



In Beast, poetry will be made by all not by one.

In Beast we find words other than those already uttered, words never yet imagined, unique in each tongue, to name each and each alone.

In Beast rather than regressing to the simple authority of a religion or blindly submitting to the rule of money, capital and methods of production that are competitive and irresponsible, we can pursue an oeuvre of justice and civility by elaborating a real culture of persons, and of the subjective and objective relations between them.

In Beast to return to ourselves as living beings, engendered and not fabricated, is a vital and ethical need and of paramount importance. If we want to go on living and governing our creations, we must make sure we do this.

Beast believes happiness must be built by us here and now, on earth, where we live. A happiness, comprising a carnal, sensible and spiritual dimension, which cannot be subordinated to the acquisition or accumulation of property, or to hypothetical human, social or divine authority.

In Beast good business is the best art: Beast needs:
artists/accountants, bankers/bar-staff, collectors/curators,
dealers/designers, estate agents/escorts, fixers/ framers,
gallerists/grant givers, hangers on/hoteliars, intellectuals/insiders,
jewellers/journalists, lawyers/lackeys, models/media makers,
nightowls/newshounds, opportunists/oracles, patrons/PR agents,
psychotherapists/personal trainers, quacks/Queens, rehab
nurses/restauranters, stylists/studio assistants, trustfunders/art
tarts, the useful or useless, van drivers/vixens, yes men/
Zealots.

Beast will do unprofessional curating.

Beast will support negative capability, as a mode of activity, wherein one is capable of uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without irritable reaching after fact and reason.

Beast will beware of art schools, which are like crack dens rendering one helpless, dependent and fuzzy.

Beast rejects unnecessary luxury, be it economic or cultural. Proliferation of possessions and knowledge is gradually burying us in secondary realities: surrounded by objects we become incapable of distinguishing the most useful from the most alienating.

Beast will look beneath gestures of mastery and appropriation, attack indifference, allow fear and failure, avoid morals as excuses, love shame, earn integrity.

Beast's elemental passions, ugly outbursts and sorrowful remorse, make work, work.

In Beast, methods of seeing, hearing, speaking, living, all these wait to be made fecund by an innocent potency.

Fig. 1. Ugly Beast Manifesto: Esther Windsor 2014

Ugly Beast:
A Critical Study of
Curating
Contemporary Fine
Art
Context Document

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Fiction is not made up, it is based on everything we can learn or use; a zone in which all sources of knowledge are valid.

---Rowlands and Williams

Everyday opinion sees in the shadow only the lack of light, if not lights complete denial. In truth, however, the shadow is a manifest, through impenetrable, testimony to the concealed emitting of light.

---Heidegger

Heidegger refers to naming as 'the lightening of what is'

---Tiffany

Introduction

Ugly Beast

Ugly Beast: A Critical Study of Curating Contemporary Fine Art was a practice-led project that developed into a personal account by the same name. This explores my experience as an artist-curator (1996-2016), using fiction and exhibition, via intersubjectivity and tacit research. *Ugly Beast* is also the name of my novel, which I will henceforth refer to as *Ugly Beast* (the novel) here, in 'Context Document', to avoid confusion. This, together with documentation of and reflection on the exhibition *Your Tongue in My Mouth* (31 May – 28 June 2014, Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston upon Thames, UK) are the means of conveying my research and presenting knowledge through two distinct forms of practice.

My questions drew on my past experience as a curator and shifted, via research practice, into fiction writing and reframed curation. Through initial experiments in art practice, a set of research methods developed, that enabled the generation of final outcomes. This made an original contribution to knowledge - a new presentation of knowledge - using transhistorical material, psychoanalysis, a city, diagrammatic mapping, embodied demonstration of theory and articulation of shared subjectivity. The novel, is set in a changing history and spatial politics of the city. It is neither a work of art history nor is it a survey of curatorial literature; it's a story. (Any fictional resemblances to real persons are accidental.)

Questions

In the field of contemporary fine art:

1. What or who are concepts, philosophies and artists?
2. What is the discourse of consumption or the fashions and drivers?
3. What are the genres, objects, spaces and practices?
4. What is its political economy?

Changed to:

1. Can curation become an activism informed by an integrity of philosophy and politics for life?
2. Can consumption become a syntax, relationality, an art as life activity?
3. Can objects, spaces and practices become a hospitality of seeing, hearing?
4. Can political economy become a mode of being, surviving and reproducing?

I came to call this combination of activism, syntax, hospitality and mode of being, 'curatorial

subjectivity'. (I use the term syntax to express language, discourse and naming) I tested 'curatorial subjectivity' through research that I have termed 'practice experiments'.¹ As these are discussed below, suffice to say for now they included Drinking and Smoking (artists' publishing, 2011 A), *A Labour of Love* (radio conversation, 2011) and *Hymn Poems*, (image, 2008) during the process of developing the PhD. These experiments with format, intention and the destination of the art work, have informed the outcomes of *Ugly Beast* (the novel) and *Your Tongue in My Mouth*, the curated exhibition. Both outcomes take shape as a visual/verbal conversation around concepts and philosophies, in relation to subjectivity and contingency. In which the political economy and status of art and artist, are shifted on to new ground, demonstrating vulnerability - not just as survival - but as a generative force within contemporary art practice.

Theoretical research undertaken during my doctoral studies built on previous understanding and is embedded in the novel and exhibition as practice-based outcomes. The novel's fictional characters enact the research questions, using an assemblage of quotes from critical theory and art world commentary, to allow an integrated approach to theory and practice and a new way of making art, where theory is contingent and alive, as a hybrid art practice. This method also informed the selection of artists and art works curated into the exhibition, operating as a visual conversation, rather than an historical survey.

I chose the novel as a practice outcome to undermine a theory versus practice division, and in order to show a way of working, where histories, subjective voices and creative language sat alongside what is traditionally named 'theory'. Moreover, the ideas, or theories, are acted out by the characters. This has the intention of undermining knowledge from a Cartesian

¹ **Examples** of and reflections on practice experiments: **Not Just One Mum**. In 2014 The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families was commissioned to pilot a scheme called Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC). This peer-to-peer parenting initiative was offered by Camden Council through the Innovation Fund Scheme. I had been part of an Anna Freud services' steering group and used experience of fundraising while directing a publicly funded arts organisation, to contribute to writing The Anna Freud Innovation Fund Scheme bid. I trained to be facilitator on EPEC with a group of parents in my community. Three programmes rolled out, one within a homelessness hostel. Some of this group formed Not Just One Mum, a protest campaign I ran independently, supported by Unite Union, as part of my practice experiments culminating in a deputation with a barrister at Camden Council chambers. The campaign protested the selling of public land, asked for artists to be eligible for the council housing register and for families in temporary accommodation, to remain in communities and not be moved outside London. It had some impact and fed into similar initiatives.

A Labour of Love was hosted by Enemies of Good Art set up by Martina Mullaney in 2009 with its' first meeting hosted at The Whitechapel Gallery with further meetings at ICA, RCA, Tate Modern, Chisenhale and Southbank Centre. Enemies of Good Art programmed a weekly radio show 2010-12 on resonance fm.

In his 1938 novel *Enemies of Promise* Cyril Connolly asserted that 'there is no more sombre enemy of good art than the pram in the hall'. Since April 2009 Enemies of Good Art has debated the issues arising from this infamous quote and seeks to investigate the possibilities of combining art practice and family commitments. In particular it seeks to encourage participation by parents and their children in a series of public discussions and art based events. See footnote for manifesto.

model and an academy embedded with unequal power relations. It sought to give visibility and voice, to those that may struggle, historically or presently, in the academy, art world and traditional models of knowledge and research.

I chose the exhibition as a visual conversation to bring histories and critical approaches together in one frame, allowing for example, a narrated film of cultural history, in *The Stuart Hall Project* (2013) from John Akomfrah, to be read alongside Ellen Cantor's *Within Heaven & Hell* (1996). Here she gives an account in her voice, of a love story, set to split screen, video collage of *The Sound of Music* (1965) and *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). In this way the visual, auditory, theory and image based, were all allowed to operate together.

My aim across the outcomes was to move away from the primacy of the visual and binary positions of difference. The contribution to knowledge is in an original presentation of knowledge, embedding subjectivity in storytelling as a practice, and to depict a specific moment and landscape in contemporary fine art.

My historic curatorial practice (1996-2007), archived at estherwindsor.com, acted as a referent linking later PhD practice as *Ugly Beast*. A published statement included here, similarly houses an extract of *Ugly Beast* (the novel) images of practice and a *Curatorial Office*. A document of the *Your Tongue In My Mouth* exhibition and a document of *Ugly Beast Diagrams* are also included here.

Ugly Beast Methods

These methods include not only my approach to the ugly; practice experiments; a manifesto, curatorial subjectivity; diagrams and space but also my exploration of psychoanalytic theory; fiction; character creation and reflexivity. All methods described in this document indicate development and precedents to support practice-based research.

Ugly as Method

Initial questions were derived from a hand drawn 'map of the field' diagram that I had used for teaching a course called Political Economy of the Media. (This required analysis of culture and media products, subject to rapid shifts in their modes of production, funding, distribution and consumption, which impacted the ideas they carried.) I looked for visual ways to understand and communicate text book information, like horizontal and vertical models of economic expansion. I applied this 'map of the field' to contemporary fine art in hand drawn

diagrams. It was an experiment, thinking about invisible economies and labour practices, but also a method to picture artists and curators to a wider sphere of structures, power, materiality and ideologies. This included the precarious nature of surviving as a cultural worker, in the culture industry of contemporary fine art. These diagrams started to visualise the concerns and minor histories of a field of curating contemporary fine art specific to London circa 1996-2016. The questions and diagrams later became the characters I created for the novel.

Ugly as a method derived from this initial questioning and recognition of structural relationships. Another early action of research was archiving my historical curatorial practice in making the website www.estherwindsor.com, which led to the development of *Ugly Beast* as a practice comprised of methods.

In archiving, contradictions emerged of concealing curatorial process and invisible social/emotional labour, in favour of complete 'work' ready for public viewing. This process prompted me to research what was edited out (the contingent, personal, ugly and difficult) and what had also been my lived experience of curating, primarily in publicly funded, gallery contexts, in the UK and London. I found that the actual explicit materiality of existing and being (in the context of curation) was crucial. Including: spaces, finance, rules, experiences, histories, geographies, exhibitions, materials, words, objects, emotions, practices, relationships and stories. I decided that what was edited out was a more interesting nexus of cultural relationships and curatorial questioning, than a generic account of this phase of British art.² (See Appendix B.)

I called this edited out material 'Ugly Beast' and imaged the 'map of the field' as ugly characters: 'Ugly Bastard', 'Ugly Rich Bitch', 'Ugly Sister' and 'Ugly Angry Bastard' (see Appendix A in this essay). Four basic characters, who became radically reworked as fictional characters in my novel. I used a working title for these practice experiments, *Crack: Contemporary Research, Art and Culture Kitchen* and documented some of the practice in my website under 'Ugly Beast: PhD', with the subheadings: 'Beast Kitchen', 'Beast on The Couch', 'Beast Agony', 'Beast Tender' and wrote the following text to describe to Ugly Beast as a

² Some background history: In making a curatorial archival website I considered all the anecdotal information unseen: technical problems; institutional politics; health and safety prohibitions; unfavourable press; complaints about content of exhibitions; proposals for exhibitions that did not happen but were written up for interview presentations; the police being called regarding a replica gun as exhibit; the graffiti on the walls of the toilets, in one university, about exhibitions and sometimes about me.; the long conversations, the encounters leading to seeing new work or making a show; letters; hospitality arrangements; the relationship of artist and curator and of process to exhibition; the arguments that had turned to great affections, scandals that were lasting memories; traumas that were catalyst for change; embarrassments; mistakes that became social markers; press releases that were faxed back by BANK; what the drinks were at the private view; who came and didn't; who wasn't in the show and who asked to be in it.

practice:

Ugly Beast: is a project space and concept for contemporary art. It encourages play and un-purposeful, non-product related thinking. It takes pleasure in unrealistic political ideals and romantic ambitions. Ugly Beast is obscene, odd, stupid, savage, decadent, useless but splendid, shy and not sure, sometimes sorry, conceited, monstrous, excessive, glamorous, stained, disappointed defiant and proud. Ugly Beast may be conducted from a desk and held in invited spaces or unoccupied buildings. It may also reside like a parasite on the edge of an office building and official practices. It has four characters and may develop more. (Windsor 2010 A)

Ugly as a method was also informed by Mark Cousins' public-access series Friday Lectures, which I attended at The Architectural Association from 1994-2008. Many of these lectures used psychoanalysis and philosophy as a means of understanding architecture. These lectures included a series on 'The Ugly' in which Cousins often used stories and myths, including his own. This dynamic informed the naming of my practice and Ugly Beast's development as a method. It also provided the thinking that allowed me to use units of space and models as concept housing for material and voices, claimed as excluded within the practice of Ugly Beast. This is how Mark Cousins describes the ugly:

We already know what evil is; it is the opposite of Good. And there is still worse. If the positive terms Beauty, the Good and the True are welded together as a single figure, so too is their opposite. The Ugly is a kind of error and is an evil. Error is a mistake and is ugly and is an evil. Evil is what is ugly and is an error, or a heresy. This veritable philosophical complex of Truth, Beauty and the Good, which still recommends itself to many, has as its secret malice, the authorisation of exclusion. It is a complex, which not only permits but which positively produces the theoretical basis for persecution and stigmatisation. (Cousins 1999, p.23)

Naming was also important to locate practice-based knowledge and method. Donald Schön identifies that this helps the inquirer focus on a name for the practice they are investigating and to recognise the contested nature of the name of the practice. This may even involve expressing the practice diagrammatically and sometimes this framing can list the critical incidents that have informed the development of a given professional practice (1983, p. 42).

Through reclaiming the material edited out of the website and formal presentations of art world finish, I saw further material was available to me from within my own lived experience. I represented this via words and the voice to avoid traps of the visual, cliché and objectification. This approach also involved drawing on the repetition of sensational myth-making at that time, that circuited around the concept of 'Young British Artists' and its individual, heroic, participants, within a global economy of art commodity and cultural capital.

In the process of my research and archiving past curation, I came to consider curation as a mode of being, a language, a syntax - a new arrangement of words and significations. In my curatorial archive titles, conversation, criticism and textual relationships were key. Exhibitions had made new housings for thinking and questioning, responding to sites, spaces, relationships, books and current events. Exhibitions became a hospitality for ideas and this history prompted my research into the formats of both fiction and exhibition.

For example, the exhibition *I'm a Virgin* (1999) that I curated at the Waiting Room, University of Wolverhampton (1997) was titled after graffiti I had seen on a railway wall, and utilised an extract from Derek Jarman's chapter 'White Lies' in *Chroma*. Artists responded to the chapter's title and ideas invested in innocence and white's possibility of purity, which also suggested the stain.

Ghostly white postcards. As I look at them now, the girls are blissfully unaware of the wall of death that will change their Sunday best but not it's colour, a few short years ahead. They will become nurses, factory girls, maybe even engineers or aviators. Behind the postcard there is white. Behind the painting there is white ground. (Jarman 1995, p. 9)

I had also used curation as an activism that sought to misuse systems, institutions and existing languages. For example, at the 1000000mph Project Space, a group show titled *Pimps and Hookers* (2006) invited art works that played with systems of value and art making in critique of the 'art as a culture' industry. It suggested a self-conscious engagement with one's own productivity, community and systems of meaning, allowed a negotiation of the slippery path to social prostitution, where values and emotions are lived through object status and unequal relations. Including works by Simon Bedwell, Dave Burrows, Simon O' Sullivan, Freee, Anat Ben David, Cedric Christie, Cullinan and Richards, Adam Dant and Liz Price, it drew on Pierre Bourdieu's idea of social capital and Raymond William's assertion: 'Culture industries are involved in the production of social meaning - part of a signifying system through which social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored' (Williams 1981, p. 13).

Practice Experiments as Method

Hymn Poem: The practice experiments, made as part of the PhD research, originated with a work I made for Savage School Gallery, Cullinan and Richards's window gallery at their studio in Vyner Street, Bethnal Green, London. *Hymn Poem: Of Joy That hath No Ending And Love That Cannot Cease* (2008) reworked words from a nineteenth-century hymn, with my art work set in cinematic, sliding letters, on a vintage, cinema tracking board. This was a starting point

for reference to hymns, Christian stories and the intermediate space of city church architecture in *Ugly Beast* (the novel). This provided a bridge to female historic customs associated with the church, including maintenance and mourning. This is used in the novel, to recognise a changing history and the politics of the city, where some sites and histories remain, while others change, seeing many collective dreams relinquished.

Hymn Poem had originated from an earlier practice of finding images that were covert and intended to act as a support in some way. For example, Bible illustrations, cookery book illustrations of home hospitality, hostess calling cards in phone boxes, posters and notice boards advertising religious lectures outside church buildings. *Hymn Poem* drew from my background in a fundamentalist Christian community, where, in modest meeting rooms, services were carried out to strict rituals, women covering their heads and forbidden to speak. Women attended the altar, cared for the elderly, made meals, took Sunday school or played the organ. But when they sang hymns their voices were strident and joyful. As a child I knew the Bible stories and their images intimately, constructing my own as a relief from boredom.

