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The Ignorant Art Schools

Hao, Sophia Yadong ; Perks, Sarah ; Stewart, Paul

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The Ignorant Art Schools: Alternative Pedagogy and Collective Agency as New Curatorial Ecosystems

A British Art Network Research Group led by Sophia Yadong Hao (Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee), Dr Edgar Schmitz (Goldsmiths), Dr Paul Stewart and Prof Sarah Perks (Teesside University).

The group emerged from work carried out under the umbrella of *The Ignorant Art School: Five Sit-ins Toward Creative Emancipation* exhibition and event programme at Cooper Gallery, curated by Sophia Yadong Hao.

Our research project (2022-2024) is concerned with:

- **Describing** the relationship between alternative art pedagogies and sites of crisis in view of their contribution to current socio-political narratives including decoloniality, social justice and environmental stewardship (the **'what'**).

- **Articulating** how these new curatorial ecosystems challenge social hierarchies and economies of access, and reveal how they have transformed modes of participation and production (the **'how'**).

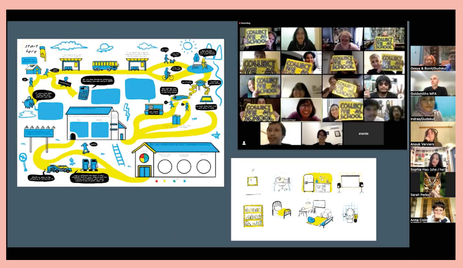
- **Investigating** where these new curatorial ecosystems take place and how these spaces impact social experiences and how they allow for new forms of sociality (the **'where'**).

[1] Practising Duets

This was a series of four public trans-disciplinary events traversing artistic, curatorial, and research-led practices in the humanities and beyond, based on the principle of a critical conversation between two leading practitioners who have not yet met.

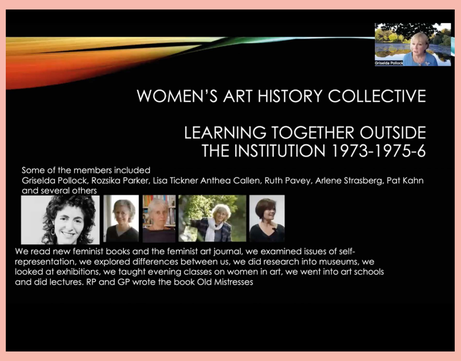


Practising Duets #1 (MIMA, Middlesbrough, in-person)
A conversation between curator and film producer Olivier Marboeuf and artist and researcher Dr Ranjana Thapalyal to share their reflections on knowledge formation, alternative art pedagogies and decoloniality.



Practising Duets #2 (online)
Members of the Jakarta based alternative learning space Gudskul and co-founder of Open School East Dr Anna Colin reflected on alternative art pedagogies, economy of access, and transformative collective agency.

Practising Duets #3 (CCA Goldsmiths, London, in-person)
Artist and community organiser Filipa César and artist and writer Harun Morrison came together to discuss artistic agency and ethics in alternative pedagogy in the context of extractivism.



Practising Duets #4 (online)
A discussion on praxis of interceptional feminism, internationalism and feminist collective learning with postcolonial and social art historian Griselda Pollock and Varsha Nair, one of the artist-organisers of Womanifesto, a Thailand based women artists' collective.

[2] CHEAD Annual Conference 2024



Sophia Yadong Hao, Paul Stewart and Sarah Perks presented a workshop for the CHEAD Annual Conference 2024 at V&A Dundee that gave a snapshot into the radical ethos of Δ. Through collective reading, making, watching, listening, and sharing the workshop explored collective working and radical pedagogical ideas towards notions of commoning.

[3] 0-eA residency in Yokosuka, Japan



The research group was selected for 0-eA Curatorial Residency in Yokosuka, Japan. During the residency Paul Stewart and Sarah Perks created the programme **Partially Incorrect Answers (Δ)** with word sets, diagrams and short films with movement, meditation and gesture, to ask how we might use silence to speak together, building on Susan Sontag's 'The Aesthetic of Silent'. The programme culminated in an interactive performance with a live score by musician Dawn Bothwell with artist Chris Shen, and a workshop staged as a collaborative composition that engaged in non-verbal forms of knowledge exchange.