The Slade Research Centre in Woburn Square hosts collaborations and events that involve researchers from many different fields, from the Slade and UCL as well as from the wider national and international community. One of the aims of the Slade Research Centre is to encourage and teach students to create artworks of the highest quality, to help them develop and achieve their ambitions as artists, and in so doing to engage in artistic research at the highest level.

The Slade Research Centre is used by students on all our programmes, including undergraduate, graduate and doctorate. Graduate Research Weeks are held at the Slade Research Centre in the Autumn and Spring Terms and provide MFA, MA and PhD students across all three areas, Painting, Sculpture and Fine Art Media, the opportunity to explore an aspect of their work under a particular research theme, which can be imaginatively developed in the unique studio space of the Centre. The research themes involve basic notions that continually inform the activity of making art, and hence are key to the development of artistic research.

The research themes for the academic year 2015/16 are:

**Body**

**Colour**

**Drawing**

**Scale**

The continual conversation of Fine Art with design, architecture, fashion, and the development of culture and its related industries is often overlooked. Much of what we see around us has been made by someone who went to art school, often working with experts in other fields. The Slade Research Centre and Graduate Research Weeks support emerging artists in providing a forum to help construct the thinking and making which will allow them to engage positively with other disciplines. In light of exploring the constant themes that run through artistic practice, related questions and ideas shift and change. Context and materials change too, and through this dynamic, artists bring new questions and answers to the fore, interrogating familiar issues in new and different ways, and fostering innovative research.

This e-book represents a selection of the work of MFA, MA and PhD students who participated in one or more of this year’s Graduate Research Weeks during the 2015/16 academic year. It demonstrates a range of experimentation, collaboration and discussion, and reflects the spirit of ambition and enthusiasm that has energised the programme. We would like to thank everyone involved, the students and staff within the Slade and UCL, as well as the artists and researchers from outside the university who have engaged in our debates and given so generously of their time and expertise to help us achieve our aims. Special thanks goes to Professor Edward Allington for leading “Body Week”, and to Professor Chris Dean and Dr. Wendy Birch, UCL Anatomy for their generous support in hosting Anatomical Drawing for Slade students in conjunction with “Body Week”.

Thank you to Patrick White for editing and designing this year’s Graduate Research Weeks e-book.

Cover image: *Hattie Moore Puddles Are Not Always Round (2015)* Detail

Lisa Milroy
Director of Graduate Studies and Head of Graduate Painting

Jayne Parker
Head of Graduate Fine Art Media

Karin Ruggaber
Acting Head of Graduate Sculpture
I am interested in producing my own modular construction parts which I use to build my work. I enjoy mixing my own material so that the surface and texture of the components contain a physical record of my actions. I try to highlight the unique quality of each single entity. I deliberately draw attention to the hand by repeating forms or punctuating work with ‘handles’. Individual components are normally relatively flat but together they become three dimensional. I am interested in the space between two and three dimensionality. I hope my work carries instinctive gestures, hinting at other possibilities and suggesting that it is in a state of flux.

I had not been able to assemble the components that I had been making until Scale Week. It became evident by the end of the week that not only did I need more parts but I also needed to reassess the scale of some elements. I returned to Woburn a month later for Body Week. As a result of what I made in the interval, the work can now stretch upwards, filling the space with more dynamism.
‘Neckties’ consists of a hand-sewn military standard flag, ceremonial flag pole and leather flag holster. The flag was made in response to (and as a remediation of) the first meeting of HRH Prince Charles and the leader of Sinn Féin, Gerry Adams TD, in The Republic of Ireland on the 19th May 2015. The flag’s design was determined by the choice of tie each of these figures, and an innocent bystander, made on the day.

‘Neckties’ had been a work I had wanted to realise for a number of months. I intended to use the colour week to work towards its completion. However, making the flag involved the acquisition of new skills which I had underestimated the time it would take to develop, resulting in the work not being finished by the end of the week. Over the next month the flag was completed and installed in the rotunda at The Slade.

