

## **Worlds that can hardly hold up: Art and learning as ambivalent practices of study**

Laura Traffi-Prats

l.traffi-prats@mmu.ac.uk

### **Abstract**

By thinking with post-humanist new materialisms, in this paper I articulate a pedagogical approach to children community art spaces that pays attention to what is emergent and incipient in processes of art-making with children, that often escape normative understandings of participation and art experience. By considering Karen Barad's concept of intra-activity I suggest that art learning is an encompassing relational phenomenon, where entities such those of the child, the materials, the environment and the languages of expression do not precede the relation. Relying on Erin Manning and Lauren Berlant, I consider the studio not as a place but as a practice of study. This is, the practice of study of the not-yet-known, and a collective practice that plays with ambivalence and ongoingness while creates differential effects.

This paper focuses on my experience as a facilitator of a weekly art studio directed to pre-teen children in an urban community youth arts centre, to which I have given the name of True North Arts<sup>1</sup>. I became the facilitator of this programme in a rather unexpected way. I had just started at my current university post in July 2016, when I arranged a series of visits and observations to True North Arts. For the months of September and October, I watched weekly workshops of music, theatre, dance, cinema aiming to become familiar with the centre's ethos, and staff and to think in a potential research collaboration. In mid-October during a conversation with the art studio facilitator, Anne, I learned that she was to quit the job by the end of December to begin a masters in arts and social engagement in a different city. Anne noted that the centre manager was left with two options, either to find an artist educator in the next four weeks with experience of working with children in community settings for one hour a week, or to close the program for the time being.

Having worked in urban environments in times of austerity and tight cultural budgets for most of my professional life, one thing that I have seen is that programs that close do not tend to reopen.<sup>1</sup> As Berlant (2017) notes, we live in a time where we have a sense that “a glitch has appeared in the reproduction of life” (p. 393), infrastructural breakage is common. Somehow, we have come to a tacit agreement that certain worlds and forms of life cannot hold up. In such socio-material-political context, a small art studio with six regular kids that come from different places of the city to do art together did not seem a big loss; especially if one considers the climate of scrutiny and shrinking resources in which local community art centres operate. This is a climate, where nothing is guaranteed unless a large portfolio of activities is maintained and renewed, and participation in these activities comes in quantities rather than qualities. Berlant affirms, that a political response to normalized experiences of sustained loss, breakage and discontinuity may not come in the shape of judgement or critique, but in the fashion of active and creative interventions that keep things bound together in situations of transition. Such precarious infrastructuring is built around ambivalent experiences that combine difficulty and vulnerability with the sense that perhaps some new forms of common life can come out of it.

So here we are, the ethico-political dilemma of holding up the little world of the art studio in a time of transition mixed with my initial interest for finding a research context that allowed me to think

practically in my current study interests on post-humanist new materialist art pedagogies. The encounter of both circumstances, and the familiarity that I had developed with the group as a result of my weekly observations brought me to volunteer as programme lead from January until the end of the season in June. Additionally, I continued attending the sessions with Anne until her departure. I volunteered with the condition of being allowed to visually document shared processes of art-making with children (Kind, 2010; Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind & Kocher, 2017). Thinking again with Berlant (2017), the idea was to maintain the continuity of the program in the transitional period of finding and hiring a new lead, while utilizing such provisionality as an opportunity to pay close attention to the existential, bodied and collective dynamics that come to matter in such small, precarious, creative and hard-to-maintain spaces.

### **A post-humanist new materialist approach to the studio as a material-discursive apparatus**

As mentioned above, my involvement with the art studio at True North Arts coincided with my start at Manchester Metropolitan University. This facilitated an encounter with other scholars and educators intellectually engaged with post-humanist new materialist theories. The potential for these theories to connect and expand arts-based research and arts practice research was one of the central interests of some of us at this time. This was such that Abi Hackett, a Research fellow at the Education and Social Research Institute, initiated an Arts-Based Research Group that began to hold monthly discussions and presentations just few months after my arrival (see, <https://artsbasedmethods.wordpress.com/>). In a context where these theories were closely read and studied, I began to wonder what could be thought of the activity at the art studio in True North Arts from a post-humanist new materialist lens.

