

# Collaboration in Experimental Design Research Symposium

COFA UNSW | 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> August  
Presentation Abstracts

[Keynote Speakers]

David Trubridge  
Dr Kevin Murray  
Janet DeBoos

[a] Communication in Collaboration

Gilbert Riedelbauch  
Ian McArthur  
Neal Haslem

[b] Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Geoff Crispin  
Dr Louise Hamby  
Dr June Ngo Siok Kheng  
Shashank Mehta/Vijai Singh Katiyar/Neelima Hasija

[c] Implications of Recent Collaborations

Trent Jansen  
Roderick Bamford  
Marius Foley  
Dr Bruce Carnie

[d] Collaboration as Social Innovation

Karina Clarke & Virginia Bruce  
Laurene Vaughan  
Cecilia Heffer  
Alice Whish  
Gabrielle Mordy

[e] Contexts for Collaboration

Oliver Smith  
Jane Shadbolt  
Jane Gavan  
Katherine Moline

[f] Society, History and Technology in Collaboration

Yoshigazu Hasegawa  
Michael Kempson  
Prof Ian Howard  
Prue Venables

## Keynote Speakers

**Dr Kevin Murray**

**A Race to the Top**

*Transnational Collaborations in Craft and Design*

Dr Kevin Murray is Adjunct Professor at RMIT University and coordinator of the Ethical Design Laboratory, which hosts Sangam - the Australia India Design Platform. He will talk about the rise of 'bespoke globalisation' as it facilitates collaboration between artisan workshops with urban designers and artists.

**Janet DeBoos**

**Collaboration or Co-Labouring?**

*When Do Partnerships Work?*

Collaboration is increasingly cited as a paradigm for joint projects in art, design and other creative areas. But whilst we readily use the term, what do we really mean by it? Is it a fully equal partnership? Or is it a benign dictatorship, with a ruling partner and orchestrated input from other experts? And does a truly democratic collaboration always produce the best results?

Through examination of a number of (what were termed) art & design collaborations both in Australia and overseas in which I have been involved, this talk will attempt to address those questions.

**David Trubridge**

**Collaborator: Traitor or Ally?**

I used to be a solo self-employed designer/craftsman but I have learnt the rich rewards of sharing the process and embracing the input from others in their specialised fields. I will talk about how I see the creative process working through the stages of the art, design and craft processes. I will illustrate each of these separate processes with examples of how I work collaboratively with my core of about ten key people who work for me.

## [a] Communication in Collaboration

Chaired by Jacqueline Clayton

### Gilbert Riedelbauch

#### Intermixes of collaboration: Vector Talk

*How visual programming becomes a means of communication for contemporary Design/maker practice*

This paper will explore the changes to communication in contemporary designer/maker practice.

The contemporary designer/maker frequently includes collaboration with others, including companies. These collaborations give access to different materials and processes extending the capacities of the individual maker's studio/workshop and help them to achieve new ways of creating objects. Communication is the key to these collaborations.

Where these collaborations include access to new materials and high-tech processes different ways of communication are called for. This paper will focus on the literacy in information technology required from today's maker. These skills are necessary for both the communication and collaboration with web-based or distributed fabrication services.

Just as the sketch in the artist's diary can be the design for the resulting artwork, a vector drawing in software like illustrator can be used to translate an idea into reality. The designer/maker's vector drawing cannot only communicate their design to other individuals like clients, but more importantly to a fabrication process. In other words the digital drawing controls the machine without the need to learn a machine language. The maker's vector drawing becomes visual programming.

For the designer/maker as a model for practice distributed fabrication has consequences both beneficial and detrimental. It effects issues like: the necessary skill set, the infra structure requirements, location and introduced risks.

I will discuss how digital communication augment these processes and inform educational programs in university based craft and design courses at the ANU, School of Art.

Keywords: Designer/maker, contemporary practice, vector graphic, communication, collaboration, education, distributed manufacturing and fabrication.

Ian McArthur  
Meta-Design and Collaboration  
*Creating Space for Shared Visions*

Globalised, networked geopolitical and economic systems mean we are ever more interconnected and interdependent in ever more immediate ways. However, driven by the extremes, contradictions and consequences of wild capitalism China, Islam and the 'West' are on a collision course. Unless these diverse models of culture and capital find constructive engagement, economic, social and ecological collapse are realistic scenarios (Nolan, 2006). The dominant silo-based tradition of design as a mechanical-object ethos in a world characterised by biological connectedness (Dubberly, 2010) is at the heart of the crisis. In contrast to design's now destructive value system, Meta-design reinvents practice as a multidisciplinary, culturally adaptive, co-visioning social platform for constructing common ground and 'shared visions' for sustainable futures (Manzini, 2007). Despite our complicity with state and industry in generating a plethora of overwhelming wicked social and ecological problems (Buchanan, 1992), designers and design educationalists are well positioned to implement adaptive, technologically augmented laboratories where intercultural trust, communication, and the collaborative design of our shared future can be initiated.

The most direct method of addressing this exigence is to educate those 'becoming' designers accordingly. Design pedagogy that stimulates the necessary cultural and collaborative literacy enabling graduates to thrive in open, multicultural co-creation environments, resist the status quo, and reform current practices, must be rapidly developed and widely adopted. A holistic perspective on such a totalising project implies that designers across all disciplines, from differing cultural and language traditions and from diverse communities of practice can investigate ways to work together in a 'joined-up' way (Stebbing, 2010; Wood, 2010) to develop common ideas on what a sustainable way of living might be like and consequently, identify and work in spaces conducive to this purpose.

