social actions in both urban and rural contexts. As an educator he works in Higher Education institutions and developing social practice programs at community cultural centres El Faro de Oriente, La Central del Pueblo and CICO.

<https://www.facebook.com/taniel.morales>

**Anna Colin** is an independent curator, educator and researcher based in Kent. Alongside her freelance activities, which straddle the curatorial and the pedagogical and increasingly engage the natural environment, Anna was a co-founder and director of Open School East, an independent art school and community space in Margate (2013-2020). Currently she is completing a PhD at the University of Nottingham researching the notion of alternative in multi-public educational organisations from the late 19th century to the present.

<http://annacolin.co.uk>

**Dr Gurnam Singh** is currently Associate Professor of Educational Attainment at Coventry University. He also holds posts as Honorary Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick, Visiting Professor of Social Work at the University of Chester and Visiting Fellow in Race and Education at the University of Arts, London. Before entering academia in 1993, Dr Singh worked as a professional social worker and community activist. He completed a PhD in Sociology from the University of Warwick in 2004. In 2009 he was awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) from the UK Higher Education Academy and in 2018 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts (FRSA). Over the past 25 years, Dr Singh has published 4 books and 40 book chapters and peer-review journal articles, given 200 conference papers and written numerous blogs and newspaper articles. The main focus of his scholarship and activism is on social justice, social work and higher education. He is recognised as an expert on anti-racism, education and inclusion. He has worked with several bodies, such as the UUK, OfS, HEA, LFHE, WONKHE and HEERAG and numerous universities, to develop understanding and strategies for addressing ongoing concerns about racism and higher education. Along with his work in the HE sector, Gurnam has a significant media profile and he currently presents a weekly live discussion show on Akaal Channel UK focussing on social issues. He writes a regular column for Malaysia based international online newspaper, Asia Samachar.

**Dr Luca Morini** is a Research Associate at the Centre for Global Learning Education and Attainment at Coventry University. He holds a Master's Degree in Psychology and a Doctorate in Education and Communication, obtained researching the social, cultural and pedagogical dynamics which occur in Do-It-Yourself amateur game design communities.

In recent years he worked on research projects pertaining to game- and play-based learning and cultures, among which BEACONING and Crowds4Roads H2020 Projects, looking into ways to sustainably and ethically implement seamless game-based learning on a European Union scale, and GameChangers and CreativeCulture, trying to embed game design thinking and practices in everyday pedagogies.

His main areas of interest are participatory cultures (especially game cultures), critical pedagogy, and systems thinking. He has experience in qualitative research methodologies, particularly in participatory research and ethnography, seamlessly transversing online and offline spaces.

Luca has a record of publications, including peer reviewed journals, conference papers and book chapters, which touch on the diverse themes of digital and critical pedagogy, game design, human ecology, and research methodology.

**Magnus Quaife** is Professor of Fine Art Pedagogy at KuvA, UNIARTS, Helsinki where his research focuses on the role of the artist as educator within art schools. He previously worked at Manchester School of Art for over 15 years and taught at all levels from Foundation to PhD, and he has taught at art schools internationally. He is a founding director of the organisation Teaching Painting. His practice has been described as that of a conceptual artist interested in paint and an archaeology of the modern and contemporary. Quaife studied at Chelsea College of Art and Design and Manchester School of Art. He is represented by Workplace Foundation Newcastle.

**Jaana Erkkilä-Hill** is the Vice Rector for Research at the University of the Arts Helsinki. She also holds a Professorship in Fine Art at the University of Lapland. She graduated with Master of Fine Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts Helsinki and a Doctor of Arts from Aalto University. Her research interests lie in the field of artistic thinking and artist pedagogy. In addition to her academic career she is active as an artist. Her work is held in several public and private collections.

**Annie Davey** is an artist researcher and teacher at UCL Institute of Education. Her work is centred around the sociology, philosophy and fantasies of art education. She is completing a PhD that examines the legacies of fine art education formed under the welfare state within the contemporary 'neoliberal' university, and the ways in which historical models of the artist haunt, are mobilised and persist through pedagogy, marketing and the 'educational turn' in curating.

**Material:Pedagogy:Future (MPF)**

The *Material:Pedagogy:Future* research network comprises colleagues at Bath School of Art, Bath Spa University; Kingston School of Art, Kingston University London; and Chelsea College of Arts, UAL.

Through inter-institutional dialogue and collaboration, we seek to establish an international network of transdisciplinary, practice-based researchers dedicated to querying our positions and agencies as artist-teachers in contributing to the form and context of the contemporary art of tomorrow. By examining the hierarchies, systems, and relations which form its present, we will engage in practice and theory based research to critique and develop greater understanding around the function of the art school in relation to broader social, cultural and economic ecosystems.

By establishing a network of researchers across multiple institutions, we hope to enable discussions to emerge from a space in-between our respective institutional contexts, and in which we are enabled to navigate new art-based methodologies for teaching-as-practice and practice-as-research that could exist in a speculative alternative.

**Co-partners/leads:**

Jo Addison: Senior Lecturer, Kingston School of Art, Kingston University London

JJ Chan: Senior Lecturer, Kingston School of Art, Kingston University London

Jenny Dunseath: Senior Lecturer and Reader, Bath School of Art, Bath Spa University

Dr Katrine Hjelde: Senior Lecturer, Chelsea College of Arts, UAL

Dr Natasha Kidd: Senior Lecturer, Bath School of Art, Bath Spa University

Hannah Kate Sackett: Writer-in-residence

Kate Squires: Visiting Lecturer, Bath School of Art, Bath Spa University;  
Artist-in-residence

Dr Lauren Faro: Research Assistant

Dr Astrid Breel: Impact Research Fellow BSU