Post-humanism prompts us to consider how pedagogy has been historically conceived as an anthropocentric endeavour that makes it practically impossible to think of teaching and learning as disconnected from things that are of human concern (Snaza, Sonu, Truman & Zaliwska, 2016). The ascendancy of the human as the central motive of knowledge production constitutes a carryover of Cartesian and Newtonian epistemologies (Barad, 2007, 2008), manifested today in the “ruthless individualism” of “neoliberal governmentality” (Davies, 2018, p. 115), which dominates public and

institutional life and presents art, and education as knowable, assessable, controllable, objectified. The persistence of these epistemological traditions thinks thought as something that is produced inside the mind to be then implemented in the outside world.

A post-humanist new materialist logic challenges the idea of what Barad (2007) describes as the trap of representationalism in which, bodies and objects are clearly demarcated entities with interiors and exteriors. Barad's (2007, 2008) concept of intra-activity suggests that any entity, including humans, exists in dynamic relations, constituting ongoing reconfigurings of the world, and that no entities precede the relationality in which they already are. Barad (2007) reconceptualizes knowing as non-separable from practices of being and becoming with others. She calls for an ethico-onto-epistemology of "entangled practices of knowing and being" (p. 379) that propels a responsibility towards what comes to matter in research, pedagogy, art. It is a perspective that focuses on bodies' materiality. This is, how bodies (human and other than human) more than fixed objects with boundaries are material and made of bodily substances in dynamics of intra-activity of iterative nature with other bodies. For Barad (2008), agency is not a matter of human intentionality. It is not something that objects or subjects have, but the "enactment of iterative changes to particular practices through the dynamics of intra-activity" (p. 144). It is in this definition of agency, that the ethical aspect of Barad's ethico-onto-epistemology appears. This is, agency more than an attribute is a force and a potential for world reconfigurings that open possibilities for acting and existing at every moment. She writes,

Agency is about the possibilities and accountability entailed in reconfiguring material-discursive apparatuses of bodily production, including the boundary articulations and exclusions that are marked by those practices in the enactment of a causal structure (p. 144).

Barad's (2007, 2008) philosophy puts forward the possibility to think in the studio as a material-discursive apparatus where matter is engaged and articulated under specific boundaries and exclusions, and how these boundaries and exclusions more than foreclosing agency participate in the reconfiguration of matter and the opening towards future worlds. The art studio at True North Arts presented important boundaries and exclusions, including: the short timing of our meetings, poor resources, a small space populated by tables that allowed some activity but excluded other, a truly

diverse group of children with different art desirings, a manager who for reasons of programming wanted to advertise well-defined art projects, a history of previous educational practices responding to policy demands on quality accountability concerning arts experiences delivered to children, and so on. Barad argues against seeing boundaries and exclusions as the ones above in purely discursive terms, as if they simply acted as mediators and predictors of possible/not possible art studio practices. For Barad, this implies the transparency or givenness of phenomena as art-making and prevents an understanding of discursive practices and material phenomena as material-discursive, dynamic and re-configuring.

Writing about the impact of Barad's concept of intra-activity in art pedagogy, Atkinson (2018) affirms that it enables a view of art learning that is concerned with being and becoming, and enacting the potentials for alternative modes of life. Art learning is a process of composing with other entities human and more-than-human that are not separated. We exist and participate "in a world of processes of folding, unfolding and refolding that produce differential becomings" (p. 32). I want to consider these ideas further with this story written from my fieldnotes:

Today we have moved the tables away, put them against the walls, so we are able to use the floor as a space where to engage with large format drawings that I described with the term *lumpy drawings* of important everyday objects. With it I referred to an aesthetic that both concerns the graphics and imaginary of artists such as Elizabeth Murray and popular culture phenomena such as *Adventure Time* that play with the transformation and mutation of bodies in ways that are only possible in art.