Agony Aunt, Writing, Radio and Council Chamber: I practised the idea of curation as a mode of being, syntax, activism and hospitality in my PhD research, with this finding forms as practice experiments, such as: the writing of *Beast Agony*, as an agony aunt, with Angela de la Cruz, while working in her studio during her Turner Prize nomination (2010 B); the writing of a catalogue essay Drinking and Smoking for Heather Sparks' artists book *It Colors Your Life* (2011 A); the curating and chairing of a radio series, *A Labour of Love*, with Martina Mullany's *Enemies of Good Art* on Resonance FM (2011); and the making of *Not Just One Mum*, (2013) deputations and protests at Camden Council Chambers, London with Unite Union community groups.

The practice of interrogating the codes of art world conduct, collaboration, emotional exchange, shared histories, different voices and political protest, led to ideas of not just social capital but emotional capital informing the method of curatorial subjectivity in *Ugly Beast* (the practice).

Practice experiments allowed the development of my own methodology including the fictional writing of characters, on the therapy couch, in *Ugly Beast* (the novel). They also informed the visual conversation of my curated exhibition, *Your Tongue in My Mouth*. *Ugly Beast* (the practice) became a conceptual container and a method for practice.

Ugly Beast Manifesto as Method

Ugly Beast Manifesto (2014) was an instruction for practice, based on physical, contingent relationships to the world and was a trigger to making a novel and exhibition. It became an image, using found 1970s French porn magazine imagery, overlaid with the manifesto text in 2010. The repositioning of porn imagery was a decision taken to suggest bodily reproduction, baseness and non-academic material. The manifesto took inspiration from female artists often overlooked or censored and criticised. Including the work of Cosey Fanni Tutti, member of Hull based art collective COUM and band Throbbing Gristle. Her retrospective exhibition *Prostitution* (1976), at the ICA, featured her soiled tampon and porn magazines from her sex industry work, using these for her own purposes, to subvert and make art, breaking down social barriers, often at great personal cost. I also took inspiration from: Sue Williams, who featured in the exhibition *Bad Girls* (1993), at the ICA, that I worked on during an internship, whose paintings of abject, abused figures, with sarcastic graffiti text, permitted anger as a productive art tool; Carolee Schneemann's performance art: *Fuses* (1965), *Interior Scroll* (1975), *Meat Joy* (1964) and intricate writing, using human and animal bodies as emancipatory material; and, lastly, Ellen Cantor. Cantor showed work in an exhibition I curated at 1000,000mph Project Space with Dallas Seitz (*Pimps and Hookers*, 2006), where a band, The Crisps, played and a crowd danced on the pavement outside. I frequently spoke to Cantor on the phone but for the purpose of an exhibition of her drawings (*Path of Sun – Road of Life*, 2006) I conducted an interview with her, which I transcribed. I told her that elements of her work remind me of Bernini's *Ecstasy of St Theresa* (1647-1652), where a woman is depicted in rapture with God, to which Cantor replied that while her work is not about sex, most cultures regard sex as a spiritual union. We discussed how the sex in her work cannot be considered merely as direct representation. In one of Cantor's films, *Madam Bovary's Revenge* (1995), using a split screen, kissing lovers are juxtaposed with porn, mixing *Behind the Green Door* (1972) into key scenes of lovemaking from Louis Malle's *The Lovers* (1959). Other bodies of work by Cantor use popular culture, such as Barbie or Bambi. I wrote a press release where I said 'Ellen's use of porn images are like cuts in the paper or gasps of breath in the narrative of the story.' Also including a quote from Bataille's *Story of the Eye* (1928):

The day was extremely hot. Simone put the saucer on a small bench before me and with her eyes fixed on me she sat down without me being able to see her burning buttocks under the skirt, dipping into the cool milk. (n.d., p. 3)

Cantor memorably acted out a blow job to Vivaldi's *Gloria* (1715) in her unfinished film work *Pinocet Porn* (2016) and she was frequently censored by the art world. Barry Schwabsky

reviewing her work in *Artforum* (2007), asked whether a blow job could be a religious experience? It was a motif frequently utilised in her drawings and he observed that abasement and transcendence tend to work hand in hand.

Cantor's work influenced my decision to use porn as a challenge to thresholds of taste and social ordering of the body, and was curated into the exhibition, *Your Tongue In My Mouth*. The accompanying manifesto's text used a religious language and considered the unconscious as the undoing of the Cartesian rationalist project for productive effect. It proposed that we are always, already bound by the subconscious and constructed through language, ideologically. Drawing on Jacques Lacan's assertion that 'the unconscious is structured like language', it also borrowed, in both concept and style, from Luce Irigaray's *Elemental Passions* (1991), Andy Warhol's *Address Book* (1989) and Felix Guattari *Three Ecologies* (1989), in proposing practice as a way of being. Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), the artwork of Joseph Beuys (1950-80s) Fluxus (1960-70s) Alan Kaprow (1958) and Maintenance Art (Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969) also informed its propositions.

Ugly Beast Manifesto as a method was part of the practice of curatorial subjectivity. The manifesto embedded my questions in practice-based propositions:

1. Concepts, philosophies, artists activated by ideas of integrity to real life: Beast will look beneath gestures of mastery and appropriation, attack indifference, allow fear and failure, avoid morals as excuses, love shame, earn integrity.

2. Discourses of audience, fashion, consumption become a new syntax or relationality: In Beast rather than regressing to the simple authority of a religion or blindly submitting to the rule of money, capital and methods of production that are competitive and irresponsible, we can pursue an oeuvre of justice and culture by elaborating a real civil culture of persons and of the subjective and objective relations between them.

3. Objects, practices, genres become a hospitality of seeing, hearing, living and being: Beast will do unprofessional curating. Beast will support negative capability, as a way of being, wherein one is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without irritably reaching after fact and reason.

4. Political economy becomes a mode of being: Beast rejects unnecessary luxury, be it economic or cultural. The proliferation of possessions and knowledge is gradually burying us in objects or secondary realities: surrounded by them we become incapable of distinguishing the most useful from the most alienating.

Beast will beware of art schools which are like crack dens rendering one helpless, dependent and fuzzy.

These manifesto propositions operated within the voice of the novel and the themes represented in the exhibition.

I asked whether curatorial subjectivity could act in institutions of knowledge and power. I represented this questioning in an exhibition of artists whose practices self-consciously addressed issues of knowledge and power. The *Your Tongue In My Mouth* exhibition itself was presented within Stanley Picker Gallery, itself funded by Arts Council of England, at Kingston University. I also presented a work of fiction to represent subjectivity in the field of knowledge. These two presentations of knowledge were a conscious act within the academy, as a designated place for authorising knowledge.

Can curatorial subjectivity critically position self-reflexive practitioners and practice? My exhibition and novel sought to represent how past practices and contemporary histories could be considered as an interplay of self-conscious reflexive actors, embedded in contemporary cultural landscapes.

These actions locate the questions and practice as research, which can be identified as such, by referring to Estelle Barrett's work on experiential learning in practice as research:

Creative arts research is often motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns; it operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit and experiential knowledge. Experience operates within in the domain of the aesthetic and knowledge produced through aesthetic experience is always contextual and situated. The continuity of artistic experience with normal processes of living is derived from an impulse to handle materials and to think and feel through their handling. The key term for understanding the relationship between experience, practice and knowledge is 'aesthetic experience', not as it is understood through traditional eighteenth century accounts, but as 'sense activity'. I will further draw on the work of John Dewey, Michael Polanyi and others to argue that a creative arts practice as research is an intensification of everyday experiences, from which new knowledge or knowing emerges. (2014, pp. 115)

Ugly Beast as Method: Curatorial Subjectivity

Curatorial subjectivity had been informed by the idea of curator as active mediator, grounded in Paul O'Neill's *Curating Subjects*:

. . . [T]he curator is not something; the curator does something. There is no ontology of the middleman: she is a performative and extemporary

agent. Acquiring subjectivity in and by the act of mediation (O'Neill 2007, p. 26-27)

Is the mediator, or the figure of the middleman, as bad as modernism wanted us to believe, and as insidious as neo liberalism makes them appear? Gilles Deleuze thought differently. In an interview from 1985, called *Mediators*, (in *Negotiations 1972-1990*: 1990: p125) he challenges contemporary thought to intervene in or connect to what is already there. What is important, he says, is not to be the origin of an effort or to ponder eternal values, but instead to participate in movements: to put ideas into orbit and to get caught up in perpetual motion. He also urges modern thinkers to stop being custodians and 'get into something'. For Deleuze, movement/flow is creating itself, and the mediator embraces movement in order to keep the world open and alive. (O'Neill 2007, p. 22)

The naming of the act of 'mediation' and 'movement' in this text, expresses the dynamic incorporated in my own integration of subjectivity within my curating.

Similar theoretical articulations, also informed the ugly beast method of curatorial subjectivity, some of which had origins in feminist, queer and psychoanalytic philosophies, which questioned binary difference and essentialism in favour of interrogations, articulations, performativity and problematising.

Claire Colebrook's concept of 'Queer Vitalism' in *Sex After Life: Essays on Extinction Vol.2*, as part of my practice and articulation in the novel and exhibition, was important in resisting Cartesian dualism of mind versus body and embracing micropolitics.

This urgency of the turn to life, I will argue, far from being a recent, radical and necessarily transgressive gesture, has always underpinned (and presupposed) highly normative gestures in philosophy, literature and cultural understanding. Indeed, the very notion and possibility of the normative, or the idea that one can proceed from what is (life) to what ought to be (ways of living) has always taken the form of vitalism. For the purposes of this essay, then, I will define vitalism as the imperative of grounding, defending or deriving principles and systems from life as it really is. (Colebrook 2014, p. 100)

Hans Ulrich Obrist's *Brutally Early Club meetings* (2009) and his assertion that the best term to describe his job might be 'junction-maker' between not only objects, but also people was also relevant to my articulation of curatorial subjectivity. The exhibition *Memory Marathon* at The Serpentine (2011) can also be cited as part of the critical ecology of my research practice's development. Obrist stated:

As a curator, I am constantly engaged in building memory or, as Eric Hobsbawm put it, leading a 'protest against forgetting' . . . [E]xploring a subject that is so pertinent in an age where, as Ai Weiwei says, 'we move

so fast that memory is something we can only try to grasp'. (2011)

Curatorial subjectivity can be demonstrated as a self-conscious practice through the following example from curator, Peter Lewis, with whom I collaborated on several curated exhibitions at The Waiting Room, University of Wolverhampton, between 1996 and 2000.

'Tacit' is a kind of knowledge, unspoken, and difficult to express, yet is arguably paramount in reaching agreements of value. A tacit understanding differs from one employing empirical and logical means of communication, predetermined by technology networks. The tacit, or silent understanding between exhibiting artists, is not predetermined by facts, or curatorial will, but by an agreement to open interpretation from many subjective positions of equal value. A tacit agreement will allow for different kinds of experience to be shared, in this case upon a grid marked out on the gallery floor, without demands for categorical description or authorial identification. The construction of artworks follows a method using a simple algorithm, live on the web, that locates exact positions on a world grid. (Lewis 2019)

Reflection and reflexivity are also part of Curatorial Subjectivity and an inherent methodology of its practice. A through-the-mirror writing can tell the truth while accepting the impossibility of objectivity. We don't 'store' experience as data, like a computer: we 'story' it. Reflection can counteract seemingly given, social, cultural and political structures. Reflexivity is embodied, dialogical and an existential activity. Reflexivity includes the importance of self-actions and responses to others actions in the context of practice, and also considers the socio-material aspects of practice (Heidegger 2011).

Appendix titled background

Diagrams as Method

Throughout my research practice, diagrams were a method of mapping the characters to places, events and theories. This was a working method of keeping track of characters and making them reflect characteristics, as art roles or positions. A set of diagrams (see Ugly Beast Diagrams in PhD contents) inform the practice and visually map the inter-relation of knowledge, practices and method to characters and theories, which perform and act in a fictive and exhibition space respectively.

My questions were drawn as diagrams which mapped theoretical platforms and structures of the art world's function, taking a cue from but subverting the canonical and now questionable diagrams of Alfred Barr.

It was also a way of understanding theories, for example, psychoanalytic language, structures or dysfunctions. This developed from a primary diagram informing PhD questioning and was built upon in order to position research, including:

1. Application of different questions, manifesto and theories to be expressed in characters;
2. Understand ideas, politics, histories, generated by artists in the curated exhibition as visual conversation: *Your Tongue in My Mouth* (who had been chosen intuitively through intricate relationships built over the time of a curatorial career)
3. Express research via visual physical hand drawn mark making.

The text by David Burrows and Dean Kenning, from the ICA exhibition and symposium, *Plague of Diagrams* (2015), gives a good explanation of this method and my motivations in use of it:

'The plague is met by order; its function is to sort out every possible confusion.' Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*

Since the Enlightenment, when diagrams facilitated scientific and statistical breakthroughs, to cybernetic research of the twentieth century, to the algorithmic devices that govern relations and economies today, diagrams have extended and organised human culture. While diagrams have proliferated we can draw a distinction between diagrams that index and deliver knowledge, and diagrams that pose problems and facilitate thought as an exploratory process. . . .

. . . [D]iagrams as critical and logical exploratory devices that, in presenting what is not apparent or visible—real abstractions, potential modes of being, hidden relations—paradoxically depend on the register of the imaginary and the inventive production of images, figures and gestures. (Burrows and Kenning 2015)

The possibility of ideas and information existing all on one plane was important in adopting this method alongside allowing the imaginary. Also, the emphasis on space as a way of understanding. *Ugly Beast*, the practice and the novel, had imagined questions and activities in rooms, questions as characters and how and where they existed. Space allowed movement, visibility, connections and facilitated new thinking.

De Landa suggests, as a method of communication, diagrams conflate the representational and the possible space. Diagrams are here justified as being more than representational because they offer the possibility of creating other kinds of space and understanding (De Landa 2006).

I also refer to Rosalind Krauss' canonical notion and diagram from 'Sculpture as an Expanded

Field' (1979) in support of the ugly beast concept and writing as sculpture:

The expanded field, is thus generated by problematizing the set of oppositions, between which the modernist category sculpture, is suspended. And once this has happened, once one is able to think ones way into this expansion, there is logically three other categories that one can envision, all of them a condition of the field itself, none of them assimilable to sculpture. Because we can see, sculpture is no longer the privileged middle term between two things that it isn't. Sculpture is rather only one term on the periphery of a field in which there are other structured possibilities. And one has thereby gained the permission to think these other forms. (p. 38)

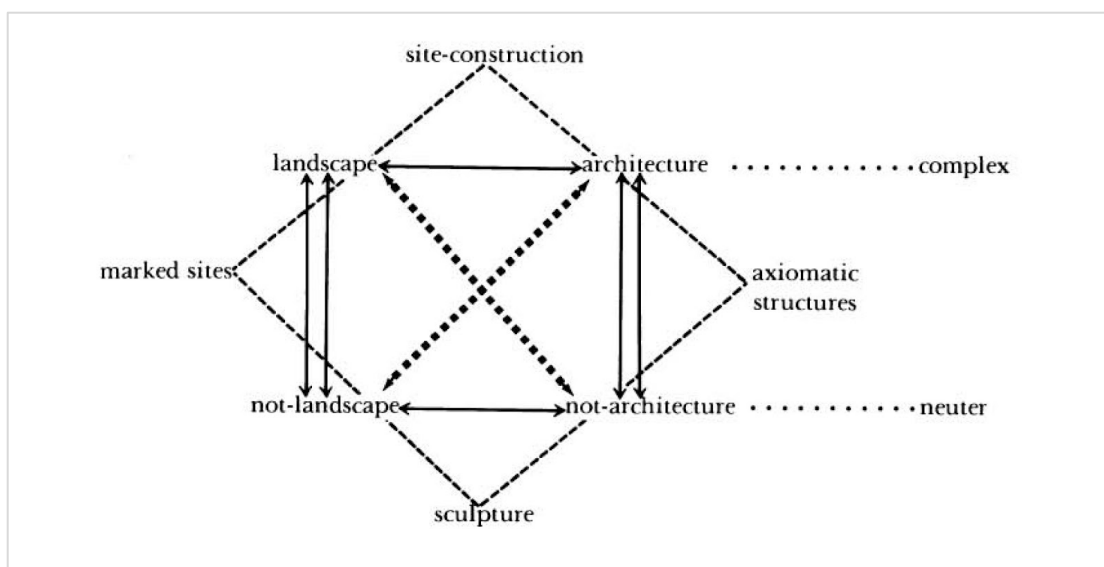


Fig. 2. Diagram - 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' (Krauss 1979, p.38)

Particularly important to me was the idea of sculpture as permission to think in other forms. Words and their arrangement make space, permission, connection and fixity. Diagrams became a mental apparatus to expose and test thinking in my research practice.

Space and Model as Method (for Novel)

The novel is a structure and container where subject and object are in constant co-dependency. The reader is in direct dialogue, interpreting their subjects and objects through personal signification, subjectivity and history. It is an intersubjective internal space. Olafur Eliasson's explanation in *Models are Real*, is helpful here:

A model offers a way of thinking. It is a tool. It is a space. It is a possibility. Models are not just simply smaller versions of other things. They are not

just representations. They are ideas. The model has the ability to transcend a reality and representation. As an idea it co exists in both of these places simultaneously: at once offering a sense of literal space but also of potential space. Models can be used in a variety of ways and to understand something bigger, yet to happen (2007, p. 19)

In *Ugly Beast* (the novel) spaces sanctioned by the state apparatus and by characters intimate lives are distinct but all are invested in these container spaces. Dave in his reassuring Neave Brown Brutalist flat, built on reassuring rational lines, Scarlett's love of the therapy waiting room and longing for a home, Charles's aspiration for middle class Victorian streets and the clinical gallery, Marlene's fashionable social spheres, operating as stages upon which to perform identities she cannot fully occupy.

