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### ABSTRACT

Learning experiences in the university studio are embedded within cultural and disciplinary practices that are informed in part by the space and place, and the relations in-between. Students and educators need to consider how disciplinary notions and boundaries are addressed by the practices enacted and embodied in the university studio. In this paper, I focus on the space and place of print studios, although embedded in a canon of disciplinary practice address contemporary university and artistic needs. This paper draws on my experiences of student, educator, artist and visiting artist in print studios over the last thirty years and my study of the crit (2018) which was based in university print studios. I use visual ethnographic and post qualitative methods to think through my experience of visiting and photographing the studio spaces. Responses to space and place are affective, I deconstruct the space and its usage, and what and how the practices demand through enacted and embodied responses.

### KEYWORDS

*Studio; space; practice; print; affect; learning.*

### INTRODUCTION

In a think piece about school leadership and the studio as metaphor, Professor Pat Thomson (2018) examines how the notion of the studio could support critical reflection in leaders. Studio practice, Thomson argues, brings to the fore ‘not knowing, generating new ideas, risk taking, integrating theory and practice, criticality and socially just practices’ (Thomson, 2018, p. 1). In this article, I am attending to studio spaces and places as another layer to Thomson’s article to think about how the studio’s call to generate responses, disciplinary and otherwise. I do this thinking to pose questions of the practices in studios as a “scene of address rather than as an offering of security or of cognitive certainty” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 108) of ways of learning in relationships, diverse, complex and creative in practice.

In this article, I use photographs of Australian university print studios, showing different relationships in practice. Neither of the two studios are sites of in-depth research, rather it is the experience of visiting them in relation to my experience as a printmaking educator and researcher that I have responded to the call of the images. These places are studios with specialised equipment and ways of working with equipment which develop in use, in practice, and with skill. This capacity of practice, and a practice within relation in and with the learning experience in the studio, in the in-between (Ellsworth, 2005; Grosz, 2001) of relations is my focus in examining the photographs. The print studios operate as ways of entry into communities of artists and audiences, they generate responses to the learning happening within them, and how subjectivities are enacted and embodied in these spaces. I have photographed print studios over my thirty years of practice and have been fascinated in what the studio brings to a practice, and how one’s responses in practice and in art making are generated and mediated by the studio relations and culture.

To think about what a studio brings to practice, and how one's responses in practice and in art making are generated and mediated by the studio one needs to look at historic and contemporary teaching in the studio. The early history of western art education was based in mimicry to learn skills. The eighteenth century European and English academies teaching model was based around the copying of master artists, drawing the antique from Greek and Roman sculptures, and then progressing to live models (Daichendt, 2010), if you happened to be male. Student progression was based on public competitions such as the Royal Academy and judged by the Academicians (Daichendt, 2010). Teaching staff were elected to the positions within the Academy, rather than their suitability as teachers (Daichendt, 2010). In the atelier model, a student was assigned to a master and progression was based on the worthiness of the work judged by their master/professor (Daichendt, 2010). In a contemporary atelier model of an art school, Daniel Birnbaum, the head of the head of the Städelschule Frankfurt /Main, described the most important characteristic of teaching as "the individual artist is more important than any educational program or doctrine" (Birnbaum, 2007, p. 49). The individual teacher/artist modelling the practice to be an artist for their students. I am interested in how a practice is taught through modelling, how modelling generates becoming artists? And what else is happening in the place and space of the studio?

I argue print studio in an artists' education in undergraduate art schools creates particular circumstances in place and space. It is in the contexts of the print studio that generates multiple and layered relations (McPherson, 2018) and are a part of learning and teaching in the studio. I propose it is useful to engage in the possibilities and the experiences of the studio by a theoretical framing of the spaces of learning through the relations generated with human and non-human actors (Ellsworth, 2005). It is a way of thinking through how desire, affect and sensation is produced in the becoming an artist in the university studio. The print studio becomes a way to understand how to become "oriented" (Ahmed, 2006) with the press and other non-human actors, and at the same time – disorients as an acknowledgment of using/ being with the body in different ways – in becoming an artist. Ahmed argues for a critical materialism where orientations matter in a "historical materialism with a materialism of the body" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 235) incorporating "forms of labour that disappear in the familiarity or 'givenness' of objects" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 234).

In developing a theoretical framing of the spaces of learning through the relations I am thinking through Thompson's proposition of the studio practice as a space of not knowing, and of learning to practice with criticality, risk, and theory. Studio encompasses movement, in each of the frameworks used in this paper, there is a sense of movement. In understanding how to become orientated (Ahmed, 2006) I am thinking through the movement in orientation, how positionality moves through learning through materialism. Movement in the experience of learning becomes a way to experience knowledge as subjective response, an affective movement, that both orientates and makes and unmakes knowledge stability (Ellsworth, 2006). The space of the studio is a becoming space; an orientation and a dynamic and lived space. In the next section I move to the images of the studio, noticeably unpopulated with human actors. With the images, I present my research notes written in response to the photograph and the experience of visiting the studio.



Figure 1: Etching presses. Print studio at ANU, Canberra 2016.