I have chosen my bottle of water as an important everyday object to me. I am kneeling in the floor in front of the paper, and draw with gross gestures, using different sides of the charcoal. I note to the children the possibility of using different sides of the charcoal to experiment with different graphic effects and lines. The children are paying attention while continue standing up in front of their blank papers that are distributed in the floor. Sally expresses concern about the floor being clean enough, and the possibility of getting her new leggings dirty. Others seem a bit hesitant about how to go with a space that makes them feel more exposed than our usual sitting in chairs and behind tables.

One of the kids that gets more excited with the proposition, and instantly gets in the floor to draw is Ash. He says, "I have not brought any object in particular, but the most important object in my life besides my phone are my Batman trainers". I looked at him a bit disoriented as he pointed down to his shoes. Takes one

of the shoes off, places it in front of the paper, and begins drawing. In practically one take, Ash energetically draws a sequence of large arches across the width and length that seem to resemble the profile of his shoe. Then, stops and while he is still holding the charcoal looks at the surface, thinks for less than three seconds, and begins to draw in the inside a series of curvy lines to separate areas of the shoe. Then in the left upper side he draws the Batman logo inside an oval, and blackens the central part of it. Then marks the laces with swirling gestures, moving back and forth several times across the upper edge of the shoe, as a curvy pattern of lines appears. He ends by blackening a large area of the shoe's surface. First, he paints inside the initially demarcated areas beginning at the centre. As the intense blackness appears, he paints over the lines and extends the black all across the shoe, with the exception of soles and the upper edges which are left blank. Ash pulls the paper up, and shouts "hey look at my lumpy Batman trainers!!!", as others continue working with less ease in their own lumpy drawings. He asks if he can do another one, this time it will be a lumpy drawing of his computer.

Rather than seeing this situation as organized by a maker, what is made, and the materials used to make it, Barad's (2007, 2008) propels us to see these as non-separable entities or relational phenomena (Atkinson, 2018). Relational phenomena such as a-body in-the-floor-large-paper-charcoal-Batman-trainers-lumpy-drawings-marks-movement-across-movement-swirling-movement-expanding-blackness all at once enacting a lumpy drawing. In this enactment there are configurings and reconfigurings via material-discursive intra-activity in which we cannot say whether Ash's body moves or is moved by the arching, curvy, swirling lines and masses of black. We cannot discern either why Ash's body exists and intra-acts in this relationality in such accelerated and ascending way, while other bodies in the room slowed down with it. What we can do is to pay attention to how bodies (human and non-human) exist in relation, and how a new proposed relationality makes bodies move in ways that are not limited to their organs, qualities and minds but to what bodies can and cannot do in the relationality that making lumpy drawings bring to the world.

Manning (2007) affirms, that the relational body is connected to other bodies "through intensities of composition that in turn produce new bodies" (p. xvi), such as "a lumpy Batman trainer!!!". For Manning, one of the possible things that the lumpy Batman trainer brings to the world is the expression of a space-time where the body can be more to what we have thought to imagine, such as that drawings are made in tables while sitting in chairs, or that drawings are not made by

kneeling in dirty floors, or that drawings are not made lumpy, or that making lumpy drawings is simply and strictly an art project.

By considering Barad (2007, 2008) we can also think of this situation as carrying a *differential accountability* for what matters are excluded for mattering in lumpy drawings. The fact that some bodies enacted boundaries between the human (body) and the non-human, (drawing-floor-charcoal-lumpy) does not mean that such bodies were not already in intra-activity with matter. An evidence of this is that all the resulting drawings express different materializations. As Manning (2007) notes, expression is dynamic, and “an ethics of expression involves producing “atypical expressions” (p. xxvii) such as existing, thinking, becoming with the relationality of a lumpy drawing that creates emergent unthought worlds.