In order to understand, inhabit, and evaluate space it is crucial to recognize its temporal aspect. Space does not simply exist in time; it is of time. The actions of its users continually recreate its structures. This condition is often forgotten or repressed, as Western society is generally still based on the idea of a static, non-negotiable space. Commercial interests also nurture this idea, as people have realized that static objects and objective spaces are more marketable than their relative and instable counterparts. (Eliasson 2007, p. 18)

Ugly Beast (the novel) uses a temporal aspect of space in subjective occupation of imagined space. Space acts in the manner of a reclaimed autonomous zone, activated via the act of writing. The space made is words, a word is a sculpture in the mind. It is not simply a found object in space.

Lefebvre distinguishes between different kinds of spatiality: the perceived, the conceived and the lived (1991). When the church, galley or council estate is described in the novel, its perceived form is linked to a belief system or formal encounter within a changing history and the politics of the city. This perception becomes a method of framing characters in architecture as a belief system. The conceived space of architectural planning exists in its drawing and geometrical proposals, and is echoed in diagrams supporting the construction of the novel's concept. The lived space is that of every day activity which characters in the novel act in and attach meaning to. This is expressed via the human body and is something Lefebvre reinforces in his writing:

The restoration of the body means first and foremost the restoration of the sensory-sensual. The body has a tangible quality and space is activated by perceived form and social interaction. (1991:35)

The inclusion of specific architectural domestic space and the council estate, in my novel, is a reflection of the *Ugly Beast Manifesto* addressing real and material life.

'There's some that don't half deserve pity on that Bacton Massive', the midwife said, pointing to the thirty-storey, seventies, council tower block, from Scarlett's window. This was one of the many on gentrified streets and capacious Victorian houses, that were carved into tiny flats made of plasterboard, with pantries and airing cupboards converted for cooking and ablutions, often sharing their smells. Scarlett decided not to tell her about the dead mice under the sink or that she envied the architecture and security of council tenure, on 'the Massive', as it was known locally. (Windsor 2016, p. 98)

Walking in the space of the London enabled the novel to narrate a type of psychogeography that utilised the architecture, a changing history and the politics of the city, as well as the contemporary art world. This occurred via my own personal routines of walking my baby to sleep in a pram, navigating the daytime of new motherhood, understanding new social structures and norms, wandering and finding new spaces and relationships to the city. Doreen Massey explains this type of encounter:

We recognize space as the product of interrelations: as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny. . . . Space is a site of multiplicity, it is the gathering together of potential and the co-existing interchange between those that use it. Without space, none of these things can function. Spatial understanding is at the very core of our interactions. (2005, p. 9)

Ugly Beast (the novel) was informed by the spaces of the city and the changing models of space within it. This time period witnessed a radical change in London as a city, architecturally and socially, with public recognition that artists could no longer afford to live in London and that for many, precarity was a defining feature of everyday life, art school and studio practices alike. Mediated private space, presented as public civic space, on land once publically owned, prompted notable practices. For example, Andrea Luka Zimmerman's film *Estate, a Reverie* (2015) pays homage to the council estate in a portrait of Samuel House, Haggerston, Hackney, demolished in autumn 2014. Cubitt Gallery's exhibition *A Public Resource* (2016) focused on giving a platform and space to grass roots political movements, activists, individuals and artists, campaigning for social, cultural or political change.

Saskia Sassen, in *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval Assemblages to Global Villages* (2008) suggests the idea of autonomous zones. And Saul Newman (2011) applies a Lacanian analysis of the social imaginary to explore the utopian fantasies and desires that underpin social spaces, discourses and practices – including planning, and revolutionary politics. Dave expresses such a social imaginary in *Ugly Beast* (the novel):

As Dave stormed onto Fitzjohn's Avenue in Hampstead, he saw the elegant houses that had been attacked by greed and homogeneity. They grieved with their adopted facades of gravel, marble, fake grass, shiny stone surfaces and replacement real windows, mocking the old in their new materials. Like knotted flesh of scars over the cuts, that took away the homely everyday, of lives lived in the glorious sun of Socialism's project. Many of these houses had belonged to the NHS, Tavistock Mental Health Hospital and to Camden Council, providing sanctuary, hostels and council housing. The nobility afforded to the troubled or relentless working life, by this social arrangement, in their forefathers' architecture, had given hope, meaning and even transformation. The journey of struggle, to tolerate the pains, injustices and disappointments, that had in these buildings, received encouragement and compassion, now had a lonely path, cast out, cast away. They left knotty scars, like flesh that wouldn't quite heal over, so the bumpy twists were always visible. As if the knife had been rudimentary. (Windsor 2016, p. 95-96)

Sara Jaspen in *Art Monthly*, discussed alternative ways to practice, stating: 'That pockets of resistance exist that individuals and groups continue to respond critically and creatively to the educational and societal problems they perceive should perhaps be viewed as amongst the most important artists acts of today' (2017, p.4).

The artist duo Cullinan and Richards outline resistance succinctly in their practice:

You can build your personal system-strategy to do things in life. In making work, think how you can stand apart from your homogenised surroundings, how can you take part in the world and at the same time not to be what the world wants you to be? How can you take advantage of the world's mechanisms in order to build your own? How can you shift continuously from one situation to another in the constant rebuilding of your own personal strategies, and how can you resist the outside world's impulses to incorporate and destroy difference? (Cullinan and Richards 2008)

Similar to his method of diagrams, De Landa's 'Assemblage Theory' (2006) can also be used to explain the layers and pastiche, that allow different knowledges to operate in one space in the novel. Fictional characters, their described psycho-pathologies, personal diaries, news reporting, cultural events, online gossip, theory quotes, therapeutic talk, all exist together in this frame. Deep listening is another method that can be said to be used in research for the novel. The active position of my curatorial career was replaced by one of a quieter observation and I spent much time listening in a way I would not have done previously, much as I also did by walking in the city. The psychoanalytic process observed, and allowing characters to be portrayed in the novel, is also one of deep listening and attentiveness.

Nicolas Bourriaud, in *Relational Aesthetics*, talks of participation and transitivity:

If a work of art is successful, it will invariably set its sights beyond its mere presence in space it will be open to dialogue, discussion and that from of inter-human negotiation which is a temporal process, being played out here and now. (2002, p. 4)

Eliasson (2007), Massey (2005), Bourriaud (2002), Lefebvre (1991) and De Landa (2006) all offer theoretical rational for a framework of space/time that *Ugly Beast* (the novel) occupies as a proposition for lived in knowledge, that uses history, artists, galleries, quotes and fiction and allows for contradiction and uncertainty.

Fiction as Method

The method of fiction allowed the expression of politics and theory through lived experience, making it both believable and able to be experienced though emotion and empathy. This method can be expressed as tacit research and may be explained as follows:

In the context of artistic research, the notion of tacit knowledge has been invoked central to the arts' challenging our common patterns of thinking . . . while experiencing a situation, visual, auditory, mobility, and emotional. . . . This tacit knowledge is acquired through extensive experience of visual approaches for the communication of experiential knowledge. (Schindler 2015, p. 231)

I transformed questions around curating contemporary fine art into real life characters on the therapist's couch so that their cultural and individual behaviour were inseparable. The novel became a scaffold for characters. A gallery director, artist, teacher, dealer and psychotherapist are depicted and bring forth the attendant theories and mannerisms of their roles. The characters were like ideological symptoms, and the prism of the psychoanalyst's couch provided a space like an actual room, for analysis, of cultural change in this construction of characters, who act in the art world. This act of fiction was also a result of my own maternal experience, which included: looking from the outside of a culture I had been inside of; relinquishing positions of power; entering a world of babies babble; the broken speech of children and other mothers and becoming subject to hegemonic structures in family roles. I struggled with this and an academic voice needed for PhD study. I created the questions as characters through a frustration at making an academic study of an aliveness I had experienced in fine art, and also at the limiting effect of culture and language that I directly felt and was newly subjected to. I felt voiceless. I understood feminism very differently and saw many other missing and silent voices that I had not before. I considered memory, books, everyday life and cultural observation, all materials I was surrounded by and could use. Some

characters were more developed, for example Scarlett, as I could use my own experiences to inform her and Dave who resembled the academics and critics I had worked with.

Each character acts out a different position, for example: high-end market values and style, a Marxist scholar, a chancer in Shoreditch dealing in middle markets, a struggling ex-academic artist. The psychoanalyst is also a symptom of contemporary life, with the therapy room being a sanctuary, as a church can also sometimes be, where contradictions, frustrations, addictions and traumas are tolerated, where they have a type of home. The characters behaviours present a landscape, that is a contemporary art world. The psychoanalyst is also a spin-off of relational aesthetics that can be considered to ameliorate rather than change cultural difficulties, a symptom of late capitalism itself.

I adopted a style that appeared like pastiche at times, quoting from gossip or news columns, academic and Biblical sources, alongside the characters internal voices reflecting upon themselves, remembering and speaking to the therapist. I also employed a guttural physical language of emotion, which was not necessarily grammatically correct. This was employed in order to express the failure of words and speech, or the struggle to articulate what was felt.

A subjective and creative writing style of poetry, music, protest or Biblical verse, was a strategy informed by work of the French feminists. For example, Hélène Cixous's theatrical writing and Irigaray's philosophy of gender and love, referring to an ecology of sex, bodily experience, articulation and *jouissance*, or Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic work on abjection, maternity and melancholia. Their writing challenged the boundaries of theory and fiction. As Irigaray shows in *Elemental Passions*:

And you wanted words other than those already uttered, words never yet imagined, unique in your tongue, to name you and you alone, you kept on preying me open, further and further open. Honing and sharpening your instrument, till it was almost imperceptible, piercing further into my silence. Further into my flesh, were you not thus discovering the path of your being. Of its yet to come? (Irigaray 1992, p. 9)

She used a style of *écriture féminine* (feminine writing), a project begun in the middle 1970s, when Cixous, Irigaray, Kristeva and Catherine Clément, began reading texts in the particular contexts of women's experience. Their strategy was not on a 'given' essence of male and female characteristics but on culturally achieved conventions, such as 'openness' in feminine texts. They drew on Derrida and Lacanian psychoanalysis. (Briganti and Davis 1994).

This strategy can be used to describe my use of fiction in *Ugly Beast*, the novel. Kristeva

describes this as speech acts, in her book *Desire in language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) in the form of the novel:

The novel, seen as a text is a semiotic practice in which the synthesised patterns of several utterances can be read. (Kristeva 1980, p. 37) I will show that the novels textural order is based more on speech than on writing and then proceed to analyse the topology of this phonetic order. (the relation of speech acts, in relation to one another). (Kristeva 1980, p.38)

In *Ugly Beast* novel, the character of Scarlett expresses a semiotic order based on speech:

As Scarlett lingered in the waiting room unable to expel herself yet, she thought of the words of her ex-partner in a local gastro pub. Careless words, like immovable stones now. Talk costs, thoughtless actions of panic make havoc she thought. Words, like hand grenades, reverberating, maiming for whole lifetimes and beyond. Sometimes dormant and potent, exploding later, like landmines thought buried, done and gone and disposed of. Consequences, as real as scars, infections and grievous bodily harm.

For years to come Scarlett would pass that pub where the careless words were said and the furniture, walls and staff would change. Where clear glass windows and hard chairs, replaced the comfy sofas, stained glass and yellowed paint. The words remained. It had been a place where they would sit in companionable silence, as she breastfed and the baby slept, where the Christmas tree was a prop for a fictional happy family photo. Scarlett made these photos for many years to give her daughter, who had no words, a family story, and a memory. (Windsor 2016, p.47)

For Cixous, and Kristeva, there is the key assumption that the feminine economy of excess does not need re-creation, to be made anew, because it persists in the margins and gaps (as the repressed, the unconscious) of male-dominated culture. As a deconstructive reader, she understands texts as built upon a system of cultural contradictions, especially concerning values. She focuses on those contradictions to find the channels of 'excess' and violation, accidents of meaning and perversities of signification, through which texts inscribe a feminine writing that goes beyond and escapes the masculine economy of texts. (Briganti and Davis 1994, p.162-4)

I also used Judith Butler and Foucault to think of gender as performative and culturally learnt. In *Ugly Beast* (the novel), Charles and Marlene act, particularly in this vein. The use of 'Him', with a capital H, also indicates a type of masculine presence in the female voice, used by Scarlett, that points to power, othering and unequal difference. I also used a writing style and relationship to objects, that I saw in fiction, for example *Morvern Callar* by Alan Warner. This is from the first page of his text:

He'd cut his throat with the knife. He'd near chopped off his hand with the meat cleaver. He couldn't object so I lit a Silk Cut. A sort of wave of something was going across me. There was fright but I'd day dreamed how I'd be.

I came back towards the scullery then took a running jump over the dead body. The sink was full of dishes so I had to give them a good rinse. The face was next to my bare foot. I fitted the kettle spout under the tap. Then I put my underwear over the spot and tugged the elastic round the sides. When the kettle boiled I put the warm knickers on. (1996, p.1)

In *Ugly Beast* (the novel) I thought about Mary Douglas's *Purity and Danger* (1966) and the polluting possibilities (and rituals that protect) sex, food and the female body and represented this in my language.

I remember when you sang to me as you cooked sausages telling the story of your day and I sang back as I told of mine. We laughed as our pretend opera became crazy and cracked. You grabbed my arse and shut off the gas and as I felt you throb deeply inside me and held you tight with my cunt, I saw under the oven, the years of grease, crumbs and bits of food. As my arms shook and body stiffened I smelt burnt sausages and clean sperm. And felt my face against the fake wood floor. Now our daughter pushes her body across the fake wood floor, on her back with just her legs, and looks underneath things too. (Windsor 2016, p. 61)

Kristeva describes pollution taboo as abjection in *Powers of Horror* (1982) and writes:

Defilement is what is jettisoned from the symbolic system. It is what escapes that social rationality, that logical order on which a social aggregate is based, which then becomes differentiated from a temporary agglomeration of individuals and in short constitutes a classification system or a structure. (1982, p. 65)

As writing fiction was chosen as a method during my experience of motherhood, where I was restricted from previously enjoyed curatorial work and spaces, it facilitated methods arising from my own invisible labour and a shift in practice. It gave permission, an 'epistemological amnesty'. I generated methods to meet different objectives. I wrote continuously, making notes into Gmail, my phone, into voice recorders, even on scraps of paper and periodically assembling a sculpture of parts: theory, quotes, situations, readings, press, gossip, press cuttings, memory, critique, descriptions of works, space, people. These became material for characters and their therapy sessions and then chapters, where a thematic and analytic framework painted a picture of the underlying theory. I later represented this in my drawn diagrams, extending them in order to visualise multiple parts

In *I Love Dick*, Chris Kraus asks who gets to speak and why (1997). This asks us to question discursive spaces to see how they might produce certain thoughts and modes of speech. What kinds of speech are privileged? In thinking about who is speaking and why, we start to consider *how* they speak. This is very relevant to *Ugly Beast* (the novel) where the method of fiction allows expression of uncertain and forgotten voices to speak and ones that do not fit within the academy. This method resists the sole author, genius or heroic solitary researcher. In the novel this may be most evidently expressed by Scarlett but the voice in therapy gives the ugly and painful, possible new space to exist or imagine in, across all characters. It offers a-grace-as-words translation of unspeakable confluences and conflicts, found by accident, unconscious processes and rupturing events.

Women Who Make A Fuss (WWMAF), written by Belgian philosophers Isabelle Stengers and Vinciane Despret, addresses the issue of women's voices asking what are women doing to thought? They connect this question to the position of women in the academy. They ask how the operation of academia in the context of economic forces might determine what kinds of ideas are produced, and how these determinations can be resisted. It is within this position I consider a novel as a PhD an original presentation of knowledge as it allows a particular voice within the academy, which is of course a place of power and knowledge production.

Institutions, like all human relationships, can be alive and growing - or they can be dead. As Lorenz Hart described the snuffing out of a living passion: 'When love congeals/it soon reveals/the faint aroma of performing seals. . . .' In our most vital institutions, the need for live human care and judgment is reduced to a series of performance indicators: people must reduce what they have to offer from within, under the government/management whip. (Windsor 2016, p. 96)

Writing fiction was in part informed by experience of ethnography and the practice of participant observation from an undergraduate degree in anthropology but also from a love of storytelling. Added to this, I had experience of psychoanalytic study, that occurred during an MA in photographic studies with practitioners, Victor Burgin and Olivier Richon, which included attendance on MA Psychoanalytic Study at Brunel University, with Parveen Adams, Darian Leader and Slavoj Zizek (1994-6). A subsequent reading course, at the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research, along with my own experience on the psychoanalyst's couch, initially with the intention of training to be a psychoanalyst, allowed me to use subjectivity and words, as materials of my practice.

The novel as form and method became a container home, a word homology, a sculptural form, to allow a voice and belonging for diverse experience, including that a gendered author, artist and curator in the academy. The arrangement of words, characters, events, emotions, scenes

and place, I viewed as a new curated landscape. The city, psychoanalysis, speculative accidental research, were key activations.

I should note autofiction is currently a popular contemporary art form, used in literary criticism to refer to a form of fictionalized autobiography (Doubrovsky 1977). *Ugly Beast* (the novel) is explicitly not of this intention but could be recognised in this genre.

Simon O'Sullivan's description in 'Fictioning the Landscape' (2018) expresses the methodology I employed.