My practice has two sides. One involves the making of objects which only become activated within the gallery space. The other involves interacting with works in the public sphere, carrying out actions to instigate a conversation. Given the history the flag references and the 100 year anniversary of the 1916 Easter rising I decided to activate ‘Neckties’ through a performance on the 30th March 2016. The performance was a citizen’s flag bearing march from Dublin Castle to the General Post Office (GPO), retracing part of the official 1916-2016 parade which took place a few days earlier. The performance ended outside the GPO where the Proclamation of the Irish Republic was read by Pádraig Pearse in 1916. Over the week preceding the performance I distributed 1000 postcards depicting the moment HRH Prince Charles, an innocent bystander, and Gerry Adams TD met.

DAVID BLACKMORE

‘Neckties’ (2015)
Hand sewn military standard flag, ceremonial flag pole, leather flag pole holster and brass plaque.
Dimensions variable.
David Blackmore
Neckties (2016)
Photographic
documentation of
a performance on
30th March 2016,
Dublin Castle to
the GPO.
“The Body” Research Week at Woburn helped me to allow the mental and physical space to experiment with the use of the body within my work (which generally makes up the crux of my practice). I played with the use of disparate body parts to be used as abstract components to suggest a narrative, rather than the use of the full body in a more traditional performative role.

During the week I was thinking about how anxiety can be ‘performed’, what this word meant to me, and how certain psychological feelings can bridge something between pleasure and discomfort.

I ended up focusing on the act of tickling, being a feeling that can be fetishized and enjoyed, but also that can provoke deep discomfort and anxiety.

I was interested in tickling specifically for the fact it goes against our reading of body language and empathetic understanding, it is often impossible to know whether someone is enjoying the act or whether it is unbearable.

I was thinking of all the various ways you could play with this strange and disconcerting feeling in film, utilising its possibility to distort reality and ‘play tricks’, and how affective it could really be by using a static object to perform ‘the victim’.

‘Tickle Me Pink’ eventually was the outcome of Research Week, not feeling like I needed a finished piece, but what came out of it was a short film that acted as a sketch or performance, something I see not as a work on its own, but part of my broader research into how performance and humour can be used in a creative context to communicate something more hidden, more specifically human traits that are related to mental health or subjects of taboo.

http://www.jessicabryant.co.uk/
Jess Bryant
Tickle Me Pink
Video
00:41
1280 x 720

Link to video
Colour
The Woburn space was large and empty. Dim light was coming through from the ceiling windows. I wanted to experiment with the subtle shifts between the colours that I could see in the shades on the walls of Woburn. I dyed watercolour paper in several colours. The work I made was installed in response to the Woburn space. It seemed to glow and I arranged each piece of paper that was similar next to one another in order to create a smooth transition. I also made two coloured paper drawings with wax pastel by drawing lines. They seemed to reflect vivid colours and contrasted with the dyed paper.

Drawing
Drawing has been my most intuitive and direct method of materializing my ideas. The large space and high ceiling in Woburn led me to freely draw images that I had kept in my mind.

MINYOUNG CHOI
Minyoung Choi
*Untitled* (2015)
Korean pigments, acrylic paint, water soluble wax pastel on water colour paper.
Dimensions variable.

Minyoung Choi
*Bonfire and Tea* (2015)
Charcoal on paper
69.5 x 150 cm
For the first Research Week on the theme of ‘Colour’ I worked with 20 overlapping screenprints (70x100cm each) building up this mural collage composition of approximate dimensions 330x420cm. I intended to engage with the influential role of light on colours. Thus, I experimented with the presence and absence of colour, and I opted for white (pure light) and black (total absence of light). On a larger scale the work becomes dominant in the space: once in mural-scale the human scale seems to be so small. Inspiration for this work was the evocation from the numerous street murals, surfaces filled with layers of posters, omnipresent in the city of Athens. I intend to further investigate this mural character of the collage and proceed to larger scales or even entire rooms making enveloping spaces for the viewer.