*Manual presses, bins, hotplates for heating inks on plates.*

*Unseen: how is the space shared? Close together, see-able, recognisable.*

*Unrecorded: Yellow press*

*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 2: Screen printing tables. Print studio at ANU, Canberra 2016.

*Arms with squeegees to extend your reach (more than your body), vacuums to hold tight the paper for registration of the colour separations (to hold tighter than your strength to push colour through the mesh).*

*Unseen: how is the space shared? Close together, see-able, recognisable.*

*Unrecorded: cold, winter.*

*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*

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Figure 3: Lithography stone storage and graining sink. Print studio at ANU, Canberra 2016.

*The “oomph” needed to first shift the stone. I’m looking for the two super-sized flat head screw drivers I need to prise the stone of the surface after too much Gum Arabic has seeped down the sizes and glued “my stone”\* to the shelf. Crush of the fingers when moving stones. The call of “FINGERS” to remind you to be aware of the weight of the stone. (\*Stones are borrowed, never owned by the student). Each time, the surface is grounded down, re-grained prior to drawing.*

*Unseen: how is the space shared? Close together, see-able, recognisable.*

*Unrecorded: dark*

*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*

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Figure 4: Lithography drying area. Print studio at ANU, Canberra 2016

*Oily inky gloves and lithography muslins, first premise of lithography is oil and water don't mix.*

*Unseen: Who wears these gloves? Are they communal? Are they named?*

*Unrecorded: Who washes these cloths?*

*Unfelt: Are they dry? (They smelt dampish, re –remembered my dislike of damp). How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*

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Figure 5: Squeegee storage and clean up area. Print studio at ANU, Canberra

*Mop, bins, and brooms. Who cleans up after themselves? Communal squeegees.*

*Unseen: why are they pooling in this corner?*

*Unrecorded: are they in the “right” place?  
Unfelt: Is this a non space? How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 6: Print studio (etching). UNSW Printmaking, 2017.

*Yellow lines, no place. Sitting allowed. In some studios, there is no place for sitting. Only standing, moving, pulling wheels and pushing ink.*



*Unseen: On what side of the line am I to stand? Where do I stand? Depends on the activity, the lines mark the place where the bed of the press extends too.*

*Unrecorded: Rather warm. Hot even.*

*Unfelt: Greenery outside. Dull roar of exhaust system on the inside. How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 7: Print studio (rollers). UNSW Printmaking, 2017.

*Everything in place, and “cleaned”. Obviously “cleaned” is particular.*

*Unseen: clean the roller before printing, clean after printing. No contamination in the colour I use.*

*Unrecorded: Smell of the turps (Turpentine) where are the cloths to clean? Where do the cloths go after cleaning?*

*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 8: Lab coats 1. UNSW Printmaking, 2017

Lab coats lives here.

*Unseen: Who else wears this one? Pencil.*

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*Unrecorded: Check the pockets? Paper fingers for picking up the damp etching, so my dirty fingerprints don't transfer to the clean edge. Lost button. Paper clip. Rubber band.*  
*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 9: Lab coats 2. UNSW Printmaking, 2017.

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Different classes' lab coats reside here.

*Unseen: Who else wears this one?*

*Unrecorded: Check the pockets?*

*Unfelt: How is this space learnt and unlearnt?*

*(research note)*



Figure 10: Lab coats 3. UNSW Printmaking, 2017  
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More resident lab coats.

*Unseen: Who else wears this one?*

*Unrecorded: Which one would I fit?*

*Unfelt: Do I fit?*

*(research note)*

In the next section, I discuss Ellsworth's call to examine the pedagogical experience as a way of thinking through how desire, affect and sensation in the studio are understood.

## THE PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE IN THE STUDIO

Ellsworth (2005) calls and argues for an investigation into the notion of the pedagogical experience, an area of knowledge they argue where affect and sensation challenges assumptions and practices that have historically privileged language. The learning experiences discussed by Ellsworth have a pedagogical force that,

invite sensations of being somewhere in between thinking and feeling, of being in motion through the space and time between knowing and not knowing, in the space and time of learning as a lived experience with an open, unforeseeable future. (Ellsworth, 2005, p.16)

The experience of knowledge as subjective response are dismissed as feminine by theorists suspicious of experience as "it is 'under-theorized' and easily 'contaminated' by naïve subjectivity" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 3). Ellsworth's thinking about affect and sensation meets her pedagogical desire to show "knowledge in the making" and "learning as noncompliance" (2005, p.16).

This notion of desire, and affect, Ellsworth argues simultaneously requests sensations in a "mind/brain/body" and invite transformation (Ellsworth, 2005, p.16). Affects, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argues,

are attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, including other affects. Thus, one can be excited by anger, disgusted by shame, or surprised by joy. (Kosofsky Sedgwick, 2003, p.19)

Kosofsky Sedgwick argues, desire is a social force, not as a particular affective state rather as a "glue" forming an important relationship (Kosofsky Sedgwick, 2003). Conversely, affect is about "the capacities to act and be acted upon" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 1) that is neither positive nor negative, but the all of that. It is a force. To this, Ellsworth adds, affect that both suspend and animates us. Sensation, affect and desire are relational and contextual. Beyond emotion, or conscious knowing, affect is a force with the capacity to call to action and be called into action. In that action, affect orients, it positions, and it moves.