The Collabor8 Project (C8) has since 2003 responded to these conditions by challenging design students in China and Australia to collaborate in online and blended environments. C8 aims to create immersive cross-cultural collaborative learning spaces where trust can develop and shared visions can be mobilized. Research drawing on an ongoing sequence of experimental multidisciplinary design projects focusing on cities, networks and sustainability uses triangulated data gathered from semi-structured interviews, web-based statistics, questionnaires, observation, and creative outcomes of participants to demonstrate the transformative potential of co-constructed adaptive learning environments as catalysts for cross-cultural design collaboration.

Questions posited in the research include:

*How and where can common ground between students located in diverse cultures from west and non-west be explored to create spaces where shared visions are realised in collaboration?*

*Can culturally adaptive pedagogies solve some of the challenges of cultural literacy, trust and cross-cultural communication?*

A model for Cross-Cultural Multidisciplinary Collaboration (CCMC) is proposed as pliant methodology advocating sensitivity to appropriate technologies, language difference, culturally based expectations of learning, and the potential of boundary objects (Star, Greisemer, 1989) as intercultural communication and collaborative tools. This situated Meta-design driven approach creates active, participatory and emergent spaces where students are empowered to reflexively explore meaningful ways designers from different cultures and social systems might work together to envisage as yet unimagined futures.

Keywords: collaboration, cross-cultural, shared visions, multidisciplinary, Meta-design, pedagogy.

## Neal Haslem

My doctoral research investigates the intersubjective aspects of communication design practice through a focus on the other, and the roles that the other takes in practice. It does so in order to better understand the practice of communication design as practiced on a day-to-day basis.

Communication design, as a practice, and a field, extends out of graphic design. This extension is due to a change in priorities; from privileging the graphic and artefactual aspects of practice, to prioritising the consideration of the broader agency of design within a specific context.

This research has been accomplished through a practice-led methodology. Communication design projects form the methods of, and the foundation for, the investigation. Seven individual research projects have been designed and carried out. These projects have each incorporated members of the different participants of communication design practice; new and existing clients, student designers and established practicing designers. This has allowed the research to investigate its concerns from a range of roles and viewpoints, incorporating different perspectives into its observations and understandings.

This research extends the work of Donald Schön and his investigation into *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983). It achieves this through a consideration for the roles of the other in professional practice. In order to articulate this move extensive reference is made to the thinking of the twentieth century philosophers Martin Heidegger and Emmanuel Levinas.

This research has found that the other plays critical roles in the practice of communication design. These roles are ones of providing provocative disjunction. Provocative disjunction, as understood by this research, contributes directly to the generative action communication design offers artefacts, clients and designers.

The observations and understandings of this practice-led research have enabled extensive insights into the practice of communication design. These insights contribute significantly to the broader communication design discourse in professional practice, education and research.

For the RED Objects symposium 'Collaboration in Experimental Design Research' I will present projects from my practice-led PhD in order to discuss 'the collaborator as other'; a party providing 'disjunctive provocation' and consequently having the potential to enable, simultaneously, epistemological and ontological change.

## [b] Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Chaired by Liz Williamson

Geoff Crispin

Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Dr Louise Hamby

Working with 'Women with Clever Hands'

The title of this paper Working with 'Women with Clever Hands' is indicative of the type of collaboration I pursue with Indigenous artists from Australia. Guidelines and parameters for collaboration with Indigenous people are varied depending on the type of project. There are many ethical guidelines published but in this paper I would like to present my personal insights in working collaboratively on exhibitions with Indigenous artists.

My close association with Yolngu women of Gapuwiyak, a remote community in eastern Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, spans fifteen years. In this presentation I will outline the development of the exhibition *Women with Clever Hands: Gapuwiyak Miyalkurruwurr Gong Djambatjamla*, currently showing at Melbourne Museum. This important fibre exhibition has been developed collaboratively with the Yolngu women and the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, and the work exhibited provides a key insight into the community and individual practice. Expectations and realities of working in two cultural domains brings unexpected but often successful results.

The exhibition's development was influenced by my relationships with the women, initially as a PhD student commencing in 1995, and subsequently as an ARC researcher on various projects. This talk will examine the events leading up to the decision to form the exhibition, the formation of the aims and how the works were selected. It will also include a discussion of the themes and their relationships to the design of the exhibition.

Louise Hamby is a Lecturer in the Museums and Collections Graduate Program in the Research School of Humanities and the Arts. Her research areas combine the fields of anthropology and art. She holds an MFA in Fabric Design from the University of Georgia and a PhD in anthropology. She is currently working on an ARC Discovery Grant: Contexts of Collection - a dialogic approach to understanding the making of the material record of Yolngu cultures (2008-2011). Louise has a strong interest in historic and contemporary material culture from Arnhem Land. Her involvement with eastern Arnhem Land women lead to the development of the exhibition that she co-curated with Diana Young, Art on a String. Her involvement in curation, research and writing is evident in her last two Arnhem Land projects. The western Arnhem Land fibre project resulted in the touring exhibition and book called Twined Together: Kunmadj Njalehnjaleken. Her current travelling exhibition is Women with Clever Hands: Gapuwiyak Miyalkurruwurr Gong Djambatjamla. Her most recent book is Containers of Power: Women with Clever Hands.