‘Individual territory’
For the second Research Week on the theme of ‘Drawing’ I intended to explore the potential of drawing as a sculptural element on surfaces like the floor. ‘Individual territory’ was an idea for a performance-installation and suggests a direct (performance) and indirect (installation) dialogue of artist and viewer. The artist appears to build a kind of territory, as an animal, like a spider makes its web, defining its territory. The viewers will face the artist tearing letters and spreading this enormous form. They will be present during this artist’s act of tearing apart the language symbols (the alphabet, the given code) and making a new one, even automatic or incomprehensible. What if the form fills the entire floor, becoming an obstacle for the viewer? Will they interact with the artist by stepping on it? Will they do it during the artist’s absence, becoming ‘needles’ that weave their own courses with their shoe traces? What if the artist was to perform the work outside, in the city itself, in public space?
Panagiotis Ferentinos
*Mural Collage* (2015)
20 overlapping screenprints (70 x 100cm each).
330 x 420cm.

Panagiotis Ferentinos
*Individual territory* (2015-16)
Performance-installation.
Playing in the making of art
as if playing with our skin
in life.
Colour
Making work at Woburn allows me to separate it from the space I normally make in and allows me to see it more objectively. I was interested in making paint a sculptural material and experimented with colours mixed with different polymer mediums or latex, painting them on plastic or pressing into textures and letting them dry. I wanted to look at how feelings can be invested in surface textures, and could be a skin-like focus for touch and feeling, physical and metaphorical.

Body
While my research into the body was very colour led it was also about what constitutes a body. The ceramic shape had been formed by slip coated net wrapped around a papier-mâché shape, which was itself formed around a balloon, both absent due to removal or firing, leaving a ceramic husk. The purple sand is another tenuous type of body composed of multiple particles heaped together. I felt compelled to put the hyacinth with these objects to somehow link and enliven them.
During drawing research week I explored drawing with large scale figures. I wanted to see what impact life-size works would have on the viewer. Drawing week also enabled me to consider how I approach drawing working from a photograph as well as working from an observational sketch and memory. It was also a chance to really focus on what subject matter I like to depict, and through drawing I was able to develop the size and scale, as well as the subject matter of my paintings.
JABULANI MASEKO

Drawing
During the drawing week, I considered the use of building tools often employed in the erection of temporary walls in galleries and museums as viable instruments to continue my interest in the art of drawing.

Colour
Colour in the investigation of identity.
Who really cares
This performance is based on the transformation of a wall drawing into a musical score. The drawing is the result of the continuous repetition of a process of which the single objective is drawing lines as close together as possible without overlapping. The drawing is then read from bottom to top through the spaces between the lines. Each space is equivalent to a note attributed according to its size in relation to each other. Time-wise, the drawing is read from left to right.

Through the juxtaposition of sounds, the work intends to create an environment of vibrations. As the notes “pull up”, so does the intensity of the sound until it is almost possible to feel the space vibrate. In this instant, the lines of the drawing seem to move and extend beyond the physical barrier of the wall.
With the space, intensive period of working and focus on ‘Scale’ offered by the Woburn Research week, I sewed together Olympia from fragmented parts, materials, theories and processes. Hoffman’s Olympia in Nachtstücken (‘The Sand Man’), a life-like doll or automaton with real human eyes; Manet’s Olympia, an uncompromised reworking of the tradition of the female nude; Mount Olympia, bane of the gods; Olympia, ‘from the home of the gods’. My Olympia is a synthetically created landscape simultaneously in the process of creation and ruination. At once macro- and microscopic, a series of islands viewed from the air or cushions of moss created from towels, duvets, velvet and oil paint; sprouting intestinal, silicone cables; Anthropomorphized moulds of car parts with machine-like body casts sink into and crawl out of each other; consuming, consummating, feeding off one another. Toying with scale roused a dormant monster in my work, and she continues to grow.
The research week’s theme of ‘drawing’ invited me to begin an examination of the manner in which I had been collecting filmed gestures using my body, as drawings or scores of movement. The film produced during this week described my visual retort to a passage of text from the diaries of dancer and choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky, written while he was undergoing a prolonged psychiatric episode in 1919. The resulting filmic gesticulation was a response to Nijinsky’s description of the anxieties experienced by audience and performer during an intimate dance recital. This singular and highly refined action is, as Nijinsky states, concerned with ‘transmitting’ pure feeling – anxiety, ease, fluidity and decisiveness.

