

INNOVATIONS IN ART AND DESIGN

NEW PRACTICES NEW PEDAGOGIES

a reader



Edited by MALCOLM MILES



European
League of
Institutes
of the Arts

fluidity is no less alienating or divisive than the industrial city, the action of the Communards seems a fanciful intrusion of imagination into ordinary life. Or perhaps it was a reassertion of ordinary life in face of an ordering which from another point of view would seem extraordinary.

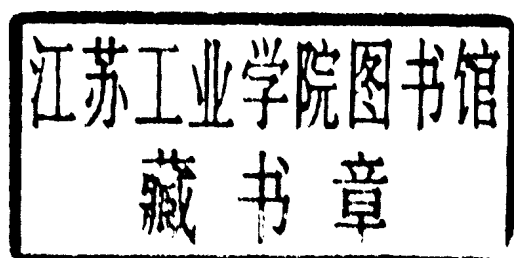
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New Practices – New Pedagogies

A Reader

Malcolm Miles



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The European League of Institutes of the Arts – ELIA – is an independent organisation of approximately 350 major arts education and training institutions representing the subject disciplines of Architecture, Dance, Design, Media Arts, Fine Art, Music and Theatre from over 45 countries. ELIA represents deans, directors, administrators, artists, teachers and students in the arts in Europe. ELIA is very grateful for support from, among others, The European Community for the support in the budget line ‘Support to organisations who promote European culture’ and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

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FOREWORD

New Practices/New Pedagogies is a collection of essays inspired by *Cómhar*, the 7th Biennial conference of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) in Dublin, Ireland at the end of October 2002. The conference title *Cómhar* is a Gaelic word signifying cooperation and companionship and from the 24th – 26th of October, 2002 over 600 arts educators and practitioners gathered in Dublin to discuss, debate and participate in a series of symposia, talks and workshops on key issues affecting higher arts education.

Keynote speakers included Saskia Sassen, Luc Tuymans, Fintan O'Toole and Noel Sheridan; but the main body of the conference focused on an extensive series of structured symposia with invited presentations. The symposia were organised by working groups made up of members of Irish creative arts colleges and board members of ELIA. In the spirit of the conference title, arts educators from Ireland worked with their colleagues in Lisbon, Berlin, Bucharest, Warsaw, Barcelona, Helsinki, Bratislava, London and Amsterdam to devise a series of symposia examining issues such as changes in the role of the profession of the artist, practice-based research, ethics and critical aesthetics, e-learning and distance learning in arts pedagogy, student mobility and diversity in arts education, and the debate on cultural expression, power and privilege in the context of an expanded Europe. In addition, a special practice-based interdisciplinary symposium involving live exercises with music, drama and fine art students looked at how key terms and ideas of arts practice can be introduced through teaching.

This highly structured framework for the conference proved to be successful. The practice-based interdisciplinary symposium inspired a whole conference called *The Teachers' Academy* which was held in Barcelona in 2003, while issues raised in the *Monstrous Thinking: on practice based research* symposium have led to the development of a European Commission funded project called *re:search*, which is being led by ELIA and 10 partner institutions across the EU. The aim of the project is to achieve a better understanding of cultural differences in research in higher arts education through a comparative analysis of how research traditions, structures and approaches to research practice and supervision are integrated in EU countries.

The success of *Cómhar* was due to the hard work of many individuals and institutions and I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the representatives of art, design, media and performing arts institutions throughout Ireland who gave freely of their time, energy and creativity in numerous meetings helping to develop a stimulating conference and cultural programme for their European colleagues. The Irish Department of Education and Science, the Arts Council of Ireland, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin City Council, the Dublin

Chamber of Commerce and Bord Failte / Irish Tourist Board all provided invaluable help. Finally, a special word of thanks goes to The Dublin Institute of Technology, University of Ulster, National College of Art and Design and The Council of Directors of the Institutes of Technology of Ireland whose generous financial and administrative support made the conference possible.

Kieran Corcoran, Dublin Institute of Technology,
Chair of the Local Steering Committee for *Cómhar*.

June 2004

PREFACE: THE EUROPEAN LEAGUE OF INSTITUTES OF THE ARTS

The European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), founded in 1990, is an independent membership organisation representing over 350 higher arts education institutions from over 45 countries. ELIA represents all disciplines in the arts, including architecture, dance, design, fine art, media, music and theatre. Through this network ELIA facilitates and promotes dialogues, mobility and activities between artists, teachers, senior managers and administrators responsible for more than 250,000 students graduating and entering the professional world annually.

As the principal European higher education network of arts institutions, one of our major objectives is to support and promote new developments in arts practice that challenge old orders and rigid historical boundaries. ELIA fosters new approaches to pedagogies that critique traditional practices and promote more socially and culturally engaged programmes, encouraging international and interdisciplinary collaborations.