## Dr June Ngo Siok Kheng

### Improving lives through Songket Weaving

The Yayasan Tuanku Nur Zahirah (YTNZ/ Foundation) was established in 2007 under the Royal Patronage and guidance of Her Majesty the Queen, Tuanku Nur Zahirah. The main goal of YTNZ is to preserve and enhance indigenous craft and heritage while improving the livelihood of artisans. YTNZ chose to begin with songket as it is a craft that has more than 800 years of history in the Malay Archipelago but is in great danger of disappearing over the next twenty or thirty years if nothing is done to arrest its decline. Songket-weaving requires a high degree of skill. Thus, it takes a lot of dedication and practice for a weaver to master the technique. Unless new weavers continue to take up the challenge of mastering the skill, Malaysia may lose generations of cultural heritage. I came on board the Foundation in 2008 as Director of Textile Design and Production. Soon, the Foundation established two production centers – one in Kuala Terengganu and one in Kuching under my direct supervision. The Foundation believes that charity will not last long as once the money is depleted, it is gone. It is important to empower unprivileged community with skills rather than giving out money. Thus, the Foundation believes in ‘Social business’ as it is much more viable and powerful as money can be recycled and reinvested back into the business. Through this, more benefits can be expanded and lives can be touched.

In order to raise the income level of weavers and provide them with income security, the YTNZ started employing weavers as full-time staff. All YTNZ weavers earn a regular salary with employers provident fund (EPF) and social security protection (SOCSO) benefits. This is a very important step as it frees the weavers from having to take out burdensome loans to purchase raw materials or to worry about finding buyers for their finished products. Instead, with the Foundation taking over these functions, the weavers are able to focus on perfecting their craft. With their productivity level raised significantly, weavers employed by YTNZ earn at least twice their previous average monthly income. This has greatly improved the welfare of the artisans, so much so that they are able to help support their extended families. Most encouragingly, the Foundation began to attract young weavers to train in this craft. The Foundation has changed the face of the songket industry by contemporizing the look of songket and today, songket is no longer a textile limited to ceremonial use. YTNZ have retained its luxury and heirloom element but extended its use to exclusive shawls, scarves, unique gift items, home and interior products. One of the Foundation’s young Sarawak weavers won second prize last year in an ASEAN Silk Fabric and Design Competition in Thailand.

This is a significant achievement as it places the design and weaving skills of our artisans at par with those master weavers in countries with very established weaving traditions such as Thailand, India and Cambodia. The YTNZ hope not only to give many more weavers the opportunity to make a career in their beloved craft but also to inspire many more to value and cherish our cultural heritage.

Dr. June Ngo Siok Kheng  
Deputy Dean (Postgraduate and Research)  
Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts,  
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

## Shashank Mehta/Vijai Singh Katiyar/Neelima Hasija Collaboration for Co-creation through Design

### *Diverse Design Initiatives for the Indian Context*

The National Institute of Design (NID), India, established as the first design institute in the country, has begun its one yearlong golden jubilee celebrations since November 2010. Over the last five decades, NID and its alumni have worked extensively with the country's variegated industrial and social sectors, as well as government and non-government organisations. The experience gained over years has helped the institute develop design intervention methodologies that are most appropriate to the Indian context.

### *Design Clinic Scheme for MSMEs*

The 'Design Clinic Scheme for Design Expertise' is one such unique and ambitious design intervention methodology developed based on these experiences. Here a solution to an existing design problem is diagnosed and remedial steps suggested by a multidisciplinary team of design experts. In this model, the value additions to an idea or a concept are imparted through interaction and at a lesser cost to a specific industry/sector. It applies to sectors such as Micro and Small & Medium Scale Enterprises, MSMEs, where a conventional model of design consultancy and training is not often affordable. This model brings design exposure to the doorstep of industry clusters and helps in design improvement, evaluation and analysis and adopting long term consultancy/design related interventions.

Scaling up of this tested strategic design intervention methodology is a major challenge and NID is appointed by the Government of India, as a nodal agency to implement this unique and ambitious design intervention scheme throughout the country. The scheme aims to reach out to about 5,000 MSME industries from 200 MSME clusters from across the country.

With the main objective of seeding design amongst the MSME industries, over the last one year, the scheme has helped create that, much needed platform for constant and continuous interaction and collaborations amongst the designers and the MSMEs. Successful implementation and scaling up of this approach is expected to create a sustainable design eco system for the Indian MSME sector.

### *International Centre for Indian Crafts (ICIC – NID)*

The International Centre for Indian Crafts (ICIC – NID) is a collaborative international initiative by National Institute of Design and the Office of Development Commissioner, Handicrafts, Govt. of India with stakeholders from around the world and India.

NID has been involved with the Handicrafts and Handloom sectors for over five decades. Through its various landmark design intervention projects, NID has been instrumental in development and promotion of design in Indian Handicrafts & Handloom Industry.

Today, NID continues to be engaged in diverse design intervention initiatives for crafts sector through the support of government and non-government Organizations/Institutions while moving forward to connect craft with technology with the crafts of different countries, through an eclectic approach. This extensive experience has given NID an insight into the country's diverse and vibrant crafts sector, which, in turn, has motivated the institute to set up ICIC – NID with the objective of supporting the Indian crafts sector and persons by providing design entrepreneurship and new product development orientation through strategic design-technology-skill- management programs/ workshops at multiple levels on a regular basis. A number of projects have been successfully completed fulfilling the centre's objectives.

