

MA Fine Art: MA Project Proposal

(Working) Title:

How the methodologies of drawing practice can explore the shapes, forms, and passages relating to the internal landscape of the human body

The aims and objectives of my project for the duration of my MA will be to continue to accumulate my position and practice in relation to drawing as a mobile and versatile agency.

There are always two overarching themes to my practice. Firstly, the activity of drawing within the act itself, and secondly, towards the line, which stems to and from drawing as practice.

The third theme which has become part of my enquiry for this MA is how I can bring a sense of the body into my works. And I say *sense* purposefully. It will not be a literal depiction. It isn't about replicating; it will be about referencing. I want it to be stretched out from anatomy, to hark back at it. We live in vessels we hardly pay attention to. I am interested in where I might be able to give the viewer a subtle heightened awareness.

I expect this exploration to last for the duration of my MA (and beyond this course).

In Unit 1, I believed my inquiry to be about breathing. In Unit 2, I started questioning whether this was the case. In Unit 3, I now know my work has nothing to do with breathing. This updated project proposal still has me asking, 'what is my work about?'

I think it is still important to note that this whole enquiry came about because I had a line (probe) inserted both physically and metaphorically into my head in order to look at an internal system to try to better understand it. I think this probing line, trying to understand a system, is still happening.

'What moves as a body, returns as the movement of thought.'

Massumi, B. (2011) *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*. MIT Press

My enquiry is an attempt to understand the body, to look at the body as a landscape, a terrain to try to navigate. It is a sensitive and embodied inquiry, caught up in relation to my physical self and my way of intuiting my way around these ideas (literally).

I want to consider notions of inside and outside, internal/external, of being and matter and how one connects and affects the other. I am interested in the 'spine' of the works, being aware of the frameworks/anatomy that supports it and the 'legs' which hold it up.

At the same time, I am reluctant to view the body as a fixed standpoint. It is 'a push that pulls', as stated in *Thought in the act* by Erin Manning & Brian Massumi, 'the site is in the process of apportioning itself out as the body is apportioning itself to it. The site lands itself for the body as much as the body lands the site... "we cannot define where a body begins and where external nature ends." They give the example of a couch, which 'fits itself to the body, as the body spreads itself over the couch' it is a two-way movement of reciprocation (Manning, E. & Massumi, B. 2014, pg. 24). So that between the body, the making and the thinking, each thing alters the other; therefore, definitions get murky, and it is easy to lose the toehold you had in any one subject.

My practice is process-led, and my methodology is based on thinking through doing/thinking through drawing. I expect to make resolved works that will feature as installations and individual pieces.

For this, I will require the following resources,

- Metalwork
- Plaster/mod roc
- Woodwork

Before the end of this MA, I would like to push some methodologies I am not so familiar or comfortable with. This will not make resolved work. Instead, they will be sketches, tests and notations to carry forward beyond this MA. I hope that through these processes, I might find ways of working more haptically to create something looser, softer, or more fluid. I may not have time to get around to all of them, but this is what I would like to envisage,

- Writings

Highlighting a consideration for art writing as practice. Here, I'd like to explore phrases, sentences, and the internal/external cues I might utilise in teaching Pilates to see what this could bring to my work (e.g., breathe into the back of your ribs), be that through literal text or audio.

- videos

I like that moving images allow for movement/kinetic energy. It is also one of the only ways to make visible internal spaces of the body via cameras and probes, which then provide video footage and recordings. I find these parallels very intriguing.

- Clay

For many reasons: body inference, vulnerability/malleability, more loose material with a fluidity and chance element that I cannot control. The relationship between the body/ceramics/the vessel. The vessel's capacity to hold space. This is very interesting in relation to the internal spaces of the body.

- paper-based drawings

looking at these as finished works, giving more autonomy to this side of my practice

- vinyl/wall paintings

a way of flattening the MDF works more, playing with scale, spanning wall and floor space – amplifying and stretching 'spaces.'

- fabrics

to invite the possibility of soft sculpture into my work – something softer with weight

In terms of research, embodiment will be a strong theme.

I also intend to utilise my background as a Pilates instructor. These teachings include this feeling of working through, e.g., postures and how muscles are held to capture the felt relationship to the body, a mode of self-knowledge in navigating a lived experience of movement.

I am interested in the relationship which could be built between my creative practice and science/medical research and the opportunity of multidisciplinary working in this way. I'd like science to impact what I communicate and how it can be understood, especially in giving visibility to the invisible. I am particularly interested in neurology and neurocentric approaches to health.

My research into artists will also continue to be informed by those I feel akin to in terms of physical aesthetics, material dispositions, or the heightened awareness they bring about.

I am especially interested in works or artists that,

- use material presence suspended on the border between disciplines
- the conceptual space of drawing where sculpture, assemblages and interchangeable elements are prevalent
- where form is given to negative spaces
- where there aren't any kinetic elements, but there is a feeling of transition or movement
- a sense of embodiment in materials, objects or things that give capacity to the senses of more than just sight/seeing

Including examples such as,

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| - Holly Hendry | - Richard Tuttle |
| - Nairy Baghramian | - Olivia Bax |
| - Julia Crabtree & William Evans | - Natasha Macvoy |
| - Thea Djordjadze | - Doretha Tanning |
| - Esther Klas | - Phyllida Barlow |

- Franz West
- Sandra Lane
- Clare Burnett
- William Cobbing
- Lilah Fowler
- Eva Hesse
- Claire Baily

Over time, I expect this to include more artists to reflect the material response of working in new mediums.

Visits to exhibitions will also be included here, specifically to shows that deal with the same territories - the artists who use the same materials, subject, and content as me – as a critical measure of myself against this broader context.

(Current) Bibliography

Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and Time*. London, SCM Press

Lakoff, G. (1999) *Philosophy in the flesh: the embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought*. New York, Basic Books.

Manning, E. & Massumi, B. (2014) *Thought in the act: passages in the ecology of experience*. University Of Minnesota Press

Massumi, B. (2002) *Parables for the virtual: movement, affect, sensation*. Durham, NC; Duke University Press

Massumi, B. (2011) *Semblance and event: activist philosophy and the occurrent arts*. Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2002) *Phenomenology of perception* [E-book + book]. London: Routledge Classics.

Pallasmaa, J. (2009) *The thinking hand: existential and embodied wisdom in architecture*. Hoboken, N.J.; Chichester: Wiley; John Wiley [distributor].

Taussig, M. (1993) *Mimesis and alterity: a particular history of the senses*. London, Routledge

Turkle, S. (2011) *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*. MIT Press

Suggested Reading:

- A Philosophy of Emptiness, Gay Watson, 2014
- Seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees: A Life of Contemporary Artist Robert Irwin, 1992
- Schwenger, P. (2005) *The Tears of Things*. University of Minnesota Press
- Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture, Tim Ingold, 2013

Timetable

I will shift my timetable to maximise the amount of time I can commit towards being in university to use the workshop facilities and my studio and depending upon any contact time teaching that is scheduled. This indicates what I intend my weekly timetable to look like.

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
STUDIO/ WORKSHOP	STUDIO RESEARCH LECTURES	WFH RESEARCH LECTURES	STUDIO/ WORKSHOP	STUDIO/ WORKSHOP	RESEARCH/ STUDIO (as required)	