ELIA's activities include: international advocacy - representing and promoting higher arts education; organising international symposia and conferences; research and development projects relating to European and world-wide issues within higher arts education, and the production of publications and on line services.

In co-operation with the Dublin Institute of Technology, the Council of Directors of the Irish Institutes of Technology, the University of Ulster and the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, ELIA organised its 8th biennial conference *Cómhar* in Dublin, Ireland in October 2002. Over 600 representatives of higher arts education (deans/directors, teachers, artists and students) participated in the conference. Many chapters in this publication are outcomes of this conference.

On behalf of ELIA I would like to warmly thank President Mary McAleese as the Patron, and all the fourteen higher education institutions of the visual, performing and media arts from throughout the island of Ireland, for their contributions to the conference. We are also grateful for the financial support of the Department of Education and Science, Dublin; the Irish Tourist Board/Bord Failte; the Dublin Chamber of Commerce; the Dublin City Council; the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Dublin; the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, Dublin; the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism; Aer Lingus; the European Commission DG Education and Culture; LUAS; Temple Bar Properties; ESB; the French Embassy in Dublin; Digital Hub; Enterprise Island and the Irish Arts Council.

I express our gratitude to all the authors for their enlightening and probing contributions and to the editor, Dr Malcolm Miles, Reader in Cultural Theory at the University of Plymouth, for devising a coherent structure to this complex and challenging publication. Our thanks also go to the Arts Council of Ireland for their ongoing support.

John Butler, ELIA President

June 2004

CONTRIBUTORS:

Saskia Sassen is Ralph Lewis Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago and Centennial Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics.

Clémentine Deliss is an independent writer and editor, and researcher with Edinburgh College of Art, UK

Geoff Cox and *Joasia Krysa* teach in the School of Computing, University of Plymouth, UK, and are Editors of iDAT Browser

Tim Collins and *Reiko Goto* are Research Fellows in the Studio for Creative Inquiry in the Fine Arts School at Carnegie Mellon University, USA

Matthew Cornford and *David Cross* constitute the London-based artists' group Cornford & Cross

Judith Rugg is Reader in Fine Art Theory at the Kent Institute of Art & Design, UK

Ann Rosenthal is an environmental artist and educator working with social and natural histories and community landscapes, based in Pittsburgh, USA

Peter Renshaw is an arts education consultant and was Principal of the Yehudi Menuhin School before becoming Head of Research at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, UK

Amanda Wood is Associate Dean in the Faculty of Art, Media and Design at the University of the West of England, UK

Iain Biggs is Reader in Visual Arts Practice in the Faculty of Art, Media and Design at the University of the West of England, UK

Peter Dallow lectures at the University of Western Sydney, Australia, and is researching art practice, visual imagery and media, and fiction writing at the School of Communication, Design and Media, University of Western Sydney, Australia

Katy MacLeod is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Plymouth, UK

Lin Holdridge is a Research Assistant in the Faculty of Arts, University of Plymouth, UK

Lucien Massaert is Head of the Department of Drawing at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium, and founder of the journal *La Part de l'Oeil*

Mika Hannula is Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, Finland

Tony Aldrich is Senior Lecturer in Architecture at the University of Plymouth, UK

Beverly Naidus teaches interdisciplinary arts and sciences at the University of Washington, Tacoma, USA

Jane Trowell is an artist and art historian, and core member of the London-based group PLATFORM

Noel Hefele is a graduate student and teaching assistant in the Studio for Creative Inquiry, School of Fine Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

Malcolm Miles is Reader in Cultural Theory in the Faculty of Arts, University of Plymouth, UK

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

My aim in this General Introduction is, very briefly, to set out the structure of this book and say a little about its derivation from a series of papers from the ELIA conference in Dublin in 2002 and consequent events, and from wider discussions – many of which have been enabled by ELIA – over the two years prior to its publication. I do not attempt to summarise the book's individual chapters, only to note their points of departure, the texts themselves being short enough to be read whole and I hope clear enough to need no translation. In my conclusion I draw out what I see as some common strands adding a few thoughts of my own.

The book is structured in four sections plus a conclusion.

The first section outlines some of the contexts in which art practices (or cultural production and mediation) and higher arts education take place today. These include the world of globalisation and trans-national cultural flows, discussed in an opening paper by Saskia Sassen; the emergence of radical thinking and new trans-national networks of participation outside the sites and hegemonies of the affluent society, exemplified by Clémentine Deliss; the development of digital networks of communication which either reproduce old technologically based tyrannies or liberate us from them, outlined by Geoff Cox and Joasia Krysa; and the rising importance of the environmental agenda, described by Timothy Collins and Reiko Goto.