*Cluster Based Design Approach; Firozabad, the glass city*

This presentation will share a case study of design intervention initiated by the ceramic and glass department, NID, in collaboration with Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India. Institute with its research and academic strength forms a critical interface for such priority sectors to address their development needs. On the other hand these projects do bring in extremely complex scenarios to the classroom situation for academic enrichment and also to confirm and sensitize future graduates and designers to the opportunities the sector holds for them.

Objective of the project was to research and identify the challenges and the nature of design intervention required for the development of cluster of glass based micro, small, medium scale and cottage and household industries. This task was specifically focused on Firozabad, a district located in Uttar Pradesh, one of the northern states of India. A fairly large part of the country's unorganized small-scale glass production (almost 70%) is concentrated in Firozabad in housing around 421 registered small and medium enterprises.

Team of students and faculty conducted an intensive field research to understand the work culture, variety of production processes & techniques being practiced by the cluster and make note of other factors which may provide it a unique platform in this competitive scenario. Insights generated through this process helped in holding workshops with the artisan groups and develop new product range for the tableware SSI unit; addressing the requirements of the identified consumer. A Design seminar offered in the cluster later to this helped in sensitizing the industry with design process established from within their environment and the competitive advantage of original designs.

## [c] Implications of Recent Collaborations

Chaired by Wendy Parker

### Trent Jansen

#### The Briggs Family Tea Service

In this paper I will discuss the development of the Briggs Family Tea Service, a new work due to be launched by Australian manufacturer and gallery The Broached Commissions in October 2011.

The development of the Briggs Family Tea Service was collaborative from start to finish, beginning with research directed by creative director Lou Weis, project curator John McPhee and members of the Nura Gili Indigenous research centre at the University of New South Wales. This body of research saw the investigation of families of mixed Aboriginal and English heritage, born out of Australia's Colonial Period. For me these families are emblematic of the cultural collision that was taking place during this turbulent period in Australia's history. Eventually I chose to focus on the Briggs family, a family from North East Tasmania whose evolution was defined by the meeting of free settler George Briggs and local Aboriginal woman Woretermoeteyenner.

From here the collaborative research continued in the further investigation of materials and forms that could be used to represent the Briggs family and the cultural heritage of its members. Time was spent in Tasmania with descendants of the Eastern Straightmen (of whom George Briggs was a member), exploring Indigenous and non-Indigenous artifacts used during this period, their materiality and functionality.

Eventually the Briggs Family Tea Service concluded through key collaborations with Rod Bamford (Ceramic), Oliver Smith (Copper and Brass) and Vicki West (Bull Kelp). The skills and material knowledge of these individuals allowed for the development of formal and functional elements that accurately express my views on the cultural and historical identity of the Briggs family. The result is six biographical objects that function as a family, as the Briggs Family once did in North East Tasmania.

## Roderick Bamford

### Prometheus, the collaborative experiment

In recent commentary on the expanding concept of Design, responsibilities of Promethean proportions have been ascribed to the profession, (Manzini, Latour), raising significant questions about design's capacity, given its historical singularity of practice, to meet the challenge. Collaborative, participatory processes are seen as essential to solving 'wicked problems' characteristic of this global design perspective, based on a rational argument that complex problems are best accounted for by satisfying, as much as is possible, the interests of numerous stakeholders in the achievement of a shared vision. Yet different models of co-operation, collaboration and co creation indicate that concepts for effectively 'working together' vary and continue to evolve.

Reflecting on a selection of studio projects, this paper recounts some experiences associated with transactions in different design models that may be described as 'collaboration' and how these may impact on a project's success, particularly concerning individual and smaller scale design studio practices. The discussion highlights particular characteristics of collaborative practices in experimental and the commercial design endeavors, and argues that the ongoing success of collaboration in studio design practice stems from a shared understanding of values, risk and benefit, particularly where the two sets of characteristics are combined.

## Marius Foley

### Co-creation as a Model for Independent Participatory Experiences

Communication design locates itself at the nexus of the craft of graphic design and the agency of communication within the contemporary public sphere. As such it is subject to the forces that shape modes of communication such as the new forms of social arrangement that are emerging out of social and participatory media.

This paper looks specifically at the practice of co-creation, which is a form of collaboration that extends to include the reader/viewer as well as the designer. Co-creation shares some features of the prosumer (producer/consumer) in that co-creators often share in the creation and consumption of media.

The modern usage of the term co-creation emerges out of the Open Source movement in computer programming. Co-creators act independently of each other, based on an agreement to respect the intention of the initiator. That is, full access is granted to the initial intellectual property in return for enhanced intellectual property being made available to the community under Creative Commons agreements. Co-creation is informed by practices such as co-design and participatory design.

I argue that co-creation is a model for participatory communication design. Co-creation is based on independent opt-in/opt-out actions. The practice does not rely on participants being members of a community or subscribing to a shared belief in order to take part. This sets it apart from conventional community media and design; social media communities; and other localized social arrangements. It is an ideal model for distributed interactions between makers and publics that share the ethos of independence and non-contingent involvement. I discuss this new situation in relation to the mainstream and professional design context.