It is in this affective and desiring space that the studio operates in the pedagogical *in-between-ness* (Grosz, 2001, p. 95; Ellsworth, 2005; Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 1). In the *in-between-ness* of the studio, I am focussed on the ways humans and the non-human interact, resonate and respond, and also at the same time, are silent or shirk the call and response. In the experience, affect, sensation and desire are the things that stay with the becoming artist. It is the capacity to gather affect and how affect and desire can "form dispositions and thus shape subjectivities" (Watkins, 2010, p. 269) that informs becoming and artist. The sensation, affect and desire are simultaneous gathered and altogether, layered and mingled.



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## POSING QUESTIONS

Each of the images poses questions, and in my researcher notes I ask what is unseen, unrecorded and unfelt. I did this questioning as a way to challenge my assumptions of why I teach particular practices in particular ways. Asking questions based on conceptions of what a practice does challenges me to question - who does the pedagogy think I am? My responses challenged my thinking of how the place and space of the print studio generate relations and practices, and my approaches to teaching and learning. In the "holding" spaces of each of the studios, it is the storage of rollers (figure 7), lithography stones (figure 3), squeegees (figure 5) that contrast with the human shapes left behind in the gloves (4) and lab coats (figures 8, 9, 10) that become what I respond to. It is the dissimilarity of the drying gloves, in their difference that is somehow familiar, that differentiate the regular-ness of the collected, size graded blue lab coats. Particular places enact practices in different ways; the close quarters of the etching studio at UNSW (figure 6) are mediated with yellow warning lines of where the press beds extend to and where the human actors move around. The etching studio at ANU (figure 1) has a yellow press. The colour yellow, in both cases, could signify different ways of action and movement. It is the stretch in my body of using the long arm screen printing tables (figure 2), and the caution of moving the heavy lithography stones (figure 3) that take me back to the memory of my print studio education. Action and movement in a practice then starts to echo in the motionless images.

Movement then becomes an approach into practice. This movement is within a space and place, and a moment of time. A moment of learning where one senses the experience of learning, as "a self that knows more" (Kamler & Thomson, 2014, p. 20), as this movement acts as a knowledge in the making (Ellsworth, 2005; Kamler & Thomson, 2014). In describing the encounter between multiple learning selves, for example a group of students and the experience of an artwork, Ellsworth argues,

These smudged identities interleave and emerge as social bodies composed of viewing subjects who are present in ways that cannot be reduced to "selves and their others." Rather, a social body is composed of competing presences made present to each other by virtue of the fact that their claims on "being there" are mutually witnessed. (Ellsworth, 2005, p.135)

To consider what a social body is and becomes in the print studio goes to some ways to think about the spatial, relational and material practices enacted in a culture of becoming artists.

This paper is a response and in doing it, I enact a recognition of what Seigworth and Gregg suggest affect studies can do; a further smashing of the pieces that enact a movement, an activity, a retort, rather than a deconstruction and leaving the pieces intact<sup>1</sup> (2010, p. 20). Seigworth and Gregg argue it is in the addressing of affective movements, as moments "as a demand on the social" (2010, p. 21) that "seek to imaginatively/generatively nudge these moments along" (2010, p. 21). Moments, movements and matterings that "constitute ever new and enlarged potentials for belonging" to the lived experience of the everyday (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 21). This think piece is a way of thinking and understanding the demand on the social as an elongated moment to adjust, to nudge the pedagogy of the studio into a recognition of what I ask when seeking "finer-grained postures for collective inhabitation" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 21).

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<sup>1</sup> Suggested from an anecdote from Lefebvre after he published a critique of Tristan Tzara's Dadaist manifesto of 1918 (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 20)

## CONCLUSION

Ellsworth asks, “who does the pedagogy think I am?” In this paper, I start by asking ‘What does the press do?’ In both questions, there is a demand for a response, a demand to think about what a practice brings to a social body and how a practice is taught. In the process of doing this questioning on the practices in the print studio, my thinking has shifted from a practice that operates in certain ways to one that acknowledges that a press does not know how it teaches or learns. The press does not know me. It is not a safe or neutral environment. Nor is it automatically supportive, or combative. Rather it is what the press makes available or not, contestable or not, or recognisable as a desire. A desire to become an artist, to approach the notion of practice that moves. A desire as a knowledge in the making. I encountered the sensation of what the possibilities of a practice could do. It is in a state of “never-quite-knowing” (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 9), how affect is recognised, changeable and unfamiliar and understood in those ways and mediated. Thomson argues that studio practices bring to the fore ‘not knowing, generating new ideas, risk taking, integrating theory and practice, criticality and socially just practices’ (Thomson, 2018, p. 1) for critical thinking. I argue that we need to think more about the studio’s call to generate responses and how we teach practice in the studio. In asking questions of the studio through images of two universities print studios I respond to the address of the studios and their practices, in material and matter, relations and social bodies.

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