This paper develops a concept of fictioning when this names, in part, the deliberate imbrication of an apparent reality with other narratives. It focuses on a particular audio-visual example of this kind of art practice, known as the film-essay or what Stewart Home has called the 'docufiction.' The latter operates on a porous border between fact and fiction, but also between fiction and theory and, at times, the personal and political. In particular the paper is concerned with how the docufiction can involve a presentation of landscape, broadly construed, alongside the instantiation of a complex and layered temporality which itself involves the foregrounding of other pasts and possible futures. 'Fictioning the landscape' also refers to the way in which these different space-times need to be performed in some way, for example with a journey through or to some other place as in a pilgrimage. The paper proceeds through analysing four case studies of this fictioning: Patrick Keiller's *Robinson* trilogy; Justin Barton and Mark Fisher's *On Vanishing Land*; Steve Beard and Victoria Halford's *Voodoo Science Park*; and *The Otolith Trilogy* by The Otolith Group. (O'Sullivan 2018, p. 54)

Ugly Beast (the novel) could be understood in this description as it did not belong in academic literature. Its tales of ugliness were instead central to the integration of thinking, activated, living concepts making a marriage of interior and exterior states, expressed in events, organisation of space, narrative and language.

Practice experiments including interviews on failure and a collaboration with Heather Sparks, informed my fiction's development. Sparks and I replicated invitation cards for prestige events and after attending, made stories and drawings of the event. I later wrote an essay for her artists' colouring book *It Colors Your Life*, of drawings originating from this practice, for an event at SFMOMA (2011). I curated these drawings in the *Your Tongue in My Mouth* exhibition. I also wrote an essay for Bob and Roberta Smith's exhibition, *Get Personal and Political* (2014), informing my fiction development and his painting, which was also curated into *Your Tongue in My Mouth*.

The catalogue essay for Sparks reflected on the turn of the 20th century in British art and was a precursor to the novel *Ugly Beast*, via participant observation and development of my own

voice. This period was also depicted by Gregor Muir in his memoir *Lucky Kunst* (2009). My writing, derived from this collaboration with Sparks, consciously resisted his style, while acknowledging a similarity of experience. He recounts scenes of great and disturbing drunkenness that were central to contemporary art culture in the 90s. He describes the excitement of finding, what was to become known as the YBA (Young British Artist) movement and its subsequent fall from grace.

To be a Young British Artist was to be ascribed the following attributes. A Fuck you attitude was essential, as was drinking excessive amounts of alcohol. Ideally, you had a working class background and swore a lot. You spent your days in the Groucho club or Golden Heart where you'd stay up late talking to Sandra. You'd knock up an art work. . . . You would appear drunk on television. You'd dine in all the best restaurants and not eat a thing. You'd go out on the town with Vivienne Westwood and Kate Moss who thought you were a darling. You were photographed in a studio you hadn't visited in weeks wearing expensive designer clothes, looking charismatic and pulling faces. When interviewed you'd talk about your roots and what it was like to be poor. Suddenly your phone would ring and you'd be off. (Muir 2009, p. 220)

He describes a scene of being 'carried away on a wave of camaraderie, where an artist laughing hysterically cries 'It's too much, I've shit myself'. He observes it was a turning point, along with an incident recalled of Norman Rosenthal, calling Hirst's wife, after finding him playing the piano naked, at The Colony Rooms. Muir reflects:

I noticed my face was puffy and haggard from night after night of abuse. What had happened to me? It started to dawn on me that I couldn't go on like this. I had thrown myself into the art world wholeheartedly and what was coming out the other end was a middle aged man with no children who seemed to avoid adult responsibility at every turn. . . . It occurred to me I was too involved with the art world, and I might not be able to find my way out now even if I tried. I had chosen to live my life like a teenager (Muir 2009, p. 231)

I wrote:

Heather Sparks *It Colors Your Life* is inspired by William Hogarth's 18th century politically satiric drawings, examining excess and its social implications. Heather depicts London's turn of the 20th century, contemporary art scene, drinking to excess in images culled online and mined from the artist's personal collection. Its title is taken from a 2002 Gordon's Gin advertisement. *It Colors Your Life* explores contemporary bacchanalian culture, where in drunken revelry nothing is regarded as impious or criminal. Her book plays with the double edge of escapism. A playful oblivion is juxtaposed against the tensions of success and failure and the darker, destructive forces at work in drinking.

Scenes of drunkenness have titles like *foot in mouth*, *girls on couch*, *briefcase*, *comforter*. In many, bottles of beer, seemingly stuck in mouths, make recognisable art names look like gargoyles or almost grotesque caricatures. In others mouths are held open, caught in raucous laughter and some show undress, peeing against a car or bodies disheveled and fallen over. In one, a businessman is slumped, be-suited in the street, his briefcase out of reach. In another a man is shown in close up sucking the foot of someone, while a different drawing shows someone wrapped in a comforter, the day after. The pencil marks are not soft on details; laughter lines, insides of mouths, stubble, bruises and under the eye lines. Pretty girls are shown getting sloppy, more than one drink in hand. Their strappy clothes fallen from angular limbs and strangely unfocused eyes, are all the more disturbing for the characters obvious previous attention to cosmetic detail. One thinks touchingly of their obvious effort undone while beery men seem less incongruous and disordered until we see obscene acts and collapsed bodies.

If Heather's drawings were a Hogarth depiction of modern morality the story would be not so much of drunk and disorderly but of disillusioned dreams of a modern classless Britain and USA in the 90s. Current economics a decade later might serve to remind, that free market economics and ideology makes slaves of many and success for a few. For all the 'lucky kunst', there are those with no property, children, capital or galleries. Or those struggling, before it's too late; with relationships, fertility, poverty and obscurity. And some who just didn't make it and died. A backdrop of grand failures and everyday tragedies haunts the charming comedic drinking scenes of 'Cool Britannia', leaving some artists to ask 'are there other landscapes of classlessness, other places to dream than the pub?'

It is impossible for me to separate here an academic's voice from that of a participant observer. Heather and I shared many nights at private views, going onto the Groucho, The Colony Rooms and much seedier 'end of the night' and early morning venues. Often great friends and memories were made but also great risks taken, sometimes forgotten. All of these raw experiences shape my reading of Heather's book. What I refer to here is the artist's ability to live in a precarious state of continual examination and excitement. To see the fissure, blur, blot and stain and draw its details, not bowing to social nicety, that would edit or add soft focus or colour. It is within this unflinching register that Heathers book is made, of social satire and raw emotional exposure, glimpsing the dark shimmering hours of drinking and smoking. (Windsor 2011 A)

Ugly Beast Novel: Characterisation as Method

All characters start in alienated narcissistic positions and move toward community, work, friendship, love, religion of sorts and variously negotiated positions, allowing contradictions and supporting vitality and self-directed thinking and decisions. They come to a place of thinking rather than 'not thinking'. Like a dog that snaps at the heels of cynical, hegemonic capitalism's cliché, they carve out a place for thinking with others and making a home for the

mind. This is also in line with the *Ugly Beast Manifesto*, produced from analytic thinking in the mapped field of contemporary art.

Scarlett

Through accident, failure and maternity, events rupture her fantasies of a family and the security that she craves, after her life's historic debasements. French feminists Kristeva, and Irigaray allow her to find words as places. She is located in the body, language the subjective and poetic, but also firmly located in a political context. Alain Badiou's concept of love and 'agape' love (2012), found in the psychoanalyst's room, allow her to sublimate through art, acts and friendships.

Scarlett had been reading while her baby slept.

'Was it your tongue in my mouth, which forced me into speech? Was it that blade between my lips which drew forth words to speak of you?'

Unable to ignore the domestic fabric around them she picked up dropped milky sick clothes, emptied the washing machine, filled it again and arranged all the perfect little baby clothes across straight lines, radiators, balcony in the sun, top of a bookshelf, with colours and patterns coordinating. . . . She knew how it felt now, a Marxist feminist perspective from those texts she used to study and teach. But now the words were not clever and wry, the kind that took months and years to write, they were about survival, witness and solidarity of lived invisible experience. (Windsor 2016, p. 70)

Words are Scarlett's containers, her sculptures and sublimating material. Scarlett's theoretical representation in the novel, express Lacanian concepts, as discussed here:

Scarlett wrote in her diary little titles, that, as she didn't have enough time to write, was the most efficient way to use words to say what her mind was bursting with, contained the essence of what needed to be said, to jolt her brain back to the connections and pictures inside her.

'Seeing hearing speaking, breathing, living, all these wait to be made fecund by an innocent potency.'

Bits of odd paper receipts, corners of magazines, got pushed in too, with sentences across the blank bits, sometimes illegible. It was a habit started when always holding the baby and using her hands for many tasks. She did not have idle moments to write references or connect things up, or to make sense. It was a time too, when words had failed, she could not remember the word for something or someone anymore. Letters and conversations went unfinished and important words unsaid. While her minds immediacy was attuned to willing life to persist, images and metaphors, marked by memory had to stand in, instead. While she washed up, changed a nappy, pushed the pram, climbed the stairs, cooked, walked, lay with the baby attached to her breast, these little titles came into her head. She memorized them like rooms and places in her home, to put all the precious things that didn't have words or places and could not be seen or even named. She put them all there, so she would recall for years to come what was in those room like titles. They held promises and acts of faith that could only be told in jokes, tears and ridicule and later stories. So words became her mark. A smear of memory, the witness-stain to existence (Windsor 2016, p. 61-62)

What Gilles Deleuze calls 'encounter' (1990, p.125), and O'Sullivan (2012) explains as a feeling of being on the edge of our own psychic shape, are relevant ideas for Scarlett in *Ugly Beast* (the novel), who experiences abjection. Kristeva describes this as being 'on the fragile border where identities (subject/object), do not exist, or only rarely so – double, fuzzy, heterogeneous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, abject' (1982, p. 207).

Scarlett's visual language embodies a melancholy and set of contradictions that seek representation and this can be seen in the work of Louise Bourgeois. Just before Bourgeois' retrospective at Tate Modern (2007-2008), two boxes of discarded writings that refer to her analysis, which she underwent four times a week, were found in her Chelsea home; after her death in 2010 (aged 98), her assistant unearthed two more. Selections of these have been exhibited in the Freud Museum alongside two dozen of her bulging and sinister patchwork sculptures and installations. (The Return of the Repressed 2012). These jottings, on random pads, letterheads, even playing cards, offer a glimpse into Bourgeois' psychological states. Many of her automatic writings resemble concrete poetry, such as one arranged as a spiral of injunctions. Louise Bourgeois stated 'A sense of reparation is very deep within me'. This reparation in her work includes remembering and working through earlier traumas. Donald Winnicott's object relations theory understands the feelings of loss of the mother/breast as being transferred into objects which can then be controlled attempting to gain mastery over an object/person (1949). The image is being covered and uncovered, as we remember, then forget. This accurately describes the work of reparation that Scarlett attempts in her ideological position in the novel.

Her use of words and the voice, not vision, is also a strategy to resist myths of objectivity and

transparency and a belief in vision has a privileged means of access to certainty and truth ('seeing is believing'). This is something Craig Owens taps into when he writes:

Vision is hardly disinterested; nor is it indifferent, as Luce Irigaray has observed: 'Investment in the look is not privileged in women as in men. More than the other senses, the eye objectifies and masters. It sets at a distance, maintains the distance. In our culture, the predominance of the look over smell, taste, touch, hearing, has brought about an impoverishment of bodily relations into an image.'

That the priority our culture grants to vision is a sensory impoverishment is hardly a new perception; the feminist critique, however, links the privileging of vision with sexual privilege. Freud identified the transition from a matriarchal to a patriarchal society with the simultaneous devaluation of an olfactory sexuality and promotion of a more mediated, sublimated visual sexuality. (Owens 1983, p. 70)

Artists Jenny Holzer and Cathy Wilkes, in different ways, make works that undermine binary oppositions and myth, and resist investment in the primacy of vision. Scarlett's word sculptures and engagement with the voice, within *Ugly Beast* (the novel), can be understood in this manner.

Since 2000, a number of authors in humanities have begun to explore affect theory as a way of understanding spheres of experience (including bodily experience), which fall outside of the dominant paradigm of representation (based on rhetoric and semiotics). Colebrook's text, *Sex After Life: Essays on Extinction* (2014), brings together Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *What is Philosophy* (1994) and 'the plane of immanence', to suggest power not just of command, but also of constitution, revelation and intuition. And this is where Scarlett's character resides.

Dave

In the novel, Dave is a political structural enquiry positioned as protest, located in history and contexts defined by his age and generation. He represents the ideas of Louis Althusser, Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci, and a language reminiscent of E.P. Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory* (1978).

In the next few years those who had joined forces, sometimes at great personal cost, to construct the house of the New Left, woke up from their dream to find themselves outside the home which had once been theirs looking in on a new young occupant whose pride in ownership was tempered only by his evident distaste for the unfashionable and vulgar manner in which the house had been furnished by its original occupants.

It was not long before those who stood outside their old home saw the first fleet of intercontinental removal lorries roll in. Swiftly and with very little fuss the old furniture was trundled out. That battered well-used sofa with its William Morris cover went out with it, earmarked for the dust-heap. The old kitchen chairs which were hewn from oak and worked crudely so that a little humanity had stuck to their rough forms, were now considered unusable. The old pictures were taken down from the walls and most of the books were stripped from the shelves, packed into tea-chests and loaded, along with the furniture, into the waiting container lorries. No sooner was the old furniture loaded up than was the new furniture carried proudly down the ramps of the same lorries. New steel and glass tables and chairs designed on the Bauhaus principle but purchased for the most part in Paris, were efficiently installed within the house – whose walls had already been replastered and painted in that uniform white beloved of the bourgeoisie. Only when the cantilever chair of mathematical catastrophe theory had been finally placed in position opposite the sofa of Althusserian structuralism and beneath the spotlight of Lacanian theory focused by Juliet Mitchell did the new occupants begin to feel more secure and a little more at home. Unpacking their Habitat kitchen they started to cook meals which contained little goodness and less meat but which were deemed all the better for that. (Webster 1982)

To Thompson, class was not a structure, but a relationship and this is expressed by Dave via psychoanalysis, through his relationships to institutions and feelings of envy and exclusion. But it is not a collapsing or reducing of relationships to the personal but rather an expression of the material, lived relations expressed in language.

Dave has moments like Jean Paul Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* (2002) when Sartre writes that 'a profound meaning of being is outside of me imprisoned in an absence' (p. 404). In Dave's psychoanalysis, it is like his listening though the door impulse is witnessed and he sees himself, because someone else sees him. He grew up watching with enjoyment but not being able to participate.

In Lacanian terms a strong ego is seen as defensive and expressing it during analysis is seen as resistance to change. Dave's fear of disintegration and lack, drives him to imagine himself actualised in roles like that of an academic or socialist. Dave's political self is his defence and his anger directed at neoliberalism, mirrors the anger he denies at an absent, neglectful father.

Dave had no teaching Fridays as it was a research day. He'd been reading *Love's Labour cost: The Political Economy of Intimacy* as he wanted to respond to a question raised in his research cluster on why love is neglected in Academic study. He'd heard a radio show on the subject of maternal love and it was quite disquieting. He recognized something about the lack of a father. In therapy that week, he'd talked about his mother's sacrifice for him, in part to mitigate against a largely absent, alcoholic father. He'd watched his mother get into men's cars on dates, eat baked beans for dinner every night, wear the same coat for as many

winters as he could remember. She'd saved for his school shoes and later to buy him four cans of lager on Saturday nights. Supermarket brand. He'd consumed them in his room alone, listening to The Smiths and Joy Division. Institutions held Dave, he secretly quite liked rules. (Windsor 2016, p. 38)

He might express himself in the manner expressed in Neil Kinnock's speech at Bridgend, Glamorgan, on 7 June 1983, which also represents a turning point in British politics, seeing a dismantling of the state and its protective agencies.

If Margaret Thatcher is re-elected as prime minister on Thursday, I warn you.
I warn you that you will have pain—when healing and relief depend upon payment.
I warn you that you will have ignorance—when talents are untended and wits are wasted, when learning is a privilege and not a right.
I warn you that you will have poverty—when pensions slip and benefits are whittled away by a government that won't pay in an economy that can't pay.
I warn you that you will be cold—when fuel charges are used as a tax system that the rich don't notice and the poor can't afford.
I warn you that you must not expect work—when many cannot spend, more will not be able to earn. When they don't earn, they don't spend. When they don't spend, work dies.
I warn you not to go into the streets alone after dark or into the streets in large crowds of protest in the light.
I warn you that you will be quiet—when the curfew of fear and the gibbet of unemployment make you obedient.
I warn you that you will have defence of a sort—with a risk and at a price that passes all understanding.
I warn you that you will be home-bound—when fares and transport bills kill leisure and lock you up.
I warn you that you will borrow less—when credit, loans, mortgages and easy payments are refused to people on your melting income.
If Margaret Thatcher wins on Thursday
I warn you not to be ordinary
I warn you not to be young
I warn you not to fall ill
I warn you not to get old. (Kinnock in Gavins 2007, p. 118-119)

Dave's character also expresses a critique of privatised higher education, where students are actors and consumers with theory as rhetoric and objects seducing imagined audiences. He might have written angry letters in *Art Monthly* or be in an artists led group like BANK.

On the practice-based Fine Art PhD programme, a possible project for his supervision, Bruce: *Existential Otherness as Life Form*. A swirl of Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze & Guattari, surrounded him. Words clustered insecurely, meaninglessness offered like an anorexic's feast: 'subject object phenomenological . . . inhabit self as a project . . . you are not self/other . . . there is no clear distinction. The stream of subject-object is

the subject of enquiry . . . and space-time construct is a falsehood'. Words spewed across the page, in the incomprehensible proposal. Dave could bear no more and scribbled alongside: 'you need a precedent and rationale. Are the words of your project, the same as the words you use to describe it, on purpose?' (Windsor 2016, p. 39)

He also experiences masculinity as a fragile concept, as Butler (1990) exposes gender to be. In the historical period of Dave, there would have been 'masculinity studies' that emerged after 'women's studies' in universities in the 80s and 90s, along with 'queer studies'.