## Dr Bruce Carnie

### Connected and Collaborative Celts

The presentation will look at the connections that have been developed and made between the Centre for Advanced Textiles (CAT) at Glasgow School of Art, Timorous Beasties and Morton Young and Borland (MYB), all Scottish West Coast based textile design and making facilities.

The presentation will also look at the active researcher as a conduit to connecting designers and business as a result of active participation of these three case study participants in recent exchanges and activities in Sydney, Australia.

## [d] Collaboration as Social Innovation

Chaired by Katherine Moline

### Karina Clarke & Virginia Bruce

#### S.E.A.T – The little stool that could

*The development of social innovation in product design*

This paper aims to identify criterion for a feasible socially acceptable, attractive alternative to the current 'market-led' model of product design practice. The new model proposed aims to investigate the hypothesis that social initiatives and empowering design solutions can afford positive social change.

In this paper we will discuss the evolution of a final year graduating design student's project and how through collaboration with a range of stakeholders her project entitled SEAT has been implemented into the marketplace and is an active agent for social change and development.

Starting with the designers intent we will highlight how the different stakeholders have formed a relationship with the project and identify their roles in the design/manufacture/distribution/use of the product which is mutually beneficial to all involved. The project includes sustainable manufacturing in Vietnam, a national retailer, an educational program within indigenous communities all synthesised and managed by the not for profit organisation Hands that Shape Humanity.

Laurene Vaughan  
Designing, Juggling, Balancing and Performing  
The Circus Oz Living Archive Collaboration

Increasingly within the realm of research and creative practice, collaboration, as an entity and a methodology, is held up as an ideal in the search for innovation and social relevance. A core expectation of collaboration is that diversity will enable or strengthen project outcomes. For those of us engaged in academic research this may occur either through a collaboration between designer/academic and 'realworld' industry or community partner, where the collaboration variables are in the context of the collaborators. Or, it may be disciplinary, where different knowledge and skill forms meet, intersect, bump up against one another or merge, so that new knowledge may form. Over the past five years I have been engaged in numerous collaborations. Some have been inter-disciplinary, others cross or multi-disciplinary; few have been within the simpler one frame of one disciplinary domain, and none within the same fields of practice. At times design explorations have been the central project focus of the team, at others design has been just one disciplinary contributor, as the team has sought to explore or resolve a problem or proposition. In all these projects I have come to learn that collaboration is a much more tricky entity than many give it credit for being. Understanding and engaging with the socio-historic politics and pre or misconceptions or assumptions that are present when one or more meet with the intention of working together is essential in the design of a collaboration; in the ongoing management of a project and communication between team members.

The Circus Oz Living Archive project is one such project that I am currently involved in. Funded within the Australian Research Council Linkage Program, this project is a collaboration between a circus, a performing arts museum, an arts funding organization and two universities. The listed chief and partner investigators are from 12 + different disciplinary domains. This is a rich mix where science, the arts, design, performance and cultural politics regularly meet as we endeavour to envisage, design and eventually realize a digital living archive. What has become apparent is that even in a collaboration with intense good will, tensions of difference exist. Addressing and most often embracing this tension and using it as a creative force rather than a destructive one, has been our method to date. In this presentation I will reflect on what it is to collaborate amidst such disciplinary and contextual difference in practice; the challenges, the strategies and the learning that continue to evolve, and through this, consider what this means for our understanding of design collaboration in practice.

Laurene Vaughan is an Associate Professor in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University and Research Leader within the RMIT Design Research Institute. Between 2005 -2010 she was Project Leader and researcher within ACID (the Australasian CRC for Interaction Design). Originally coming from an art and design education background with a major in sculpture, Laurene has melded a career of practicing artist, designer and educator in Australia and internationally.

Cecilia Heffer

## Inter-Lace

*A design collaboration between Associate Professor Bert Bongers and Senior Lecturer Cecilia Heffer UTS*

This paper proposes to explore the collaborative design process between two design disciplines and designers, between textiles and interactive technology. Inter-Lace is a collaborative project that brings together two designers approaches to patternmaking - the intricate contemporary lace by Textile Designer Cecilia Heffer and interactive video projections by Artist and Associate Professor of Interactive Media, Bert Bongers.

The interdisciplinary collaboration evolved over a period of three years and continues to explore new boundaries and innovative concepts. The paper will reflect on the complexities of merging tradition and technology in order to create an interactive video lace installation which sits in the space between definitions of a built environment and a multimedia environment. The intention behind the work was to create a sensory tactile experience of lace in a three dimensional virtual environment. It aimed to redefine traditional expressions of lace pattern through the use of innovative materials, process and video technologies. Video projections merge with the lace material to create an augmented fabric, with a multiplicity of layers of image and meaning. Inter-Lace explores the spatial mysterious interplay between real and virtual worlds. Its layers explore light and shadow between material and ephemeral perceptions of negative and positive space. The intention was to create a work of exquisite visual impact, a sensory experience. The viewer is invited to interact with a kaleidoscopic experience of pattern that moves fluidly between inside and outside space.

Embedded in the work merge two artists conceptual interpretation of the idea of "place". Inter-lace is a response to space and landscape through the travels of these artists separately and together within Australia. The background to the two artists underpins the conceptual translation of the lace installation and helps to explain the process and exploration of technologies and design innovation in creating Interlace.