‘I played nervously on purpose, because the audience will understand me better if I am nervous.’ – Vaslav Nijinsky

Nijinsky Laughing (2015)
Single-channel video
16sec (looped)

Link to video
Above (detail) and following page:

**Colour Structure** (2015)
Dyed cotton, cement blocks, image transfer, ink, emulsion paint, coloured tape and paper hung on baton.

ROBERT MEAD
Duckweed scooped from the Regents Canal was cultured in my studio under a hydroponic light. The greased paper holding the duckweed acted as a viewing device; from underneath, the micro-ecosystem was illuminated and tiny organisms could be seen swimming around.
Colour has always been an integral component in my work, often appearing as vibrant and contrasting colours. For the 'Colour' research week, I wanted to experiment in a more subtle way with using colours which may not be obvious at first glance, but necessary in the total experience of the work.

Coinciding with the time I was battling with my landlord about a mould problem in my flat, I was inspired to create my version of mould. Mould was almost invisible in my room, hiding behind the wall, the furniture and under the desk, but it was certainly affecting my health. I coloured self-adhesive labels with green and blue charcoals, stuck and rubbed them on the wall, which I then peeled off, leaving only the charcoal traces of the labels on the wall.

HIROKO NAKAJIMA
Hiroko Nakajima
It’s not always easy to get your landlord to deal with it (2015)
Charcoal, self-adhesive labels, print, moulded curtain from the artist’s flat
Dimensions variable
I was looking to explore sensory and tactile qualities in my sculptural work, using scent, ergonomic and moulded forms and handmade objects. The table structure holds a scene of a variety of objects. A plasticine and wax frog is seen diving into a void filled with water and floating shards of wax. At the opposite end, a cast of a bottle and a set of drips are soaked in blue non-biological washing liquid, giving off a synthetic aroma associated with cleanliness and comfort. I was interested in exploring the poetics around domestic objects and spaces alongside the performativity of the care taken in arranging them.
LANU ELENA VARVARO

I became interested in discovering the different types of colour blindness, and how each blindness affected a person, how the tones or colours altered.

Hence for the 1 week research week at Woburn, I focused on the subject of Colour Blindness. I looked up the six different types, and created different filters. I wanted the piece to be interactive with the people, each cardboard box fitted a different head dimension, and hung from a different height according to each person. I created some quick coloured prints, each with different shades of colour, so that when the person placed the box on their head, the colours of the screens would change according to which filter they would be looking through.
JACK WEST

HERETIC - Experimenting with 3 core materials, slate, oak and steel, I explored ways in which to arrange a structure that had originated in form in a virtual, computer-generated environment.
FLEUR YEARSLEY

Colour
‘Dusk’ and ‘Dawn’
The openness of Woburn truly gave me the space for reflection. ‘Memoryscapes’ were conjured of the ever changing South East Asian sky I had encountered on my recent travels. I wanted to play with the pictorial space of the paintings by stitching pieces of delicate muslin and dense canvas, which also facilitated a way of piecing the memories together. Weight of the materials and oil paint signified atmosphere, light and the sensation of the day.

Drawing
‘Pop Bang Whizz’

The paper formed a tray at the bottom to capture relics. Containment. The sentimental.

Reveal + Conceal / Weight + Float / Opaque + Transparent / Freedom + Control
One without the other collapses.