Dave was well read and interrogative and it surprised Daniel that he had not noticed his own conflicts and struggle. He has started to talk about his background in the context of 'work' and had stumbled over words describing 'work', as he spoke of his hometown and community. He had trailed off from a polemical speech as it became more and more personal. . . . Then he stopped and was oddly quiet, without the energy of objection. Did it always have to be a battle, could inequalities or differences be lived with and understood, Daniel asked? (Windsor 2016, p. 21)

Marlene

In the novel, Marlene references Butler (1990), acting out a gendered role as power performing the position of a cultural elite. She may also express an exaggerated femininity, as explained in the concept of *Womanliness as Masquerade* (Riviere 1929), to obscure guilt and conflicted feelings in her role, which she activates in her psychoanalysis. In embracing market freedoms Marlene can make a radical reconstruction of femininity, including reproduction, which is positioned as authenticity.

Marlene had no issues with artifice. She had Botox on her feet so she could wear heels all day, on her face so she couldn't frown, had plastic surgery procedures as a matter of course but had drawn the line, for now, at the knife. However today her diary incorporated some of the classic clichés of contemporary arts marriage with the high end, luxury goods market. Mass production of a client-pleasing product, presented a problem with real actual artifice and felt tedious and deadening. (Windsor 2016, p. 28)

Sarah Thornton's *Seven Days in The Art World* (2009) expresses the world of Marlene, one informed by my experience of commercial galleries, collectors and the VIP world of art fairs.

Marlene is also exposed in therapy as exercising choice in the way Renata Salecl (2011) critiques, using Lacanian psychoanalysis. She overcomes this by actual experience, events and the memory of vulnerability, that directly relate to femininity but avoid a collapse into essentialism. She also might be like Sherrie Levine, replicating seminal works as a post-

modern, feminist statement. She is the aspect of the art world visible to the outside and to popular culture. She expresses, in theory terms, the position of audience as spectator, consumer as collector.

Charles

In the novel Charles finds liberation through market positions that enable him to reinvent himself in the city and slip into class positions in the art world he craves, for their power and protection. Like Baudelaire's dandy he has an ephemeral experience of life in an urban metropolis.

Who among us has not dreamt, in moments of ambition, of the miracle of a poetic prose, musical without rhythm and rhyme, supple and staccato enough to adapt to the lyrical stirrings of the soul, the undulations of dreams, and sudden leaps of consciousness. This obsessive idea is above all a child of giant cities, of the intersecting of their myriad relations. (Baudelaire 1951)

He is part of a post Young British Artist fantasy. He is decadent and experiencing the fracturing and displacement of a post-modern schizophrenia, with events and abject experiences, of a Lacanian 'real' (1977), which he shuns.

He threw down the book. It was all there, his obese domineering mother. . . the cruel cold far away stare he got when he masturbated. His ripping off other artists. God she was thin now too. She'd refused on feminist grounds to lose weight while she was with him. Why did he have to have the fat years? He remembered after the first date, when he realized she liked him as much as he did her, how his heart felt like a living thing, like an animal, a dog rolling in grass. (Windsor 2016, p. 33)

Charles is constructed through a system of signs, working together, a simulacrum. Jean Baudrillard portrays societies always searching for a sense of meaning or a 'total' understanding of the world remains consistently elusive (1995). Giving way to a hyperreality and defacement of reality, where the postmodern mind and critical view cannot, by definition, ever truly break free from the all-encompassing 'self-referential' sphere of discourse. Charles in the novel, *Ugly Beast* might read Walter Benjamin's *One-Way Street* (2016) but end up in a J G Ballard novel.

God this was weird. When did this happen? Historical heavy weights with the kick ass market? The gallery was all double height concrete, plate glass and negative space. Caterers and gallerinas glided between the art celebs, museum curators, fashionable dealers and the scruffy respected writers. Also, there was little or no actual work, so it was not all about the

showing off, or was it? That was clever. Was this really crap or really cool? Had he done too much coke to tell? He had to get a handle on this. There was obviously opportunity here, too many big names. (Windsor 2016, p. 18)

Simon Bill's novel *Brains* (2011) was a brilliant depiction of the desperate experience of trying to be inside the art world, like Charles tries to be in *Ugly Beast*, a novel. Charles retreats to a smaller world than the complex urbane one, he previously occupied, finding refuge in public, communal spaces in order to look inwards. And at the point of leaving incarceration, repeats actions that will continue his institutionalization. Art critic Adrian Searle quotes Franz Kafka as advice on an ideal syllabus for artists and Charles has found himself in this position.

There is no need for you to leave the house. Stay at your table and listen. Don't even listen just wait. Don't even wait, be completely quiet and alone. The world will offer itself to you unmasked: it can't do otherwise: in raptures it will writhe before you. (Kafka in Searle 1998, p. 34)

Daniel

Daniel, as the analyst in the novel, represents reflexivity, in experiencing his own counter transference in his psychoanalytic practice and also in demonstrating this practice to be ideologically positioned. His character allows change, repetition, contradiction and love within the narrative and characters.

He'd written several books applying Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to fine art and popular culture and had been included in academic journals spanning architecture to fashion, that got him invited to exclusive artist dinners and attracted new patients, who, whilst presenting the usual array of addictions and neurosis, did have more interesting symptoms. (Windsor 2016, p. 12)

Daniel however is in crisis and finds change hard. He is fearful of his own past and finds comfort in his role as therapist and husband, in caring for others vulnerability.

Daniel facilitates love, not in mastery or God-like compassion, but through acts of risk and reconciliation that might be accommodated within the characters, with the accompanying anxiety and unbearable emotions borne or re-represented in order to be assimilated.

We need to repeat difference and thinking; the minute we feel we have grasped what thinking and difference are then we have lost the very power

of difference. Repetition is not the reoccurrence of the same old thing over and over again; to repeat something is to begin again, to renew, to question, and to refuse remaining the same. (Colebrook 2002, p. 8)

Badiou (2012) argues that love carries an inherent risk, for love is a violation of the ego and involves transcending the narcissistic self for a common perspective. Love is a disruptive event that opens people to a new terrain of possibilities and a common vision of what they might be together. Love, Badiou, claims, requires that we reinvent ourselves, together. It is a project of co-construction, the kind of event that we need to constantly work at in order to sustain. He describes love as a surprise and way of getting to know the world. Love is the birth of co-possibility, saying we maintain it in a state of tension, unpredictability, and risk:

Love isn't simply about two people meeting and their inward-looking relationship; it is a construction, a life that is being made, no longer from the perspective of one but from the perspective of two. (Badiou 2012 p. 29)

Daniel shows collaboration, affirmation and support to awaken love. Love, in these contexts, is a political event.

Psychoanalysis as method: social structures and unconscious mechanisms.

I used psychoanalytic and Lacanian theory to inform my novel and exhibition. In *Ugly Beast*, the novel, this informed making the characters and their symptoms, as well as their engagement within the therapeutic encounter, and informed the use of language as sculpture. The characters can be understood as ideological symptoms shaped by culture. They are subject to political structures but they also effect change, via the therapists couch, relationships and accidental events. Within the *Your Tongue In My Mouth* exhibition it informed the choice of artists, who had represented emotions of shame, failure, class, internal mental conflict, vulnerability of childhood and illness, as well as experiences of inequality, exclusion, violence or radical address of difference and invisibility.

Engagement with listening and evoking a visual conversation and emotion, in the exhibition, are deliberate strategies of practice. -Within both outputs, Lacan's theory that the unconscious is structured like language is key and it is within this inter - subjective order of symbolisation that I situate my novel and exhibition development (1977).

Freud's work on the unconscious in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1913) describes how

symbols in dreams reveal unconscious fears and desires. In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1914), he said slips of the tongue and the inability to remember words reveal these when awake. Lacan extends Freud's work in identifying the unconscious, operating in various structures through articulation in language. In Lacan's mirror stage, a child, recognises the self as separate from the mother and acquires cultural conditioning and identity, via speaking and the use of language. This recognition of the self, as other to the mother, creates a fracturing and loss, that is never recovered from. Desire, seen in all parts of life, is motivated by attempts to return to an illusory sense of completeness, experienced before giving up the mother's body. Different objects from the mother and childhood are given up at various developmental points for the child. Depending on how this is facilitated and allowed, symptoms develop. (Lacan 1977)

Psychoanalysis has long made this distinction between inside and outside as an index of mental states. The example in psychoanalytic theory is separation from the breast; it is a model for what happens to the interior of the infant when it experiences a separation from an external object, the mother. The breast is still part of the infant and is also part of the mother. The double register of internal/external corresponds to the fact that the breast is both an object of desire and a point of anxiety in the other. (Winnicott 1949 and Klein 1952) Lacan's theory of the object also radically undermines the simple opposition between the space of human interiority and social objectivity.

This double register can also be applied to vision and the incompleteness of the gaze. The eye corresponds to the ego and sense of complete coherent identity. When vision and expectations of vision are disrupted, anxiety is provoked. This is described in Laura Mulvey's seminal text *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1989) and Parveen Adams *The Emptiness of the Image* (1986).

Jacques Lacan used Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistics, structural anthropology and post-structural theories to dismantle ideas of an imaginary sense of completeness, where desire and connection are created through language. Lacan explains this through Saussure's signifier and signified, which are seen not as referring to objects but to psychic representations created by their interplay, and by culture and history. Within language, the subject vainly tries to represent itself. The unconscious is less something inside the person, as an 'intersubjective' space between people, and the unconscious is structured like language. Lacan said that human passion is structured by the desire of others and that we express deep feelings by relating them to others. Desire is therefore a social phenomenon

and psychoanalysis a theory of how the human subject is created through social interaction in language, culture and the spaces between people. (Lacan 1977)

In Renata Salecl's book *The Tyranny of Choice* (2011) she applies this analysis to market capitalism, looking at the relationship between market-ideology and individual identity, positioned and presumed to be self-directed. Working from a psychoanalytic tradition, she demonstrates the important role that unconscious emotions and desires play in shaping subjectivity and agency. She applies Lacanian theory to understand how we embrace economic rationalism and how these processes inhibit social change. Similarly, Samo Tomšič, in *The Capitalist Unconscious: Marx and Lacan*, (2015) shows links between libidinal bonds and mechanisms of exploitation.

Lacan's three concepts, of the 'imaginary', the 'symbolic' and the 'real' were also structures for developing the research practice of my novel and exhibition: the 'imaginary', a place of confusion, of reality and imagination; the 'symbolic', where rules and meaning order our structuring of reality, which make us see and 'not' see; the 'real', which is not simply external reality but something which cannot be directly experienced (Hill and Leach 2009). I applied psychoanalytic ideas to real life issues in curated radio discussions and this informed, in part, the characterisation of Scarlett in *Ugly Beast* (the novel). For example: *A Labour of Love: Motherhood as Emotional Capital part 2* (2011 D) with the Italian psychoanalyst and author of *Concerning the Rites of Psychoanalysis* (1994), Bice Benvenuto.

Two weeks ago we introduced the concept 'emotional capital' to look at class and social values in mothering. This week we use Lacanian psychoanalysis to look at anger, anxiety and intense identifications in the experience of being a mother, to re think how emotions intersect with political and economic life. (*Labour of Love: Motherhood as Emotional Capital* 2011part 2)

The novel, *Ugly Beast*, explicitly engages with the idea of the unconscious and processes from the characters' early lives being active and present in their adult lives, as fragmentations and condensations. These appear in scenes on the couch, in accidents, events, coincidences, art writing, music, sexual attraction, desire and relationships. They frame the characters' stories and subjective experiences, sometimes explicitly so, via: the psychoanalyst Daniel, who is continuous to them all; the teacher Dave in the Art School; Scarlett, as an artist and mother; Charles the artist come dealer; and Marlene the gallery director. Misrecognition of desire and attempts at unification of ego play out in the characters, their art activities and sublimations. For example: Scarlett's absent and narcissistic mother, leaving her abandoned and disconnected in relation to her trying to become a mother herself; Dave's single mother

enslaved by poverty and a shrinking world and his class anger in a hard won academic position and subsequent loneliness; Marlene damaged and high functioning, seducing and controlling to defend her pain, who talks about her uncle's blindness and attention to listening and knowledge from a non-vision perspective; Charles's inability to countenance the neglect and depression of his obese housebound mother and spiralling himself through his self-destructive addiction, with a fragile grasp on his own agency and reality

The novel also makes apparent, subjectively operating at points of crisis, event or internal voice leading to action. For example: Charles's accidental suicide attempt; Dave's desiring a student at all costs, including expulsion from the institution he feels parented by; Scarlett's longed for family and loss of voice in maternity; Marlene's false pregnancy and finding herself at a turning point after acknowledgment of her past, in her present, on revealing the events of abortion and rape; the therapist's marriage crisis, after escaping his own life through his work.

There is also a mourning at work, culturally represented in the characters alienation and grief that brings them to the therapist's couch. They occupy a generation that has a parental history of social change that is eaten by the political project of neo liberalism. They are Thatcher's children, they are *This is England* (2006). They are imbued with utopia but frustrated by pastiche consumer identity that leads them to borrow authenticities, to attach to other alienated minorities in a perpetual adolescence. They are outside their culture and themselves in a perpetual reincarnation of a lost sense of self.

In the novel big frequently overshadows small, with characters lost for words or drowned out and searching for fragile meaning on the therapy couch, grappling with thinking or not thinking. Through the use of inside and outside and a sense of scale, characters encounter spaces, be this architecture, politics or concepts, allowing a polarity to be asserted that echoes the Enlightenment's rationalist project, of body versus mind, passive versus active, but also of sheer physical size dominating all else, leaving an empty space, surrounding and devoid of others. This recalls not only restrictive binary oppositions but the cultural dominance of neoliberalism and a capitalistic force not even leaving space for the mind. The force and size of capital overcoming collectivism, thinking, productivity and self-consciousness leaving an unthinking animal.

For the novels characters, dimensions are intertwined. Individual and public experience come together, represented by language and culture, where differences are not obliterated and where oscillations between loving and hating are tolerated, even entered and experienced. This is directly facilitated by the frame of the psychoanalytic encounter but also seen in the

symbolic spaces they occupy. For example, within the novel, Scarlett's experience depicts an 'imaginary' memory of marriages, the 'real' of bodily fluids (shit, tears, fathers name left blank) and the 'symbolic', a state sanctioned, rite of passage, registering the birth of her daughter in council offices.

She pushed the council housing form to the bottom of her bag, and the humiliating memory of the council office visit yesterday, from her mind. The municipal building unceremoniously held many rites of passage: where she'd been to a friend's wedding, who had to marry so she could stay in the country to love someone; registering her daughter's birth, an occasion made memorable by her child's father's deep remorse and public crying. Sobs had shaken his body as she left the line for 'FATHER'S NAME' blank. She felt curiously unmoved. Their baby had filled her nappy with an enormous quantity of shit and a power cut to part of the building meant they had to clean up the baby's entire body in the dark of a windowless disabled toilet. (Windsor 2016, p. 25-26)

Exhibition as Method

Your Tongue In My Mouth The exhibition at Stanley Picker Gallery evokes inter-subjective space via curatorial process: within the works themselves; between the artists; between the works and the audiences reading; and within historical and cultural identifications. The artists and works were chosen so they might act in conversation, in response, to the questions and manifesto propositions found in the following descriptions of the artists and their exhibited works.

Below I have grouped artists with their biographical details and works under the areas I addressed as questions. These descriptions demonstrate their own relationship to history and curatorial subjectivity.

1. Concepts, Philosophies, Artists become Activism Informed by Ideas Integrity to Real life.

Terry Atkinson is known for paintings and drawings with political themes. These, he has said, are 'strategically aimed at an audience which is theoretically aware.' He has examined the First World War, nuclear weapons and the situation in Northern Ireland. Born in Yorkshire, he taught at Coventry School of Art and the University of Leeds. He was associated with the early years of Art & Language, which he left in 1975. His work is critical, not just of larger social issues, but of the institutions of art. He has since exhibited under his own name, including at the 1984 Venice Biennale. In 1985 he was nominated for the Turner Prize. In the exhibition

his *Light Yellow Enola Gay Axe-Head Mute 2*, (1989) depicts, through a small painted symbol of acrylic on board and title, an event of world history and ideological crisis. Enola Gray was the name of a Superfortress bomber, named after Enola Gay Tibbets, the mother of the pilot, Colonel Paul Tibbets. On 6 August 1945, during the final stages of World War II, it became the first aircraft to drop an atomic bomb.

Karen Knorr has taught, exhibited and lectured internationally, at Tate Britain, Tate Modern, The University of Westminster, Goldsmiths, Harvard and The Art Institute of Chicago. Knorr studied at the University of Westminster, exhibiting photography that addressing debates in cultural studies and film theory within 'politics of representation' practices, which emerged during the late 70s. She is now Professor of Photography at the University for the Creative Arts in Farnham, Surrey. Her works include humorous texts highlighting aspirations, lifestyle and the British class system under the neo liberalist Thatcher era, in the early 80s and its persisting affects. Photography is used as a research tool to consider cultural difference and femininity, through the representation of gendered space. In the exhibition Knorr showed her most well-known works, those from the Gentlemen Series (1981-1983), black and white silver bromide prints, using image and text and photographed in London's St. James's clubs. They investigate the patriarchal conservative values of Britain during the Falklands war.