To these contexts can be added, apart from the increased prominence of climate change in public imagination likely to follow the blockbuster movie *The Day After Tomorrow*, recognition that art's publics are not generalised but highly specific and diverse. As Catherine David said in a closing keynote to the ELIA Dublin conference in 2002:

The challenge is to be able to circulate images, ideas, and projects to more and more heterogeneous audiences, and not the mass audience that our politicians ... present as a single one (unpublished conference paper, 2002) .

This is an important point, and goes against much of the grain of European cultural policy which still assumes the unified subject (self) of a liberal humanist viewpoint which has been largely eclipsed, in academic writing, by post-modern and post-colonial thinking - since the 1970s. As Catherine David went on to argue, art's publics have many backgrounds and bring to their encounter with contemporary art a diversity of knowledges. In a further gesture against the prevailing grain, she continued:

What is also at stake in art schools, as it is elsewhere, is the speeding up of culture and the instrumentalisation of culture for the sake of a market economy and merchandising [of art] for the purposes of capital (ibid).

This does not automatically imply a politicisation of art making within the academy, though that is one route alongside the distancing from immediate political considerations – art’s retention of a claim to autonomy – defended at the same conference by Luc Tuymans (of the Rijksacademie, Amsterdam). What it does suggest is a far wider awareness of art’s publics, sites, and contexts than was assumed in the, in retrospect simpler, days of the boom in art of the 1960s. That was a period of expansion in higher arts education in Europe and north America, and many of those currently teaching and managing arts education began their training or careers then. Now times appear bleaker, and some of the absurdity of the world situation is sedimented in ironic and at times aggressive art. But practices also emerge today which see a new potential for global communication and a critical visual culture, and which engage with both new agendas and those of the human condition.

The second section looks, then, selectively at new areas of art practice in Europe and north America. Its chapters are not direct responses to those of the first section, and the order does not exactly correspond; but there is a loose correlation of the two sections. Matthew Cornford and David Cross describe projects they have conceived and exhibited, but not carried out in public sites. Their aim is to push the boundaries of assumptions, and provoke public debate rather than comply with cultural or civic norms – one example of work inserting itself in new interstices. Judith Rugg then writes of Sophie Calle’s engagement with the Freud Museum as a site of patriarchal attitudes which is (as museum) a public space and (as Freud’s house and consulting room) private. Ann Rosenthal gives two cases of projects for art as social interaction and research, one using digital means, beginning with a recollection of her participation in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). And Reiko Goto and Tim Collins extend their previous text on the environmental agenda by looking at the varieties of contemporary ecological-art practices. These are by no means the only kinds of new practice. The work of Jochen Gerz, for instance, featured in the first issue of the *European Journal of Higher Arts Education* (on-line, April, 2004), has an overt political aspect, countering fascism.

Section three, the largest, approaches pedagogies which demonstrate how, in actuality not fantasy, new approaches informed by new contexts and practices are applied. This section has more breadth, seeing art education (that is, fine art) as needing to be more integrated into culturally and socially based programmes in higher education. This includes a stronger link between programmes in the visual and performing arts; and a greater willingness to engage in social criticism. It also reflects the extension of art education into doctoral research, now well established

enough throughout the Anglophone world to construct its own critical terrain. This section begins with a call for conversations from Peter Renshaw, whose background is mainly in music education. He sees isolationism in arts education as engendering a crisis which will be resolved only in cross-artform and socially engaged critique. Amanda Wood and Iain Biggs reconsider the wider cultural context of post-graduate art education, and the relation between practice and the student's subjectivity. Among the challenges they identify is the need to understand that graduate students tend to bring with them more life experience and more mature critiques than the academy perceives itself as mediating. Among four papers from doctoral provision in art education, grouped together here, Peter Dallow argues that research through practice entails a re-examination of the material and immaterial facets of creativity, in effect an enquiry into creativity itself. Katy MacLeod and Lin Holdridge relay the findings of UK-wide research into the candidate's experience of doctoral programmes in art, and cite several cases of the kinds of work currently produced. Lucien Massaert cites Derrida paraphrasing Goya, to construct an intricate web of inter-relations between rationality and its shadow, to problematise some of the assumptions made when art as research too closely mimics scientific models. At the core of his text is a problem of representation, and the reproduction of old modes of representation in new technologies. Mika Hannula then outlines similarities between methods in art and those in hermeneutics (within the humanities). Looking to Vatimo and Gadamer, he perceives art research as a dialogic event. The final four papers arise from specific courses taught either now or very recently. Tony Aldrich introduces the idea of humane architecture and a course in which the student's self-perception is central. Given the extent of overtures between art and architecture practice in the past three decades it is surprising that education in the two areas remains startlingly separated (as if architects were merely designers). Aldrich emphasises the breadth of insight necessary for architectural education to address qualitative issues. Beverly Naidus writes (from a north American perspective) about her discontent with an art education system seemingly designed to repress imagination (including, or particularly, that of a better world), and describes courses which test alternatives such as an art of activism. From the UK, Jane Trowell writes about a new course at Birkbeck College, London University. This integrates higher education, in this case for adult learners, with radical art practice which questions structures of power and wealth, as in the global oil industry. Finally, again from north America, Noel Hefele gives a detailed account of an innovative course at Carnegie Mellon University on environmental vision in context of the grey infrastructure of a post-industrial city. One of the students writes "these are exciting and new ideas to me", which I hope might be a response to this book as well.

