

Research as Practice: Interdisciplinary study day

Building on the strength of our interdisciplinary speakers programme the Programme of Fine Art, Film and Digital Art and Photography at Farnham invite you to join us for our 21/22 online Research as Practice: Interdisciplinary study day on December 1st 2021. The event includes 4 panels hosted by UCA staff in which a range of questions around contemporary research are raised. We encourage you to join us in person in RG21 in the Farnham campus for a prompt 11AM start or via Zoom on: <https://uca.zoom.us/j/91923263145> (This space will be active from 10.30)

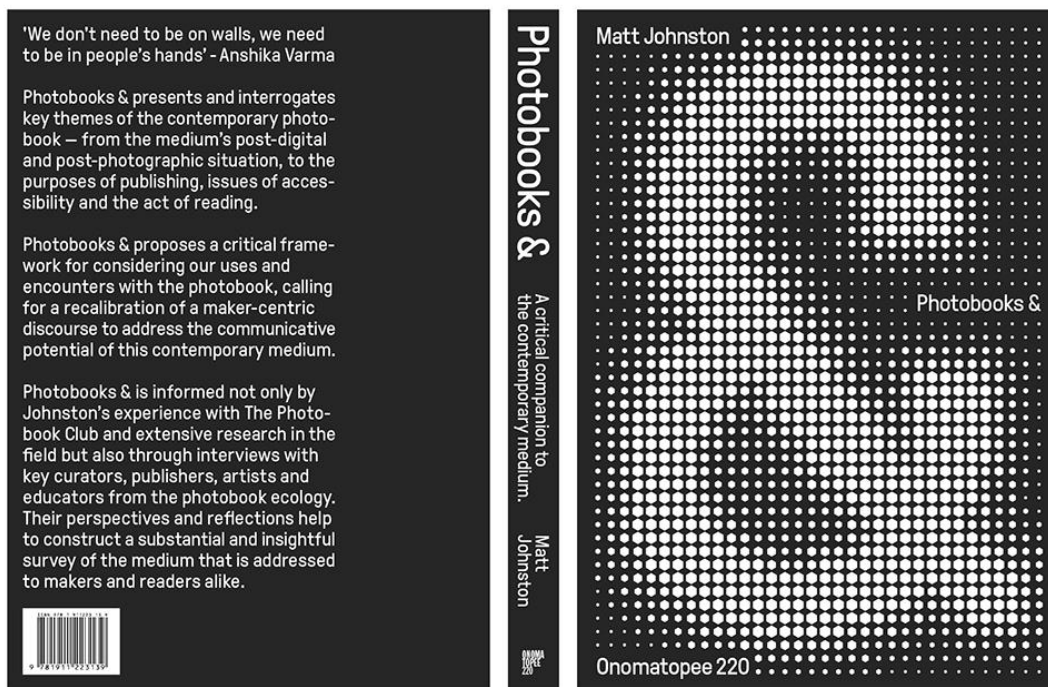


Figure 1: Book cover of *Photobooks & a critical companion to contemporary medium* © Matt Johnston

There will be a publication that captures the essence of this event which will be downloadable via *bookRoom* in early 2022.

Dr Caroline Molloy

Programme director Fine Art, Digital Art and Photography



Figure 2



Figure 3

Figure 2: Logo of the 'Gesundheitstag', an annual political and activist gathering about the topic of (alternative) health in Germany in the 1980s, designed by Berlin-based creative agency Sehstern. (Nora Heidorn) Figure 3: © Mocksim

Schedule and timings

(these times are approximate and factor in space for comfort breaks)

11 Introduction

Caroline Molloy (UCA)

11.05 Panel 1: *Curating Inclination: Vulnerability, Care, and Resistance*

Nora Heidorn hosted by Minna Pöllänen (UCA)

11.50 Panel 2: *Artificial Stupidity*

Mocksim hosted by Jeremiah Ambrose (UCA)

Lunch break 12.45 – 1.45

1.45 Panel 3: *On and off the page*

Amanda Couch, Matt Johnston and Emma Lambert
hosted by Emmanuelle Waeckerlé (UCA)

3 Panel 4: *Putting Ourselves in the Picture*

Aida Silvestri hosted by Anna Fox (UCA)

3.45 Closing comments

Grieg Burgyone (UCA)



Figure 4 © Amanda Couch

Further information about the panels

Panel 1: *Curating Inclination: Vulnerability, Care, and Resistance*

Nora Heidorn hosted by Minna Pöllänen (UCA)

In this panel, Nora Heidorn will critically engage with the standard enlightenment representation of the human body as singular, upright, able-bodied and male, gazing forward. Starting from a subjective and partial selection of contemporary artworks and research images, Heidorn's current curatorial project wants to pay caring attention to images of reclined bodies. Being horizontal, and especially being looked at and imaged in positions of recline, is often associated with feminised and/or racialised powerlessness.