Alexis Hunter is an important figure in the feminist art movement in Britain, until her death in 2014, as evidenced through her inclusion in international exhibitions and her place in the permanent collections of the Arts Council of Great Britain, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Verbund Collection Vienna, the Imperial War Museum and many other museums worldwide. She used photography as a tool to take control of her own sexuality and buck the expected norms of society and gender stereotypes. Through the use of series and narrative sequences she exposes the tyranny of fashion (*Burning Shoe*, 1977), domestic violence (*Domestic Warfare*, 1979), and the exploitation of women (*The Model's Revenge I-III*, 1974). Her inclusion in the exhibition WACK!, at LA MoCA (2007), cemented her reputation as a leading feminist artist. She made art relevant to the problems faced by women, specifically as related to consumerism and male/female relationships. In the exhibition she showed *The Model's Revenge I-III*, 1974, a set of three silver gelatin prints, and *Approach to Fear: XVII: Masculinisation of Society - exorcise*, 1977, ten vintage colour photographs mounted on two panels. In *The Model's Revenge I-III*, a photographic portrait of a gun between naked breasts accosts the viewer's gaze, suggesting violence and phallic power. Hunter's work was known for her reversal of the objectification of the female image and male gaze and her refusal to disavow sexual violence. At the time of the exhibition Hunter and the theorist Stuart Hall had both recently died, the later seen in John Akomfrah's film (2013), on display at

the exhibition. This represented cultural memory and a point of juncture, to myself and many within cultural theory and contemporary art.

2. Discourses of Audience Fashion Consumption Become a New Syntax or Relationality

Heather Sparks is a conceptual artist who uses sculpture, video and drawing, she graduated with an MFA from Stanford and has shown internationally. Her colouring book was made for Shadowshop at MOMA, San Francisco (2011), and was drawn from her experience of the international art scene's social culture, particularly in London. The book's title *It Colors Your Life* (2011) was appropriated from a 2002 Gordon's Gin advert and its satirical drawings of bodies drinking and smoking in disarray nod to William Hogarth's 18th century engravings. The book includes my essay, *Drinking and Smoking* (Windsor 2011 A). In the exhibition she showed paper photocopies taken from the 2011 work, those selected showed careful, exacting drawings from scenes in afterhours clubs across the United Kingdom and of the United States' elite social spheres. These point to an explicit, libidinous economy and fractured characters portrayed within these and to her own relationship as a female observer, to a largely patriarchal culture. In these drawings a drunk woman appears significantly more precarious when compared to the machismo or comedy of her male counterpart. In the past she and I had collaborated in making fake invitations to high profile events, both my writing and her drawings came from this art practice, which was shameless in all its intentions.

Janette Parris tells stories of everyday life through narrative works which combine the mediums of drawing, animation, video and performance (musical and theatrical). She references popular cultural formats such as soap opera, cartoons, musicals and stand-up to address contemporary perceptions of failure and success, aspiration and ambition. Often infused with humour, her work concentrates on the ordinary and banal. She has an MA in fine art from Goldsmiths College (1994) and an MA in creative writing from the University of East Anglia (2004). Her work has been exhibited across the UK, and in 2003, she was commissioned for Art on the Underground by London Underground. Her animated video *Talent* was shown at Tate Britain's *Rude Britannia* exhibition (2010). She participated in Culture 24's Connect10 project, which invites artists to create events in museums, galleries and heritage sites across the UK during the Museums at Night Weekend in May 2014 and she was featured in the recent BBC2 Arts & Culture Show documentary *Museums at Night*. She is the creator of *Arch*, a comic-come-art journal which explores art and the everyday, and was included in an exhibition at the British Library, *Comics Unmasked* (2014). For the exhibition, Parris was commissioned to make a wall and window drawing, (2014) telling a story of her

failure to secure an art residency or grant, abandoning etiquette and privacy and refusing shame and making jokes about the art world.

3. Objects, Practices, Genres become a Hospitality of Seeing, Hearing, Living and Being

Peter Harris works across various media, having studied at Chelsea and shown internationally, Harris attempts to plumb what an artist is and has to be in order to survive this moment. He uses materials from mass culture and pop iconography, and economies driven by fame and celebrity. His work is a diaristic and everyday account, while his collaborations function as a mode of self-curation, that is itself a means of self-reflection on the status of the individual, the artist and the object as a hybridised cultural product. In the exhibition he showed works from his series *Art Dads* (2012-2017). Pencil on paper self-portraits of himself, as a baby with his adult male face, lying in the arms of powerful patriarch's, including: Gilbert and George; Joseph Beuys; Picasso and Bob Dylan. It is in the order of the uncanny, an adult head on a swaddled body, cradled by men of importance. It is also comedic and vulnerable, pointing to the disfunction of the concept of male genius.

Sarah Jones makes work that is predicated on a representation of the authentic. In particular: 'the couch' as subject and how we might engage with images of the consulting space for psychoanalysis; the domestic intimate space versus nature in a familiar urban context; the portrait (of the singular female); hair as a motif; and, most recently, the artist's studio; the life-drawing room; the life model; and the horse. Sarah Jones studied fine art at Goldsmith's and has been exhibited internationally and is in many major public and private collections, including: The Tate, The Victoria & Albert Museum, Arts Council of England, The National Media Museum, The Government Collection (UK), Museum Folkwang Essen, Galeria Civica, Modena, FRAC Nord-Pas de Calais, Orange County Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco. In the exhibition she showed *Colony (Couch) (IV)*, 2006, C-type print, a depiction of the empty therapist's couch with a crumpled blanket, signifying both abandonment and the attempt to care.

Jo Spence (1934 -1992) was a feminist artist who was deeply committed to women taking control of their lives and their bodies. Initially a member of the East End based collective of women photographers, the Hackney Flashers, Spence's earlier work exhibited this, through the medium of photography and in phototherapy work with Rosy Martin and Valerie Walkerdine, amongst others. Since her death in 1992, she has been the subject of numerous

national and international exhibitions, and is found in many important contemporary art collections around the world. The exhibition included *Untitled (Mother and Daughter Shame Work: Crossing Class Boundaries)* (1988) and *The Highest Product of Capitalism* (1979), fine examples of Spence's black and white photography.

In *Not Our Class?* (1989) Spence stands naked with half her breast removed, holding a sign reading 'victim?' It is from a phototherapy series and the paper backdrop has hand written words on the left side reading: 'Dad', 'Mum', 'Teacher', 'Doctor', 'Burgin', 'Watney', 'Marx', 'Lenin', 'Foucault', 'Althusser', 'Lacan', 'God', 'God knows'. The right side reads: 'Husbands', 'Lovers', 'Boyfriends' and a list of their names. The centre, framed by drawn boxes, reads 'Perform', 'Clever', 'Be Right'. She is both questioning the word victim and identifying what is *Not Our Class*. The document of the event and pictorially representing internal voices in words and displaying her body, after surgery, is an extraordinary depiction and observance of real, imagined, seen and unseen rules and meanings, the event of her breast cancer surgery, laid bare. It is also named as a collaborative work. Her meaning is dialogic and she demonstrates the experience of being constructed through language and naming. Her work helps inform all questioning of my research and was central to the activation of the conversation within the exhibition. I met Spence through photo workshops and later had Valerie Walkerdine, her collaborator, as my tutor and learnt much from both on the emotions of class.

Ellen Cantor (1961-2013) In an interview with Gerald Matt (Cantor et al. 1998), the American artist tells how in her childhood she was brought up in the hope that the society in which she lived would give birth to a free world where perfect love and ideal democracy reigned supreme. Everything was to be made afresh, people imagined the best for the future. As an adult, Cantor discovered a world which endangered the myth of peace and love and places the sexual act squarely at the centre of this. She became aware of the violence that surrounds us and influences our relationships with others. These concerns formed the core of her work. Through drawing, video, photography and photomontage, Cantor offers a more realistic vision of the notion of love. She employs film quotation, personal experience, cult movies and cliché. She has shown internationally, including Participant New York, Cabinet Gallery London and is in many personal and museum collections. Her video work *Within Heaven & Hell* (1996) was shown as part of the exhibition, it revolves around a personal story told in voice-over by the artist, constructed by a mix of scenes from *The Sound of Music* (1965) and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). Ideal love in this instance approaches the macabre. Cantor's work and attitude as a female artist has influenced me a great deal.

4. Political Economy Becomes a Mode of Being, Surviving and Reproducing

John Akomfrah: The Stuart Hall Project (2013) British artist, filmmaker and writer who explores the personal archive of the acclaimed cultural theorist Stuart Hall in his film *The Stuart Hall Project* (2013), where he explains identity and ethnicity are not fixed, but are the subject of an 'ever-unfinished conversation'. (2013) In the film Hall discusses arriving in Britain from Jamaica as a student in 1951, by 1968 he would be one of the founding figures of the new left, a key architect of cultural studies and one of Britain's foremost public intellectuals. Akomfrah weaves issues of cultural identity using a wide range of references that overlay the soundtrack and archive footage of Hall's biography with historical events. These include references to William Blake, Charles Dickens, Virginia Woolf and Mervyn Peake, Jazz and Gospel, set alongside news footage from the 1960s and 1970s. Akomfrah says to hear Stuart Hall speak about what it is to be different in society, gave you a sense not simply of self, but of agency, of what you could do with your life. (2013: *The Stuart Hall Project*)

Akomfrah used Hall's own spoken voice, interlaced with civil rights, archival images and sounds. It is an emotional homage and loving attachment to a man, a movement and ideas invested in his academic work. Within the film, Stuart Hall recalls his displacement at Oxford University, work with *The New Left Review*, how he understood Feminism and the establishing of The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham. As well as Marxist politics, his relationship to class in the UK, his ethnicity, his mother and her own relationship to the British Empire and Christianity, both dominant discourses of colonisation, blending the personal and political seamlessly. To me, as a curator, he had been a board member at Camerawork Gallery and Darkroom in the 90s, where I first worked. He came to an event I programmed, *Scene and Heard* (1996), where Kobena Mercer was speaking, and Hall's encouragement thereafter, gave endorsement very early in my career. His manner of articulating theory as actions in real life was unique and remained with me as a mode of understanding.

Stuart Hall said 'identity is a continual process of becoming', (*The Stuart Hall Project*: 2013) which is echoed in the works of the 70s feminism project, that of re-representing bodies and language, grappling with essentialist categories of difference. The cultural work of the 70s and 80s, seen in *The Stuart Hall Project*, gave examples of practice that articulates empowered outsider-ness, in my exhibition *Your Tongue in My Mouth*.

Bob and Roberta Smith sees art as an important element in democratic life, much of his art takes the form of painted signs. Central to his thinking is the idea that campaigns are extended art works, which include a variety of consciousness raising artefacts. Bob and Roberta Smith collaborated with filmmaker Tim Newson to make *Art Party* (2014). Bob and Roberta Smith studied for his MA at Goldsmiths, 1993. He was an artist trustee of Tate between 2009 and 2013, and he is currently a trustee for the National Campaign for the Arts and is a Royal Academician. In 2015 he stood against Tory MP Michael Grove in the General Election. In the exhibition he showed a billboard sized painting, *I Should Be In Charge* (2010), on reclaimed wood.

Conclusion: Curator as Midwife

Questions I asked in the field of contemporary fine art were answered by treating curation as an activism, syntax, hospitality and mode of being, which I called curatorial subjectivity. This was developed from practice experiments in writing, radio, hymns, poems and protest which informed outcomes of *Ugly Beast* (the novel) and *Your Tongue in My Mouth* as a visual conversation, that came together in a curated exhibition. This body of work was not driven by theoretical research but explored theory as embedded in the novel and exhibition, as practice-based, research outcomes. This is seen in the interplay and assemblage of characters and quotes in the novel, demonstrating the questions.

I chose the practice outcomes in order to undermine a theory practice division and show a way of working, where histories, subjective voices and creative language sat alongside, what is traditionally named theory. This has the intention of undermining a Cartesian model of knowledge, privileging the mind and used in the academy, embedded with unequal power relations. It sought to give visibility and voice, to those that may struggle, historically or presently, in the academy, art world and traditional models of knowledge and research.

The exhibition in 2014 activated archival works and incredibly useful and instrumental practices of recent history, in the work of artists Jo Spence, Alexis Hunter, Karen Knorr, Terry Atkinson, Ellen Cantor and cultural theorist Stuart Hall, four of whom are no longer living. Hunter and Hall died in 2014 and Cantor 2013. (This was ahead of John Akomfrah's wider recognition of CBE 2015 and of Hunter's exhibition at Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art (*Sexual Warfare*, 23 November 2018 - 3 February 2019). The work they did laid the ground and set a precedent for future practices. The work of Janette Paris, Heather Sparks, Sarah Jones, Bob and Roberta Smith and Peter Harris acts similarly within the contemporary

moment, engaging with both critical thinking and self-conscious subjectivity. This is within a hostile cultural environment of divisive politics and the dismantling of the UK's post-war state infrastructure, which had initially enabled many to enjoy changed lives for the better and ushered in new equalities.

In contemporary curating the changes to production and reception over the last 25 years appeared to accept the market as a 'natural' model of a political and economic arrangement and it was important to point to the lived experience of class that many artists and theorists worked within, in cross-disciplinary positions (70s-90s) in the work of CCCS (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies) and *New Left Review*, documented in *The Stuart Hall Project*.

In *After neoliberalism: Analysing the Present*, Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Michael Rustin write:

Nor is economic class the only salient social division. Gender, racial, ethnic and sexual divisions long predate the birth of capitalism, and still structure social relations in distinctive ways. They have their own binary categories (male/female, masculine/feminine, straight/gay, religious/secular, colonial/metropolitan, civilised/barbarian), and they figure differently from class in the distribution of social and symbolic goods (though they are articulated to class). They 'manage' their own systems of reward and scarcity (paid/unpaid, legitimacy/illegitimacy, normal/ abnormal, saved/damned). They position the bodies of their subjects differently in the Nature/Culture continuum. They 'govern' different moments of the life-cycle and attribute to people different subjective capacities (paternal/maternal, emotional/ cognitive, duty/pleasure). These social divisions each have privileged sites of operation (for example, home/workplace, private/public) and distinct disciplinary regimes (patriarchal power, property inheritance, unpaid domestic labour, control of sexuality, gendered and racially-differentiated wage rates). (Hall, Massey, Rustin 2013, p. 16)

At the point of proposing my PhD research study I had previously learnt the role of the curator as an employment, which included observing hierarchy and gender coded behaviours. However my experience showed: the subjective and collaborative relationship of artist and curator to be central and their difference less clearly delineated; that production processes allowed contingency, the accidental, even failure, that departed from written plans or funded agreements; that language, cultures and relationships became the gateway, passage and facilitation of production of both artist and curatorial concepts; that the socioeconomics in which contemporary art and exhibition were enacted was the real work; that this 'work' was not always an immediate reading, the perception of this interplay or invisible matrix of meaning, often lay beyond the presentation, press release, artist statement, collector's guide or museum text panel.

In Paul O'Neill's *Curating Subjects*, in the chapter titled 'The Middle Man: Beginning to Think About Mediation', Soren Anderson and Lars Ban Larsen discuss curation as mediation and that mediation has been considered suspect, parasitical, inauthentic and mediocre. Kosuth and others argued, in the 1960's, to cut out the middle man to accelerate cultural transformation (Andreasen and Bang Larsen 2011, pp. 20-30).

Brian O'Doherty goes on to productively contextualise this line of thinking:

It is necessarily modern that alienation may now be a necessary preface to experience . . . much of our experience can only be brought home through mediation In most areas of experience there is a busy traffic in proximities and surrogates . . . as with other mediated experience, 'feeling' is turned into a consumer product. (O'Doherty 1986, pp. 52-56)

The rise of the managerial class and their execution of market imperatives in institutions in universities and other areas of cultural production, might suggest agreement with Joseph Kosuth interest in cutting out the middle man but Ugly Beast method, in its proposition to always seek and pursue dynamic and urgent survival mechanisms in the face of structural inequality (however unconventional), suggests the manager, mediator or middle 'person' could be radicalised.

The characters in *Ugly Beast* (the novel) and artists in *Your Tongue in My Mouth* successfully complicate curation. They refute shame; embrace the personal as political; enter conflicts, arguments, discourses and expulsions resulting from provocations to established systems and categories coded as natural. While they would ideally build and enter new systems, their absolute reality is that of subjection and alienation. (The university and gallery sector embrace market forces, where labour, loyalty, collectivity and intersubjective relationships are expendable or exploitable.) Therefore, their resistance may sometimes be in their shame, refusal, anger and abjection. However, acting on a new political stage, they might live through contradictions, set up art schools, engage in self-building communal homes, industries, studios and clinics.

In the first paragraphs of *Curating the 21st Century*, Dave Beech is quoted as saying: '*The future of curating is intended to be an open-ended subtitle. There are more subtitles, no "the future of curating with new media" or "the future of curating with third way politics" We don't know the future of curating . . . but we're interested to find out*' (italics in the original) (Beech in Wade 2000, p.7).

I agree and use the term 'curator' sparingly and with careful reference to its function and what it specifies. For example, when it administrates the existing parameter of the gallery or when it activates several spheres of engagement. I am thinking, for instance, of curator as farmer; curator as university lecturer; curator as prison educator; curator as constructing social systems of childcare; curator as builder on common land. As Tim Ingold suggests, in his paper 'Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials' (2010), we need to give attention to enlivened materials and forces.