Inter- Lace is part of the Love Lace Exhibition, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney design Week 2011

Cecilia Heffer is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney where she is the Director of Program for Fashion and Textiles. Her research area focuses on contemporary translations of lace, exploring the intersection of traditional and emerging textile technologies. In her work she explores the construction of lace as a system, a pattern of positive and negative space that identifies form. She combines traditional hand made processes such as drawing, silk screening, machine embroidery with digital print technologies, laser cutting, CAD systems.

## Alice Whish

### The Power of Collaboration

The artists involved are Rose Mamuniny and Mavis Ganambarr from Galiwin'ku (Elcho Island) North Eastern Arnhem Land, and Alice Whish from Sydney. These artists have worked together over a long period of time.

The importance of projects that involve collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous craftspeople will be examined including the working out of technical, aesthetic and financial issues. The sharing of experience skills and information will be detailed through the work presented. Difficulties and successes explored, alongside the role of the Art centres in the success of a project.

Each artist's personal approach will be presented by Alice Whish with examples of work, alongside the presentation of collaborative works, pieces made for each other, to be incorporated into another's work. These have included an exchange of materials, natural and constructed.

The works they have exhibited together have their origins in wearable works and have been described as "body wear", these include, necklaces, armbands, headbands, and bags of various types. Whish's work fuses an aesthetic from materials and techniques used and found in Arnhem Land with non indigenous history, (technical and material) and (European and Australian). The objects presented include necklaces, small sculptures, pins and brooches.

## Gabrielle Mordy

### Collaboration at Studio ARTES

#### Artists Living with Disabilities

Since 2006, I have worked with over one hundred adults with disabilities within an art program run by Studio ARTES Northside Inc. Studio ARTES is an independent, not for profit organisation which offers a full time art program for adults with disabilities. I have worked within this community assisting to develop artwork, and curating exhibitions of work produced. Such exhibitions include “There’s no such thing as colour coordination” at Blank Space Gallery, “You, Me and Everyone I Know” at Creahm on King, “Matthew and Me”, Callan Park Gallery, Sydney College of the Arts, all in 2009 and “Studio ARTISTS: Untitled”, Callan Park Gallery in March 2011.

The most recent exhibition, “Studio ARTISTS: Untitled”, featured work from a newly formed collective of artists, Studio ARTISTS. Studio ARTISTS have emerged from within the wider Studio ARTES program. The collective is comprised of five artists; Matthew Calandra, Daniel Kim, Greg Sindel, Robert Smith and Lynda Strong. Members of the Studio ARTISTS group are impacted by either autism or Down syndrome and all have a level of intellectual disability. After years of practice within the Studio ARTES art program, each have developed a skill, style and passion for the visual arts.

Studio ARTISTS is the initiative of myself, Emma Johnston and Maide Welch. We have worked as artist mentors at Studio ARTISTS for over five years, where we have enjoyed the honour of witnessing these artists practice emerge and mature. In an average Studio ARTES week over one hundred individuals access the art program. The decision to evolve this more select collective from the wider group was motivated by the increasing importance we could see art making as playing within the lives of these particular artists. After years of artistic practice, Studio ARTISTS have developed sophisticated and individual creative methods for expressing themselves, making their art engaging work to encounter.

In my paper I propose to discuss the evolution of the newly formed collective Studio ARTISTS. As adults with intellectual disabilities, members of Studio ARTISTS would typically be defined as “Outsider” artists. During my presentation I will reflect upon the Studio ARTISTS relationship with this term, and why it seems important for these emerging artists to work collaboratively “inside” a collective.

In addition, I will discuss the role of myself, Emma Johnston and Maide Welch within the Studio ARTIST collective. Using the “Studio ARTISTS: Untitled” exhibition as a case study, I will examine the issues involved in curating a Studio ARTISTS show, and the particular emphasis Johnston and I placed on collaborative curation. Whilst Johnston and I selected the artists, and designated each a gallery space, it was important for us that each artist felt consulted in the way their work was exhibited. So often work by artists with a disability is exhibited on their behalf. As such, in “Studio ARTISTS: Untitled”, Johnston and I felt it vital for the Studio ARTISTS to have a hand and voice in what and how their work was presented. Hence, the Studio ARTISTS were heavily involved and influential in the installation of their work.

## [e] Contexts for Collaboration

Chaired by Karina Clarke

Jane Shadbolt

DIY Collaboration

*Design-led directing in a digital world*

Design might be still grappling with the concept of creative collaboration but film has been cruelly sorting out the concept for the last century. As John Hodge, the screenwriter of *Trainspotting* discovered, the role of the writer in film once shooting starts is one of 'constitutional monarch - consulted but then ignored' when other, more pressing, practical forces come into play. Strictly hierarchical, a traditional film crew structure fails when confronted with the promise of the infinite possibilities of digital manufacture. Through examining my own directorial work on the short stop-motion animation, *The Cartographer*, this paper looks at the shifting nature of collaboration as mediated through digital technical processes and how this collaboration remakes and reforms the resultant creative outcomes throughout the making process.

*The Cartographer* is an 11 minute low-budget digital-analogue hybrid narrative drama that took four years and some 30 crew members to produce. While in some respects it followed a traditional filmmaking production structure, it also embraced the new prosumer digital world that has been very kind to independent film makers. This new paradigm offers low-cost, high-quality digital filmmaking production methods outside of mainstream channels, making short films easier to create, distribute and consume. The rigidly defined roles of the traditional film crew are challenged and redefined in this more fluid digital environment, particularly in the post-production stages where traditional film production methods can be simply irrelevant. The creative processes, and therefore outcomes, are likewise, less stratified and more varied. The entire creative process is prone to the highs of reckless excitement at the newly expanded horizons of what might be possible mixed with the lows of being mired in a thousand creativity-sapping details as well as the dangers of the illusion of digital choice engendering a deathly form of creative paralysis.