Panel 2: *Artificial Stupidity*

Mocksim hosted by Jeremiah Ambrose (UCA)

Artificial Intelligence is given much attention but, as it happens, there isn't even a consistent definition of intelligence. Who's to say that intelligent systems are not stupid? This talk will be an interrogation of the different potential uses of an invented term, Artificial Stupidity, with a view to exploring how these definitions are linked.

Suggested reading:

Steyerl, H. and Crawford, K., 2017. Stupid AI and the value of comradeship - e-flux conversations. Available at: <<https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/hito-steyerl-and-kate-crawford-on-stupid-ai-and-the-value-of-comradeship/5957>> [Accessed 29 May 2021].



Figure 5 © Emma Lambert

Panel 3: *On and off the page with bookRoom*

Amanda Couch, Matt Johnston and Emma Lambert
hosted by Emmanuelle Waeckerlé

The three short presentations will focus on individual, collective and performative strategies of making and making public of on the page works. Since the 1950s experimental publishing, artist's books and photobooks have increasingly become part of artistic and photographic practices. *bookRoom* is a platform for multidisciplinary and collaborative modes of inquiry around the photobook and the artist's book within the [School of fine Art and Photography](#) at [UCA](#) Farnham. *bookRoom* supports and shares original thinking and practice-based research in three formats; open access online, print form (*bookRoom* press) and public events. <https://www.thebookroom.net>

Panel 4: *Putting Ourselves in the Picture*

Aida Silvestri hosted by Anna Fox (UCA)

Anna Fox and Aida Silvestri (Autograph) will discuss *Putting Ourselves in the Picture* from the perspective of their own involvement in the project.

<https://fastforward.photography/our-projects/ahrc-ukri-fellowship-putting-ourselves-in-the-picture/>

Biographical information of contributors:

Dr Jeremiah Ambrose is an artist, researcher and senior lecturer at UCA whose work explores digital art, media futures and experimental practice. He is particularly interested in interactive 360 environments, but is looking to expand his practice, pedagogy and research into XR aesthetics and intersections between contemporary immersive media technologies. Jeremiah Ambrose was awarded a practice-based PhD at the University of Brighton, looking at emergent narratives and interaction aesthetics in VR and interactive 360° environments. He graduated with a BA (Hons) in English, Media and Cultural Studies from Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology in 2009. After this he was awarded an M.Phil in Film Theory and History and an M.Sc in Interactive Digital Media from Trinity College Dublin in 2011 and 2014.

Greig Burgoyne is subject lead in BA Fine Art at UCA Farnham. Having studied at Universität Für Angewandte Kunst Vienna and Royal college of art London, he has lectured in fine art practice and theory in Europe and North America including Novgorod State University Russia, NSCAD university Halifax Canada, Lille III University and HEAR Mulhouse/Strasbourg France. His writing, research and practice focus on conceptual frameworks around Performance, drawing and phenomenology. Recent solo exhibitions in 20/21 include *Delay#1* Spazio Mensa Rome; *Expect the unexpected* The Lowry Manchester (with Yoko Ono, Gillian Wearing and Keith Tyson); *Raid* Galleria Bruno Lisi Rome (June); *Negotiations* Paper Gallery Manchester; *Night of experimental boredom* Lodge 222 Dordrecht; *Spaceman* Kunsthallen Bochum Germany; *Papier Skulptural* with Monika Gryzmala, Ignacio Uriarte and Esther Stocker Verein Für Aktuelle Kunst Ruhrgebiet Oberhausen; *Empty Spaces* Digital commission ACE/Tempo Arts UK His work features in *'Performance drawing-new practices since 1945'* published by Bloomsbury Books Autumn 2020.

Amanda Couch is a senior lecturer in Fine Art at UCA. She is an interdisciplinary artist who has published 3 artist's books with *bookRoom*, all involving performances on and off the page or performance lectures, such as *Books as Bodies* which have

been enacted at The Wellcome Trust and her more recent work The Royal College of Physicians that she will share in this panel <https://oninnards.wordpress.com>

Anna Fox Professor of Photography Anna Fox (UCA) – one of the UK’s leading photographers – has been awarded new funding as a Fellowship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to continue the pioneering ‘Fast Forward: Women in Photography’ initiative through the new project *Putting Ourselves in the Picture*. This fellowship project builds on the Fast Forward work and supports a community of marginalized women through a series of innovative workshops and mentorship activities, in collaboration with Autograph ABP; Impressions Gallery, Bradford; National Galleries of Scotland; Women for Refugee Women and Work Show Grow. The aim is to train women in photography and to increase awareness of women’s unheard life stories using photography and story-telling practices.