The book began, as indicated above, as a collection of conference papers from the ELIA conference in Dublin in 2002. Saskia Sassen was as an opening keynote speaker there, and papers by Katy MacLeod and Lin Holdridge, Peter Dallow,

and Lucien Massaert were part of a parallel strand within the conference. The full set of those papers appears in issue 1 of the on-line journal, with other keynotes. Clémentine Deliss reviewed the Dublin conference for the on-line journal, and here contributes a new paper giving an extended form of her contributions to previous debates within ELIA. Peter Renshaw's paper was delivered as the keynote at the ELIA Teachers' Academy in Barcelona in 2003. To these I have added invited contributions, some papers heard at other conferences or seminars organised in conjunction with ELIA, some written specially. These fill gaps and give a more rounded impression of the current situation. They also bring in several writers based in north America, where ecological and activist art is more widespread than in the UK.

The book has a number of limitations: it is in English while ELIA is a European organisation, a majority of its member institutions working in languages other than English. Resources were not available for translations and this restricts the range of inclusions. It is also a selection based on my own judgements as Editor, and inevitably on my own contacts as far as the invited chapters are concerned. There are gaps: more on digital art would have been useful; maybe a stronger presence of feminism and post-colonialism (though these are not absent), and on the area of artist as curator; and I would have liked in my politicised way to see something on opposition to the occupation of Iraq and the fallacies of a war against terror, but perhaps this is still too raw and partisan a terrain. Since I do not wish to do the reviewer's job for her/him I will end here.

Or almost: because there are sincere thanks to express to all the writers who have produced and revised their texts within the agreed schedule, a remarkable collective achievement for a book with eighteen chapters; to Kieran Corcoran for his Foreword; to John Butler for his Preface and invitation to edit the volume; and to Francesca Pagnacco as Managing Editor of the book and on-line journal without whose unfailing support and intelligence I would have no chance to carry out my tasks in these enterprises. Recognition is due, too, to the Irish Arts Council for its generous funding for the production and dissemination of the book, and the University of Plymouth for funding the book's design and providing my time as Editor.

Malcolm Miles

June 2004

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Globalisation: issues for culture

Saskia Sassen

I want to address three issues about globalisation. As you know I am not an artist, I am not involved with any art institution and I am possibly quite ignorant about the arts, so I am writing from a perspective of economic globalisation and what it means in a broader socio-cultural context. I want to address three issues within that, then, each of a different kind. One is the question of representation, or of narration and rhetoricisation, today - at a time of transition when, in my view, prose (which is what I do) does not always help because the necessary disruptions, discontinuities and de-stabilisations of older meanings are such that a fully reasoned account is no longer possible. We need poetry and we need poesis-making to do this, and in that sense I think of art and cultural work as important to narrate the contemporary situation, including that aspect of it which links with globalisation. Secondly, and briefly, the kinds of organisation-infrastructure that globalisation produces and how it affects the world of art, not necessarily just artists, or producers, but also the whole question of international art exhibits and events - the biennials, the art fairs, and so forth. And then finally, because I have recently been to Argentina, and Argentina as you know is in a deep crisis linked to neo-liberal economic globalisation; one of the things that has happened in this context is a resurgence of artistic practice, cultural work and participation either as consumers or in a more collective form by people (who thus become more than a public for the work, become in fact its co-producers). Buenos Aires, which is where I grew up, is a place that has long had a rich artistic life, but what is happening today is that out of the desert and the devastation that engagement with neo-liberal economic globalisation has left in this country, suddenly the arts are becoming a domain where people can practice. This is what we call a natural experiment situation. I think that out of this devastation the arts give hope. The arts are what make people feel that they are still making something. The notion I want to impart here is that it has been and continues to be the arts which give people hope and a mode of participation and I think the microcosm of the Argentine case signals a broader history.