The process of creative collaboration between crew members especially in the visual post-production stages of editing, compositing and VFX became one of forming and reforming visual ideas through a combined process of creative research and development in conjunction with the technology we employed rather than a top-down directorial edict. As a director, this led to some surprising but ultimately creatively satisfying results, and the whole becoming greater than the sum of the parts.

This paper is about the creative collision of the design process and 21<sup>st</sup> century DIY filmmaking and considers the advantages of the collaborative digital process but also the hazards implicit in a creative landscape of infinite digital choice.

Jane Shadbolt

Lecturer in Visual Communications

University of Newcastle

## Oliver Smith

### Fables

*Five stories of collaboration and their evolving creative maxims*

#### journeymanhood – education and influence

*the role of education in aligning a practitioners approach to growth through learning*

To frame the collaborative relationship between teacher and student in this section I will reflect on some the mentors who have had the greatest impact on my practice as well as discussing my motivations as a lecturer. This raises questions regarding the legacy of traditions of practice and how to engage with them effectively.

#### complimentary practices – synergies

*examining the positive impact of sharing resources including ideas, authorship and outcomes*

Our peers in the professional realm, like siblings in a family, are often the people we have the longest working relationships with. Partnerships, groupings and mutually beneficial arrangements arise organically from these connections and formal and informal dialogue and collaboration abounds. Drawing on my own experiences I will describe how this creative community is a great source of support and nourishment as well as critique and challenge.

#### commissions – project management

*the potential for design thinking in all areas of creativity*

My limitations as a craftsman in terms of physical output led me to design. This linked to and extended the area of my practice developed from commission work, demonstrating the opportunities for outsourcing and utilising processes outside of my own studio. Authorship moves from hands on manipulation of materials to a position of overseer and/or collaborator. Perhaps most significantly this approach asks us to learn about possibilities beyond our previous experience. The broader range of outcomes that this mode of working allows can require a heightened level of discernment in order to work through the options with success.

#### opposites and innovation – making opportunities

*consciously seeking out fresh perspectives and dynamic partnerships in order to challenge conventions*

By seeking to work with experts in many and varied fields I have been exposed to information and situations that steered my work in unexpected directions. This points to the need to invest in the unconventional as a means to generate innovation.

#### navigating the void – crafting context

*a pioneers guide to building a conceptual compass to explore new frontiers and meet the unfamiliar with confidence*

Further speculation about the way collaborative relationships open up new areas of practice and lead to genuine evolution in the expanded cultural sphere, with a view to establishing tactics and strategies through which to create context and influence future developments.

## Jane Gavan

This paper is orientated around two questions around creative, innovative collaboration. The first question asks how designers and artists can create opportunities for collaboration that are embedded within an industrial factory. The second question asks how designers and artists can structure their practice in a way that is conducive to making a contribution to the culture (and/or products) of the factory?

As a practicing artist, I have always been drawn to the innovative, productive and creative activities of the factory communities I have visited. I am currently expanding my practice by creating installations, functional and non-functional objects in the factory context. The focus of this paper will be on one particular factory, it is the location and subject of a case study. During the study I explore how to use this factory as a “studio” to make new works.

This case study focuses on the development of a relationship with the community at the Radiant Color factory in Houthalen, Belgium. In the paper, the issues relevant to artists and designers who choose to be professionally engaged in factory environments are considered. Issues raised during the case study include; ethical considerations, and the relationship between of the needs of the factory, skills of the artist and the benefits of this type of collaboration to the factory community.

In industry, concepts of invention, manufacture, experiments and everyday engagement with materials are common, though these all may be led by different desires and motivations than those of the artist.

There is evidence in the case study to suggest that locating the artist within the factory network could allow for social change through the development of new structures or a type of “shared knowledge” (Reckwitz, 2002) within certain parameters, between the factory community (broadly defined as, but not limited to: scientists, manufacturers, marketers and designers) and the artist or designer.

The paper positions practice based material enquiry, research and experimentation in relation to artifacts as a locus for the potential restructuring of social practices. I am focusing on the emergent working relationship between the factory community and the artist or designer. The final outcome from the case study is the development of a framework for artists and designers who wish to practice within the parameters of a dynamic social environment of an industrial space such as a factory.

Reckwitz, A., 2002, ‘The status of the material in theories of culture. From ‘social structure’ to ‘artifacts’’, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* (5), no. 2, pp. 245- 265.

JANE GAVAN | Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) Senior Lecturer Glass Sydney College of the Arts

Katherine Moline

## Remodelling Collaboration in the Era of Globalisation

Criticisms of design frequently refer to its central role in the proliferation of consumer culture in the era of globalisation. This paper considers an experimental design that intervenes in these conceptions of design in the context of globalisation. By evoking the historical design ethos of re-purposing and co-creating advocated by Global Tools in Italy in the 1970s, I contend that the furniture series *Digestion* (1998-2000) by French designer Matali Crasset provides a provocative and significant model of collaboration that reworks the inequitable interdependencies between developed and developing countries in the globalised socio-economic domain. Drawing on art theorist Hal Foster's account of how unresolved issues of history haunt contemporary practices in visual art I show how this experimental design reveals a number of unresolved tensions in design pertinent to today's ecological and financial crises. I argue that *Digestion* celebrates how mass produced products manufactured in Export Production Zones register shared needs and provides an inexpensive, if not humble, model of the ethos of Global Tools that reinvents collaboration at an international scale. The approach I have taken in this analysis is the application of a theoretical framework from art history, deep description of the design, and a comparison of these with the designers' published statements of the work.