Nora Heidorn is a curator, researcher, and lecturer. Her practice is led by rigorous interdisciplinary research in the intersecting fields of gender, race, health and care. She is undertaking an LAHP-funded PhD at the Royal College of Art, London in collaboration with Birth Rites Collection. Nora’s long-term curatorial research project Sick and Desiring took the form of an exhibition, artist publication and a series of events for the biennial Bergen Assembly 2019 in Norway. She has curated exhibitions, workshops and screenings, and spoken at institutions, universities and project spaces in Berlin, London, Turin, Oslo, Helsinki and Bergen. Nora publishes essays and articles, including in CARELESS (Ma Bibliothèque) and Prova 6 (Royal College of Art) in 2021. Alongside her independent practice, Nora has been working as an Associate Lecturer on BA Culture, Criticism and Curation at University of the Arts London since 2018, where she has developed a course on Care and Curating together with Andy Marsh. She has previously worked as Curator and Project Coordinator in the Department of Art at Goldsmiths College, London and as Associate Director at the commercial gallery The Approach in East London. www.noraheidorn.com

Dr Matt Johnston is a visual practitioner, assistant professor in Photography at Coventry University and founder of The Photobook (2009). He completed a PhD at UCA in 2019 about the post-millennium situation of the contemporary photobook and

connections (made and missed) between makers and readers. This led to a new book *Photobooks & (Onomatopoeia 2021)* that he will talk to us about.

<http://photobookclub.org>

<https://www.mjohnstonphotography.co.uk>

Emma Lambert is a photographer, educator and current PhD student at UCA whose practice and research interrogate the contemporary photobook at the intersection of independent publishing and social art practice. She will present her imprint Silvergrasspress: “a space to develop and create collaborative photobooks where the form and narrative of the book, craft and process are valued as much as the social and relational aspects of making things public.

<https://silvergrasspress.co.uk/site/>

<https://www.emmalambert.co.uk>

Dr Caroline Molloy is the programme director of Fine Art, Digital Art and Photography at UCA Farnham. She is an artist, academic and writer. She holds an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, an MA in Visual Anthropology from Goldsmiths UoL. and recently completed a PhD at Birkbeck at the Centre for Photographic History and Theory. Her research interests are focused on the marginalised voice in both gender and post/decolonial colonial contexts. Her work was recently exhibited at the New Art Gallery Walsall (2021) as part of the Living Memory Project and at Four Corners, London, as part of the Ph research network in *Bridging Boundaries*. Recent peer reviewed publications include (2020) 'Rethinking the photographic studio as a politicised space', in Ashley, T., Weedon, A. (eds.) *Developing a Sense of Place: Models for the Arts and Urban Planning*. London: UCL publishing. In addition to this, she regularly writes for *Visual Studies*, *The Journal of Visual Practice*, *1000words* magazine and *Photomonitor* around the relationship between photography and visual culture.

Micheál O'Connell has a practice that employs a number of strategies - often carried out under the moniker Mocksim - of 'interference' with everyday functional processes, including appropriation, misuse, lampooning and tinkering with technological systems. He does not distinguish between the computational, algorithmic, less visible, digital network and older, heavier physical infrastructures

such as the road system or couriering operations. These systems reflect each other; both involve hardware (devices, server farms, vehicles etc.) and software (coding and bureaucracy), and there are many analogies. The interventions were discussed in his doctoral project, which was entitled *Art as Artificial Stupidity*. In that, he investigated relationships between cybernetics, conceptions of intelligence and this artistic practice. Specifically, intelligence's downside, the controversial notion of stupidity, was reappropriated as a means of considering the way artists intervene and how art, as a system, functions.

Minna Pöllänen is a Finnish visual artist living and working in London and Oxfordshire. Pöllänen is a Senior Lecturer on the BA (Hons) Photography course at UCA Farnham. She is studying towards a PhD in Fine Art at the School of Arts and Humanities in Royal College of Art. Her practice-led research explores lingering, touch and care in relation to sculptural objects. Pöllänen's work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally in venues including The Queens Museum in New York, Galerie Project Pangee in Montreal, Centre for Emerging Visual Artists in Philadelphia, Yinka Shonibare Guest Projects in London and Gallery Forum Box in Helsinki. She is the recipient of multiple residency awards including Triangle Arts Association in New York, Cité in Paris, Skaftfell in Iceland and Helsinki International Artist Programme in Helsinki. Pöllänen also works as a duo with the New York-based media artist Bang Geul Han. They are currently working on an interactive online commission for the Finnish Cultural Institutes titled *Talk Me Tender*. The project employs conversational AI and the form of a falling space junk to explore ideas around care and end-of-life. The project launches in spring 2022.

Aida Silvestri

Aida Silvestri is a UK based artist. She holds a BA (First Hons) in photography from the University of Westminster, London. She creates work that challenges the status quo of stigma, prejudice, and social injustice/inequality by highlighting issues of migration race, class, identity, and health. In her work she explores unique approaches to documentary photography and manipulation of the photographic surface. In this panel discussion she will be speaking about her contribution to the AHRC project *Putting Ourselves in the Picture*.

Emmanuelle Waeckerlé is a reader in Fine Art and Relational Practices and director of *bookRoom* at UCA. Her practice has evolved from the single discipline of fine art Photography into multiple, interconnected work zones: conceptual writing, performance, new musical composition and artist-publishing. www.ewaeckerle.com