Ugly Beast as method and practice, considers curation as a term of activation, sometimes used and employed, not a fixed role, authorship or brand. That mediation might be pedagogical or like that of a midwife. Curators as artists, might act like Artists Placement Group in workplaces or learn new ways to generate funding or to enable particular groups. They might become housing officers or policy makers, to move public resources to critical groups. They might use unlearning exercises, such as those discussed by Binna Choi (in Allan et al. 2018) as educators of staff and students, in Universities and write radical action and survival strategy, as modules on art courses. They may stand as local councillors and politicians. Some of these strategies do exist in pockets.

Consider Hoe Street Central Bank (HSCB) as a case in point. Artists Hilary Powell and Dan Edelstyn took over an old Co-Op bank on a high street in Walthamstow and printed money, featuring the faces of people behind four local services: a primary school, a foodbank, a youth project and a soup kitchen. Then, engaging in what they call 'an act of citizen money creation' (Elestyn and Powell n.d.) they sold the banknotes to people in exchange for legal tender and used the proceeds to buy back £1m of debt, owed by residents living in the E17 postcode. This practice takes inspiration from Strike Debt and Rolling Jubilee in USA. (The Rolling Jubilee campaign raised over \$700,000 , enough to buy back over \$30m debt) The artists have suggested teaching this in economics classes of every sixth form school and university and assert that the moral right to repudiate debt may be the only way of rebuilding democracy. The art market resembles some of the more unequal aspects of the financial markets and this art practice moves beyond this confine (Schneider 2019; Leach 2016)

Another instance of curation as activation comes from my own practice experiments. In 2014 the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families was commissioned to pilot EPEC³ peer-to-peer parenting scheme by Camden Council, through the Innovation Fund

³ EPEC stands for Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities. (See footnote 1 of this essay for further information.)

Scheme. I had been part of Anna Freud services, on a steering group and used experience of fundraising (gained while directing a publicly-funded arts organisation) to contribute to writing a bid for The Anna Freud Innovation Fund Scheme. I trained to be a facilitator on EPEC with a group of parents in my community. Three programmes were rolled out, one within a homelessness hostel and the programme subsequently rolled out nationally. Some of this group formed Not Just One Mum, a protest campaign I ran independently, supported by Unite Union, as part of my practice experiments, culminating in a deputation with a barrister at Camden Council chambers. The campaign protested the selling of public land, asked for artists to be eligible for the council housing register and for families in temporary accommodation, to remain in communities and not be moved outside London.

Ugly Beast: A Labour of Love was hosted by Enemies of Good Art⁴ set up by Martina Mullaney in 2009 with its first meeting hosted at The Whitechapel Gallery with further meetings at ICA, RCA, Tate Modern, Chisenhale and Southbank Centre. Enemies of Good Art programmed a weekly radio show 2010-12 on resonance fm. In his novel *Enemies of Promise*, Cyril Connolly asserted that ‘there is no more sombre enemy of good art than the pram in the hall’ (1938, p. 127). Since April 2009 Enemies of Good Art has debated the issues arising from this infamous quote and seeks to investigate the possibilities of combining art practice and family commitments. In particular it aims to encourage participation by parents and their children in a series of public discussions and art based events. (See footnote for reference to the manifesto.)

Full discussion of notable artist practices that enact curation as activation outstrips this discussion but will be the stuff of future research.⁵

⁴ See footnote 2 in this essay for further information.

⁵ Some other artist practices that enact curation as activation:

Create London's projects exists to explore the ways artists can contribute to the lives of people in cities and projects include A house for Artists a living space of 12 flats for artists with families, in Barking town centre, with studios, and shared courtyard and hall programmed by residents. (Createlondon.org, n.d.)

Jeanne van Heeswijk, BAK, basis voor actuele kunst presents the project *Trainings for the Not-Yet*, starting September 2019. The project consists of an exhibition as a series of “community learnings,” performative workshops, artworks, learning objects, and conversations. In the framework of this project, intensive collaborations with (inter)national artists, theorists, and activists take place, as well as collaborations with initiatives and communities based (mainly) in Utrecht. (BAK, n.d.)

Mikhail Karikis, a Greek/British artist working in moving image and sound to create immersive audio-visual installations and performances which emerge from his investigation of the voice as a sculptural material and a socio-political agent. He often collaborates with communities and his works highlight alternative modes of human existence, solidarity and action. For example, solo exhibitions: *No Ordinary Protest*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2018-2019); *Ain't Got No Fear*, Turku Art Museum, FI (2018); *The Chalk Factory*, Aarhus 2017 European

Ugly Beast (the method) of curatorial subjectivity is akin to midwifery, in approaching pregnant ideas with open expectations, hospitality and hope, finding the right words and time; knowing when etiquette and intervention is useful and when it is time to find a new formula.

Fictioning is a necessity of cultural production and curating. New parameters cannot exist in old language. Neither *Ugly Beast* (the novel) nor Ugly Beast (the practice method) is confessional or auto fiction (though recognises the power of this to allow multiple voices, real and imagined). It is distinct from curatorial research (O'Neill 2011) as it is a lived practice. Each act of curatorial subjectivity is a precedent and forms new discourses or conversations. This chimes with Michel Foucault's writing when he observes,

I am well aware that I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to say, however that truth is therefore absent. It seems to me that the possibility exists for fiction to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth and for bringing it about that a true discourse engenders or manufactures something that does not as yet exist, that is fictions it. (1980, p. 193)

'A Correspondence on Curation Independence and Collaboration' in *Curating Subjects* is an exchange between Mark Hutchinson and Dave Beech. Here, Hutchinson asserts:

. . . [T]he problem of rethinking the curator as embedded in social relations is the question of embedding what those social relations might be. The conventional and objectionable tradition of the curator does not so much split off the curator from art, culture and society than preserve a separate sphere of action and influence within art, culture and society: a sphere that conceals and denies the existing social relations of art (and therefore of the curator him or herself) The political task for curation is overcoming the de totalizing split inherent in curation. (2011, p. 59)

Hutchinson goes on to propose an anti-curation, interrupting and infecting art with social contexts which could also be the remembering of that which has been repressed, excluded and denied (2011, p. 60).

Capital of Culture, DK (2017); *Love Is the Institution of Revolution*, Casino Luxembourg Forum d'art Contemporain, LU (2017)

Sophie Hope and Jenny Richards, see, for instance, their paper, 'Loving Work: Drawing attention to pleasure and pain in the body of the cultural worker': 'Research into the body and mind at work, with a particular focus on experiences and implications of enjoyment and love of work within the culture sector. This research is developed through the project Manual Labours that explores the historical conditioning between the body and mind in the so-called immaterial labour conditions.' (2014, p.117)

Here I refer back to my exhibition *Your Tongue In My Mouth*, as a visual conversation employing methodology of curatorial subjectivity and recognising historical voices and radical art practices, to demonstrate my questions in spheres of action and influence within art, culture and society. Thus making an original contribution to knowledge, in new presentation of knowledge.

Protest which can be painful and hard work. As Jo Spence shows in *Not Our Class* (1989) or Karen Knorr in her *Gentlemen* series (1981-3). If you do not have privilege, you do not expect access to ideas or power or ask questions or have your voice heard or perhaps even to have things that you need to survive. If you are born of a class, gender, colour or body, without privilege, you need to ask, demand, take and protest and also to be able to court people, who don't understand you. You need to refuse those who seek to shame or silence you. *Sarah Armed's* work, including *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004), is useful here in situating the problem(atic)s of non-normative bodies and subjectivities in the intersections of race, gender and sexuality in different cultural sites and spaces.

In *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Donna Haraway opens the chapter 'Tentacular Thinking, Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene' with a poignant question: 'What happens when human exceptionalism and bounded individualism, those old saws of Western philosophy and political economics, become unthinkable in the best sciences, whether natural or social? (2016, p. 30).' Haraway goes on to observe:

In passion and action, detachment and attachment, this is what I call cultivating response-ability; that is also collective knowing and doing, an ecology of practices [Marilyn] Strathern [an ethnographer of thinking practices] taught me, a simple but game-changing thing: 'It matters what ideas we use to think other ideas It matters what thoughts think thoughts. It matters what knowledges know knowledges. It matters what relations relate relations. It matters what worlds world worlds. It matters what stories tell stories.' (2016, pp. 34-5)

Straddling novel, method and more, *Ugly Beast* is an ongoing activated project. As a way of being, it is not abstract. It exists in my work as artist/curator and teacher/writer. It is one experience. In my current role, as a course leader within a university, I see my students using Morris dancing, drumming, dog walking, models of care and temporary autonomous zones, addressing a lack of queer cruising spaces or shelter spaces for homelessness.

Curatorial subjectivity as a critical study, exists in shared objectives, where the curator as actor, is strategically standing at continually emergent, radical crossroads of meaning, as an ontological middle person. They maybe exploiting their precarious labour, teaching posts,

patrons, funders, cultural capital and institutional resources as tools, like a scavenger, disrupting thresholds.

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Appendices

Appendix A Practice Experiments

Early Ugly Beast characterisation

Radio: A Labour of Love

- Fig. 1. Enemies of Good Art Flyer, Martina Mullaney, ICA 21 July 2010
- Fig. 2. *Of Joy That Hath No Ending And Love That Cannot Cease*, Esther Windsor. Savage School Window Gallery Box Set. 2008 (Box containing serigraphed cards). London, U.K., Cullinan and Richards. Kingston University
- Fig. 3. Not Just One Mum protest poster, Esther Windsor, London Borough of Camden 2014
- Fig. 4. Protest Photo, Esther Windsor, London Borough of Camden 2014

Appendix B Ugly Beast as Method: Curatorial Subjectivity

Appendix C Space as Method

Appendix D To Dave: Character as Method

Appendix E Exhibition as Method

Appendix F Manifesto as Method

Appendix A

Practice Experiments

Ugly Sister To the Cinderella of the affluent dealer and peddler of goods Ugly Sister is a bit shy and likes to read books and daydream. She likes to dress up on her own at home and write about moments of glory. She has a small and sometimes imaginary group of friends and gets quite upset if someone interferes and spoils things. She dreams she will be rescued or may well be discovered. And may use projections and transformation and un-realised projects. Psychoanalytic theory.

Ugly Bastard An art dealer on the secondary market. He is just out of or about to enter rehab, full of anger and demons, bitter and disappointed. He may be atoning for sins to friends and his fellow man. Ashamed of making too much money, exploiting others or allowing greed and addiction to stand in the way of human kindness. He may just be biding his time to get back to where he belongs, making loads of money and just doing the odd bit of coke and getting a few shags, nothing too bad. He said sorry after all. Denial is his vice. Economics

Ugly Rich Bitch A collector of art for status and likes to be seen at functions and the right restaurants, likes to dress like the art and think about the press angle. Might do a bit of boutique curating or write a little column, went to the Royal College, worked in public relations, goes to the best parties. Thinks art is a bit too serious sometimes and is interchangeable with other events and causes. Popular

Ugly Angry Bastard Artist, activist, critic, teacher. Used to be a punk and may be a Marxist, lived in a squat at college and worked for his student union. It's not like it used to be before art was all about bling and lottery funding. 'Students these days, think it's fucking finishing school, they don't make art. Bloody culture industries, it's all about property and neoliberal post-Thatcherite values. Come the revolution.' Likes posters and public art and does quite well out of lottery funding. Political Art.

Ugly Hipster Has a tendency to wear overpriced trainers, listen to Animal Collective and sport an ironic moustache, sideburns, mullet or quiff. Wanders through London Fields, pondering alter-modernism and its opportunities for lists in artwork. May be found reading pseudo anthropological books and French critical theory in Broadway market cafes. Might make documentary films made up of 60s archival material which he believes makes him look unimpeachably hip. Has relationships with powerful and admiring women who will help his career. Believes himself to be a curator or initiator rather than a creative, adopts the trappings

of counter culture whilst belonging to a dominant elite, with a public school education. Justifies his privilege by demonstrating superior taste.

Ugly Lib Con Whore Senior Arts Council officer or senior manager in higher education. In the sway of politics of the day, happy to whore values he/she espoused to follow when interviewed for the post, all in the interests of efficiency. Petty bureaucrat who uses the language of higher education metrics or outdated business models of creative industries. Likes to defend budget and job cuts by being seen to promote the value of art to a wider public. Likes text based artists who can write cool manifestos for service level agreements and strategic initiatives. Wears Boden and Armani likes middle class trappings and management speak.

Radio: A Labour of Love

'Motherhood Power and Love' on 104.4fm. Live radio discussion. 8 March 2011. With **Dr Lisa Baraitser**, senior lecturer in Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, author: *Maternal Encounters: Anouchka Grose* Lacanian psychoanalyst and author of 'No more silly love songs: a realists guide to romance'; **Mo Thorp**, Director of Fine Art, and Subjectivity & Feminisms research group at Chelsea School of Art. **Chaired by Esther Windsor.**

www.enemiesofgoodart.org/resonance-fmenemies-of-good-art-international-womens-day-special/

A Labour of Love: Motherhood as Emotional Capital. Part 1 Sociology and Media on resonance 104.4fm (Windsor 2011 A). Live radio discussion. Wed. 23 Nov. 2011 with **Dr Tracey Jensen** at Newcastle University, 'Watching with my hands over my eyes': Shame and irritation in ambivalent encounters with 'Bad Mothers' in *Radical Psychology*; **Dr Rachel Thompson** who is Professor of Social Research at Faculty of Health and Social Care, The Open University and published 'Making Modern Mothers'. **Chaired by Esther Windsor.** 'Bad' parenting as car crash telly and 'mothers gone wrong' is just part of the media pathologization of parenting, indicating the spectrum of ideology, invested in mothers. Emotional Capital (like Social Capital but of the private sphere) is used here to understand power in mothering, invisible labour deployed, creation of 'families' and reproduction of social values and class. With Tracey Jensen, Rachel Thompson and Martina Mullaney of Enemies of Good Art. Chaired by Esther Windsor.

www.enemiesofgoodart.org/a-labour-of-love-motherhood-as-emotional-capital-part-1/

A Labour of Love: Motherhood as Emotional Capital. Part 2 Psychoanalysis and politics on resonance 104.4fm (Windsor 2011 B) Live radio discussion. Wed. 7th Dec. 2011 With

Bice Benvenuto Italian psychoanalyst & author: 'Concerning the Rites of Psychoanalysis'. Two weeks ago we introduced the concept 'Emotional Capital' to look at class and social values in mothering. This week we use Lacanian Psychoanalysis to look at anger, anxiety and intense identifications in the experience of being a mother, to re think how emotions intersect with political and economic life. With Renata, Salecl, Bice Benvenuto and Esther Windsor. Renata Salecl is a Slovenian philosopher, sociologist and legal theorist. She is senior researcher at the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana. Her books include:(Per)versions of Love and Hate (1998); Gaze and Voice as Love Objects (1996); On Anxiety (2004); Choice (2010). Bice Benvenuto is an Italian psychoanalyst and founder member of CFAR, teaching Lacanian and Kleinian, theory and practice. She is director of 'Casa Verde', a centre for the prevention of mental disturbance for children and adults in Rome and has published widely, including: 'Concerning the Rites of Psychoanalysis' (1995).

www.enemiesofgoodart.org/a-labour-of-love-motherhood-as-emotional-capital-part-2-psychoanalysis-and-politics/

This event is part of
Invisible Spaces of Parenthood: A Collection of Pragmatic Propositions for a Better Future
 by Andrea Francke

ISP explores issues surrounding childcare in collaboration with local nurseries, childminders, children's centres and parent groups, and looks for new models and possibilities. This includes setting up a workshop in The Showroom's gallery during the exhibition for visitors and workshop participants to test out DIY designs for furniture and play, some of which will be gathered through an open call. The ideas will feed into a manual, to be published in September.

The text attached is: "Women's Work, Artwork" by Nina Power from LABOUR issue 1, 2012. For more information on LABOUR check: aconversationtobehad.wordpress.com. It is the reading material for the next workshop on Survival Strategies for Cultural Workers, to be held during the GDR show at The Showroom. An informal open session for cultural workers to meet and exchange on the challenges they face, and strategies they have developed, in order to deal with the specificities of labour in the arts and cultural sector. In particular in relation to, but not limited to, parenting.

Open to the public - bring your children.

For more information and to receive the dates please e-mail The Showroom at info@theshowroom.org

Invisible Spaces Of Parenthood: A Collection of Pragmatic Propositions for a Better Future is part of Communal Knowledge supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, John Lyon's Charity, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Arts Council England, Westminster Cultural Olympiad supported by Westminster City Council, BNP Paribas and Vital Regeneration, The Showroom Supporters Scheme, and Outset as The Showroom's Production Partner 2012.

(in)visibilities is produced in the framework of COHAB, a two-year project with Casco, Office for Art, Design and Theory, Utrecht and Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm, supported by a Cooperation Measures grant from the European Commission Culture Programme (2007-2013)

How to support the artist mother father?

Co-chaired by
Martina Mullaney,
Enemies of Good Art,
Saturday 21 July,
2-5pm

A discussion about the possible solutions for motherhood and fatherhood's inclusion in the art world. Speakers include Bryony Kirby from Culture Baby and Kim Dhillon from Crib Notes.