## [f] Society, History and Technology in Collaboration

Chaired by Roderick Bamford

### Yoshigazu Hasegawa

#### Green Life 21 Project

Yoshigazu Hasegawa is the Director of GL21, a Japanese organisation that has established a system for recycling ceramic products aiming to develop a product ecology that minimises environmental impacts.

Green Life 21 Project (GL21), an association organized by private companies and public research institutes in one of Japan's biggest ceramic production region, has developed new technology of domestic ceramic waste recycling and marketing strategy of newly made tableware. Our brand, Re-shokki, has proven to be both marketable and profitable through trial sales for green consumers in past years. It has won Good Design Award and also initiated the enactment of the new Japanese environment law. My presentation will show how GL21 has gained recognition of tableware recycling by teaming up with consumer groups, NPOs, and local municipalities and contributed to a sustainable, eco-friendly society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Prof Ian Howard

#### Energy – Travel – Motion

Energy – Travel – Motion examines the relationships between distance travelled and energy consumed in various forms.

Michael Kempson

From Papunya to Pakistan

*Connecting with Asia through the collaborative research projects of Cicada Press, COFA UNSW*

Early in 2004, Cicada Press was established at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales (COFA UNSW) in Sydney as one strategy devised to re-invigorate student experience in conventional printmaking practice. This was achieved by aligning instruction in its technical routines with the research culture of an academic institution by using the creative capital found in collaborative partnerships. This paper reports upon the development and challenges that have shaped the activities of Cicada Press with specific reference to the enriching experience developed from the interaction between the artists invited to produce work and the students who participate in the course that supports this program. Cicada Press' pursuit of diverse cultural engagements in the Asia Pacific region will be discussed; featuring workshops, exchange exhibitions and print collaborations in countries as diverse as China, New Zealand, Thailand and Pakistan. One featured example is the ongoing relationship between COFA UNSW and the Indigenous community of Papunya, in the Northern Territory. It was here, in 1971, where the teacher Geoffrey Bardon encouraged a group of senior lawmen to inscribe their ancient culture in permanent images based on their own visual traditions. Despite its international fame as the home of Western Desert Art this community was without an art centre for many years. It was with the support of friends of the community like Dr. Vivien Johnson who, in 2006, organised several workshops and fundraising activities for a new art centre. With Cicada Press's ongoing printmaking collaborations and the COFA trained graduates that assist in the management of the centre, a continuing exhibition program reminds the world of this talented community's distinguished place in Australian art history.

## Prue Venables

### The Building of Collaborative Thinking

*(abridged from presentation transcript)*

My sense of the word 'collaboration' has always been that it refers to the building of understanding, connections, and of thinking and working together as equals. In exploring now, the meaning of collaboration to me, I realise that, for much of my life, experientially I have been gradually, continuously and unconsciously gathering a perception and ownership of something very practical, positive, and enriching that now enables me to welcome opportunities for collaboration as they appear.

The development of an inventive, open, questioning, experimental approach resulting in the gradual evolution of ideas was seen as essential for creative and expressive thinking. The recognition of such links across ceramics, science and music was, for me, very exciting. Emerging quietly within me was something so positive and optimistic, expectant even. I believe that these experiences have formed the building blocks of my work and the foundations of my current interest in collaborative projects.

1. Design and development in Japan of tableware designs for hotel use and to be made from recycled porcelain.

In response to Japanese government initiatives advocating environmental conservation and recycling, in 1997, the Gifu Prefectural Ceramics Research Institute (Tajimi City) initiated the Green Life 21 Project. This exercise involved local companies and research institutes, working together voluntarily to promote the more sustainable use of natural resources and a reduction in discarded fired ceramic waste. Used and broken ceramics were collected and crushed then carefully reformulated with a proportion of fresh materials into usable recycled clay bodies. New product designs were to focus on ease of use, longevity, and functionality. Forms were to incorporate thickened edges for strength and durability, while still maintaining lightness plus comfort at the mouth during use. Altogether, an exciting new approach to the making of ceramics.

2. Collaborative projects with Melbourne based designer Simon Lloyd

3. 'Prue cupboard' developed with SA furniture designer Khai Liew

4. Proposed development of a silver, porcelain and wood object in collaboration with Julie Blyfield and Khai Liew

5. Indigenous projects

There are pitfalls and hurdles involved with collaborative work. A high level of listening, respect, equality, plus excellent communication is mandatory. A determination to work collectively with clarity and precision is also important to me. Aside from the making of the work itself, I have had to learn to imagine and predict many new issues each time that I have entered into a project. These include the development of contracts, discussions regarding ownership, costs, marketing and the usual exhibition issues such as photography, publicity and gallery commissions. Much time commitment is involved in research, ideas development, making – all stages of these projects – and the appropriate valuation of this can be tricky. Arrangements must be clear from the beginning.

*(Abridged from presentation transcript)*