Open to the public - bring your children

Fig. 1. Enemies of Good Art Flyer, Martina Mullaney, ICA 21 July 2010

**OF JOY THAT HATH NO
ENDING
AND LOVE THAT CANNOT
CEASE**

2. Of Joy That Hath No Ending And Love That Cannot Cease, Esther Windsor. Savage School Window Gallery Box Set. 2008 (Box containing serigraphed cards). London, U.K., Cullinan and Richards. Kingston University

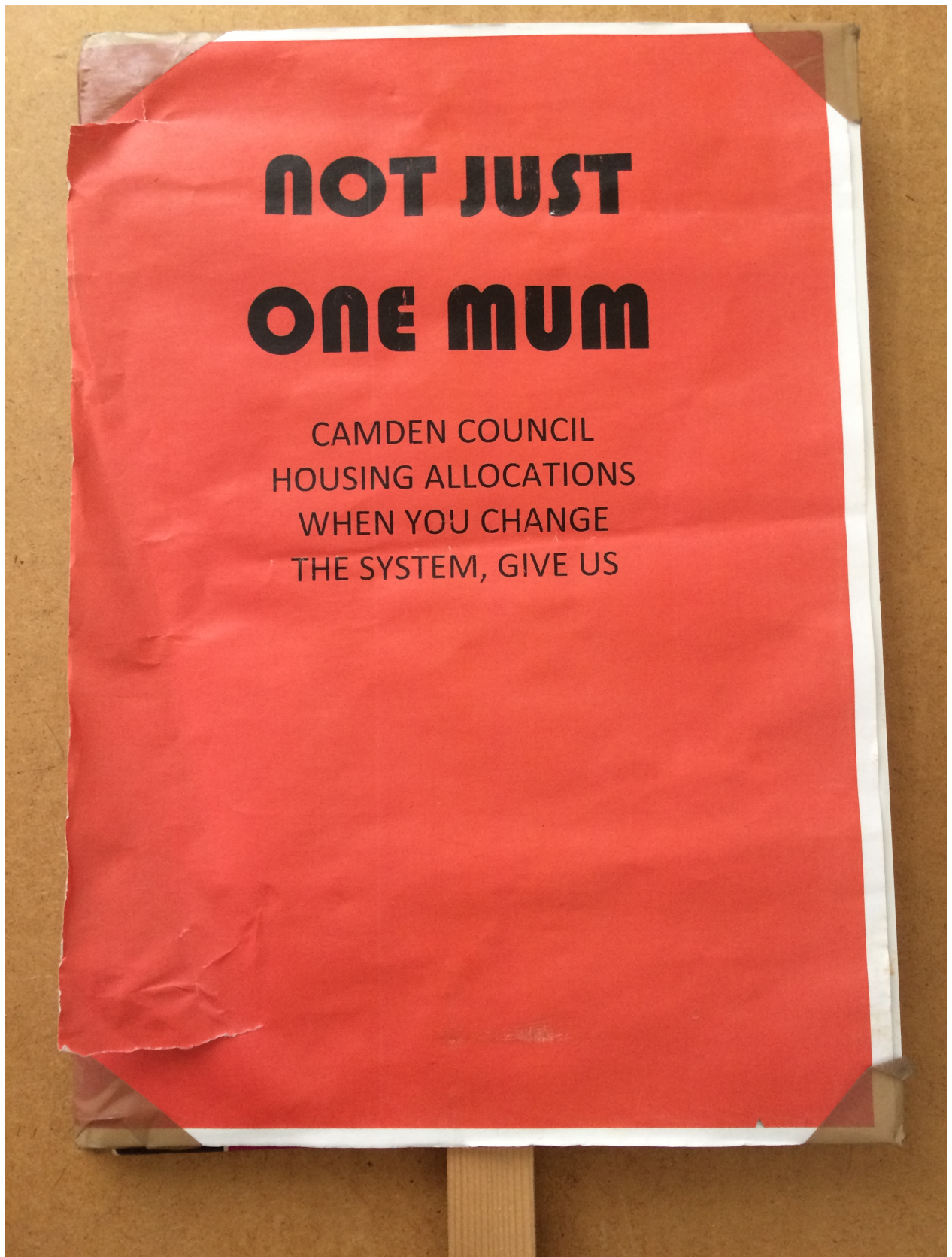


Fig. 3. Not Just One Mum protest poster, Esther Windsor, London Borough of Camden 2014



Fig. 4. Protest Photo, Esther Windsor, London Borough of Camden 2014

Appendix B

Ugly Beast as Method: Curatorial Subjectivity

Background

Ugly Beast: A Critical Study of Curating Contemporary Fine Art changed via research process and outcome. It was initially an open frame for ongoing curatorial practice experiments, staged at 1000,000mph, an artist-led space I had run with Dallas Seitz circa 2007 in Bethnal Green, London. Circumstances changed and sustaining a gallery, teaching, family and research became incompatible. I had also recently held a post as Director of an Arts-Council-funded organization, overseeing service level agreements, funding applications and commissions. I responded to all these contexts by developing a basic formula of institutional critique. This addressed a rapidly changing landscape of contemporary curatorial practice, including commercialization of artists led spaces and attendant gentrification of areas they occupied with artists displaced from homes and studios.

The historic time frame in which I was curating and teaching was marked by rapid shifts in the landscape of contemporary art, amongst them: the rise of the Young British Artist (YBA) phenomena; the expansion and globalisation of art markets, art Fairs and biennales; a shift in funding from London to the regions (UK) and from institutions to industry; a shift from artist-led spaces into market driven micro dealerships; the rise of commercial sponsors as primary funders; individual collectors coming to showcase not-for-profit spaces; the creation of popular audiences and art as entertainment; the proliferation of newbuild museums (i.e. Walsall City Art Gallery, Tate Modern, Baltic, Nottingham Contemporary, MIMA Middlesborough); the privatisation of higher education and a demographic and economic shift in artists and art students identities; a shift in parameters and practices of fine art to include digital practice and communication; the entanglement of public art and community and place making as social practice; growing appreciation but also confusion about virtual space as social space; the deployment of art practices for cultural regeneration; the creation of a privately managed 'public sphere', where cultural consumers prevail over actors, experiences over events. The denigration of the role of the art critic; a replication and pastiche, reworking of historic archive practices; reduction of art history and critical theory at art school; the proliferation of research process, networking and professional development, replacing enduring thinking, community and collaboration. This time also saw the emergence of independent and alternative art schools, resisting the industry and autocracy of university based art school (e.g. Turps

Painting School, Open School East, School of the Damned, Auto Italia). And collectives and activist movements were also on the rise (i.e. Universities Divest, Radical Re think, Precarious Workers Brigade, Enemies of Good Art, Architects for Social Housing, Assemble, Otilith Group.) Tracking these developments was the exceptionally programming at Cubbitt Gallery and Showroom, which presented radical activist groups and models of education and care.

Drawing on the field of anthropological observation and presenting this in subjective voices, including my own, was a reflexive gesture and engagement within the context of teaching and PhD study, acting within another creative industry, the art school within a university.

I started to question the dynamic of the curator and artist: the setting of controls and protocols; the invisibility of the curator and integrity of the artist observed; the care; the collaboration and relationality; the assumed purity of artists' intentions and the faithful curator realizing these; the blurred distinction of curator and artist acting in the space of exhibition; the authorship and authority of the exhibition and the celebrity or brand status, of the curator. I reflected on how I learnt to be a curator (via Internship and project management at the ICA and by working at Camerawork Gallery and Darkroom).

Appendix C Space as Method

Note: A talk programmed at Frieze London 2015, *Can Artists Still Afford to live in London?*, offered up this not unique concept for consumption by addressing how London's redevelopment and rising costs of real estate put pressure on the city's artists. A panel featuring a local artist, designer, developer and curator were invited to consider solutions. Panel: Justine Simons OBE (Head of Culture, Greater London Authority). Katherine Stout (ICA, London). Anna Strongman (Senior Projects Director, Argent LLP). Prem Sahib (artist). Bethan Laura Wood (designer). This talk took place 16 October at Frieze London 2015 as part of Frieze Talks London, daily keynote lectures, panel debates and discussions, curated by Christy Lange (*Frieze* magazine) and Gregor Muir (ICA, London).

Note: Andrea Luka Zimmerman's film *Estate, a Reverie* (2015) pays homage to the council estate in a portrait of Hackney's Haggerston, Samuel House, demolished in autumn 2014. Having lived in the estate for seventeen years, Zimmerman witnessed the property's abandonment by Hackney Council and its fall into dereliction, architecturally and socially. *Estate* weaves together architectural studies and the intimate portraits of residents to point to broader questions of community voice, representation and marginality. This moment is exemplary of a nationwide, even international, shift in the character and fabric of inner cities.

Note: The work of protest groups started to be recognized within art practice as it drew upon the theory and experiences of affective practices. For example, Cubitt Gallery. A Public Resource. 10 March – 10 April 2016. Featuring: Architects 4 Social Housing, Bonnie Camplin, Save Cressingham Gardens, Evan Ifekoya, Bill Daniel, Q-ART, Sisters Uncut, Spinwatch, Tamasin Cave, Russell Newell, ACT UP Oral History Project, Megan Nolan, Michael McMillan, SALT., Focus E15, Matthew McQuillan, Mati Diop, Michael Ohajuru, Standoff Films, Lou Macnamara, Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and London (RAMFEL), Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, Schooling and Culture Magazine, Paul Goodwin.

Part research tool and part forum, A Public Resource (2016) transformed Cubitt Gallery into the setting for the dissemination and support of progressive ideas and nonconformist energies. It featured a reading and research room and a comprehensive, weekly programme of talks, events and screenings. The project focused on giving a platform and space to grass roots political movements, activists, individuals and artists who were, in their own ways, campaigning for social, cultural or political change. (Cubitt n.d.)

Appendix D

To Dave: Character as Method

In 2016, Simon Elmer (*Architects For Social Housing*) rewrote John Cooper Clarke's *Evidently Chicken Town*. This is typical Dave in style and reflects a historical consistency of London in change between 1983 to 2016.

DEFINITELY LONDON TOWN

*The fucking rich are fucking keen
To fucking keep it fucking mean
The fucking pricks in government
Are fucking us with our consent
The fucking press is fucking lame
The immigrants they fucking blame
Are cautioned not to fuck around
Anywhere in London Town
The Tory fucks are fucking tools
And fucking Labour's just as cruel
The fucking Prime Conservative
Has fucking fucked a fucking pig
Then fucking sold us fucking out
To bail the fucking bankers out
But still they own the fucking ground
You're standing on in London Town
The fucking town's a fucking sight
A fucking great construction site
The fucking Mayor's fucking bent
On luxury developments
The fucking rent's a fucking joke
But still he wants your fucking vote
Everyone's a fucking clown
Everywhere in London Town
The fucking suits in fucking ties
Have fucking pound signs in their eyes
A fucking bloke is fucking nicked*

*For begging from some fucking prick
He only wants a fucking bed
To fucking rest his fucking head
The fine's a hundred fucking pounds
Here in fucking London Town
The fucking council's fucking crap
They fucking sold your council flat
The fucking filth are at your door
They fucking hate the fucking poor
'You're off the fucking waiting list!'
They fucking take the fucking piss
But no one makes a fucking sound
Definitely London Town
Adapted from John Cooper Clarke. Seen on ASH face-book feed.2016*

Appendix E Exhibition as Method

Your Tongue In My Mouth

Terry Atkinson, John Akomfrah: *The Stuart Hall Project*, Ellen Cantor, Peter Harris, Alexis Hunter, Sarah Jones, Karen Knorr, Janette Parris, Bob and Roberta Smith, Heather Sparks and Jo Spence. Curated by Esther Windsor
31 May - 28 June 2014

Launch Event: 2-4pm Saturday 31 May / All Welcome

"Seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, living, all these wait to be made fecund by an innocent potency."

Irigaray (*Elemental Passions* 1992)

Taking its title from Luce Irigaray's interrogation of language and love, this exhibition features artists working with photography and conceptual practices, including archival 1970s and 1980s works by Alexis Hunter, Karen Knorr and Jo Spence alongside a series of contemporary artists, whose works all use the visceral and material experience of life; the exhibition locates subjects of gender, ethnicity and class as strategies for thinking about anxiety and precarious consciousness in a neo-liberal 21st century society.

The 'personal is political' (Carol Hanisch 1970) and 'consciousness raising' (Kathie Sarachild/Anne Forer 1967) is evoked not nostalgically or fashionably but awkwardly, demonstrating affinity and action in political and art practices. Within this exhibition words and voices (and finding them) are seen as tools for analyzing and theorizing the structures of shared subjectivity, allowing personal problems to be seen as symptoms of wider socio-political issues. The French feminist theorist Irigaray expresses the utter conditionality of language to concepts of identity and difference in asking 'Was it your tongue in my mouth, which forced me into speech?' (1992), in which she echoes Lacan's reworking of Althusser, to suggest that the unconscious is structured like language.

Works in the exhibition include John Akomfrah's film *The Stuart Hall Project*, which employs archive TV news and interviews with seminal cultural theorist Stuart Hall, alongside a Miles Davis soundtrack. Alexis Hunter's *The Model's Revenge I-III* (1974) silver gelatin prints show a woman's soft breasts, with hands between clasp a gun directed to camera, and her *Approach to Fear: XVII: Masculinisation of Society – Exorcise* (1977) presents a grid of 10 photographs of a male torso with a woman's hand invading and defacing it with black paint.

Jo Spence's works include *Early Attempts at Photomontage* (1975), printed with the text 'I didn't know money grew on trees till I met workers' whilst *The Highest Product of Capitalism* (1979) pictures the artist outside a bridal shop holding a sign scrawled with the words 'I'll take almost any work'. *The Faces Group* (1978) shows a group wearing paper bags over their heads written with signs including 'Fuck off, piss off', 'I possess clarity' and 'I no longer see through the veil of illusion'. *Not Our Class* (1989) shows Spence naked against a backdrop with lists of boyfriends down one side and theorists down the other, and the photo-therapy series including *Untitled (Mother and Daughter Shame Work: Crossing Class Boundaries)* (1988) locates the social as familial and internal.

Karen Knorr's *Gentlemen* series (1981-83) are silver bromide prints depicting Gentleman's club interiors with accompanying texts presenting the gentlemen's inner thoughts, whilst Sarah Jones c-type print *Colony (Couch) (IV)* (2006) references the psychoanalysts couch.

Ellen Cantor's video *Within Heaven and Hell* (1996) features the artist's voice narrating a story over intercutting scenes from *The Sound of Music* and *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, whilst Peter Harris's *Art Dads* (2012) are drawings showing the artist as a baby, cared for by Art World 'greats' such as Gilbert and George. Bob and Roberta Smith's signs call for a politics and culture informed by art, whilst Janette Parris makes a satirical critique on the status of the artist, and Heather Sparks *It Colors Your Life: A Coloring Book of Drinking and Smoking* evokes a Hogarthian scene of debauchery in the 1990s.

The artistic practice of the 1990s – known most widely for the YBA movement – drew upon this earlier period of political self-consciousness and activism. An important legacy of historical and academic texts are recognised now, in the deployment of archives, a re-engagement with feminism and attention to the particularities of discourse, within practices in 2014.

The exhibition *Your Tongue in my Mouth* serves as an accompaniment to Esther Windsor's curatorial PhD research study at Kingston University entitled *Ugly Beast*, a curator's novel telling the story of a series of art world characters on the therapist's couch, including a teacher, an artist, a dealer and a gallery director. Cut loose from institutions, families, structures, ways of thinking, knowing and even speaking, the novel's characters struggle to find a voice and self-determination.

- See more at:

<http://www.stanleypickergallery.org/programme/my-tongue-in-your-mouth/#sthash.BEPk1aer.dpuf>

Appendix F Manifesto as Method

Ugly Beast Manifesto

In Beast we find words other than those already uttered, words never yet imagined, unique in your tongue, to name you and you alone.

In Beast, poetry will be made by all not by one.

In Beast rather than regressing to the simple authority of a religion or blindly submitting to the rule of money, capital and methods of production that are competitive and irresponsible, we can pursue an oeuvre of justice and culture by elaborating a real civil culture of persons and of the subjective and objective relations between them.

In Beast to return to ourselves as living beings who are engendered and not fabricated is a vital and ethical need of paramount importance. If we want to go on living and governing our creations, we must make sure we do this.

Beast believes Happiness must be built by us here and now on earth, where we live, a happiness comprising a carnal and sensible and spiritual dimension, which cannot be subordinated to the acquisition or accumulation of property, or to hypothetical human or divine authority.

In Beast, becoming happy implies liberating human subjectivity from the ignorance, oppression and lack of culture that weighs so heavily upon this essential dimension of existence sexual difference.

In Beast good business is the best

art: Beast needs: artists/accountants, bankers/bars, collectors/curators, dealers/designers, estate/agents/escorts, fixers/ framers, galleries/grants, hangers on/hotels, intellectuals/insiders, jewellers/journalists, kids with trust funds, lawyers/lackeys, models/media, nightclubs/newspapers, opportunists/oracles, patrons/PR, Quacks/queens, rehab/restaurants, stylists/studios, therapists/trainers, useful/useless, van drivers/vixens, yes men/Zealots

Beast will do unprofessional curating.

Beast will support negative capability, as a way of being, wherein one is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without irritably reaching after fact and reason.

Beast will beware of art schools which are like crack dens rendering one helpless, dependent and fuzzy.

Beast rejects unnecessary luxury, be it economic or cultural. The proliferation of possessions and knowledge is gradually burying us in objects or secondary realities: surrounded by them we become incapable of distinguishing the most useful from the most alienating.

Beast will look beneath gestures of mastery and appropriation, attack indifference, allow fear and failure, avoid morals as excuses, love shame, earn integrity.

Beast's elemental passions, ugly outbursts and sorrowful remorse make work

Beast will go through stages of Becoming through Anger, Confession, Talking and Tenderness.

In Beast, methods of seeing, hearing, speaking, living, all these wait to be made fecund by an innocent potency.