### **From studio to study**

The art studio as a material-discursive apparatus contrasts with traditions of studio approaches highly influenced by constructivism. These traditions see the studio as a place where the teacher curates material arrangements and thoughtful provocations to nurture children’s choice, self-expression, and representation (Thompson, 2015). As Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind and Kocher (2017) affirm this view promotes an interpretation of “children’s art as literal representations of the self, experience and knowledge” (p.3), and of the studio as a predetermined space. While it is widely agreed that in the constructivist tradition, Reggio has offered an understandings of children’s art as a complex process of investigation, development of multiple languages of expression, meaning-making and communication (Kind, 2010; Thompson, 2015), and has promoted rich, multisensory engagements with materials (Vechi, 2007; Gandini, 2005; Tarr, 2008), I agree with Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind and Kocher (2017) that Reggio-inspired pedagogies are entrapped in a logic of human intentionality, and that they offer little indication of how we *think with* materials.

Thinking with materials speaks to the logic of the material-discursive. It decentres the child to pay attention to an ecology of relational practices in which humans *conjoin* (Ingold, 2013) in the enactment of distributed forms of agency. Making involves *making with others*, which carries the underlying recognition that we make with materials, and that in this dynamic “materials shape us as much as we shape them” (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind & Kocher, 2017, p. 4). In this context, the studio

rather than an already defined space, can be thought as a space that follows and evolves with the movements and rhythms of study, and experimentation (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind & Kocher, 2017). This is, a place for the intra-action between bodies and matter [that] does not focus on the individual's practice but on the relationalities of matter with bodies [where] learning comes about, intra-acting, entangled" (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016, p. 12).

Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind and Kocher (2017) proposal of studio as a *not-yet* connects with Manning's (2016) idea of study as what you do with others that involves the creation of problems that are generative. These others are bodies, materials, time-spaces. Manning (2016) affirms that study is against method, and is immanent to the relationality of the relation. It does not pursue answers or solutions, but practices that permit thinking in what it is incipient "in the mess of relations that are not yet organized as "subject" and "object"" (p. 29). I suggest considering the studio as a practical ecology where knowledge occurs...

©

outside the register of existing knower-known relations. [This] allows us to consider the importance of what escapes that register. The ineffable felt experience of the more-than is also a kind of thinking, a kind of knowledge in the making, and it changes experience ... it propels us into the midst, opening the way for an account of study that embraces the value of what must remain ineffable" (Manning, 2016, p. 31).

Following the idea of study as a felt experience "that propels us into the midst" (Manning, 2016, p. 31), I am interested to interrogate how practices of study occur that speak of a *more-than*, and of knowledge-in-the-making in the context of a small art studio, where it seemed difficult to conceive knowledge if it was not in terms of deficiency. Local forms of art participation struggle with tight budgets, and with measures of quality accountability that their programs need to meet so to receive further funding (see, Lord, Sharp, Lee, Cooper & Grayson, 2012). They are compelled to act for the loss of art programs in schools, and for the decrease of art specialists where programmes remain (see, Warwick Comission, 2015). Local art centres are expected to help bridge the so-called gap in cultural activity, measured by how minorities and low-income families participate in cultural activities in increasing lower percentages than White middle-class families (see, Warwick Comission, 2015).

Under the pressures of such policy context, Anne the former art lead brought to the art studio the possibility for children to participate in the Bronze Award scheme of the National Art Awards. This was a way to show that the art studio as a programme could deliver evidences of quality markers (see, Lord, Sharp, Lee, Cooper & Grayson, 2012), such as those of: participation in other cultural activities, engaging in the planning, development and assessment of a project using the criteria of technique, process and art historical connections, and developing research about an artist; all of them conditions included in the award.

In words of Atkinson (2018), the requirements of accountability, progress and achievement central to cultural and educational policy govern modes of thought and action that are prescriptive, and that pay little attention to “how children and students learn and the pedagogical obligations and values for supporting each individual ‘how’” (p. 3). For Atkinson (2018) the alternative are pedagogies where neither learner nor what is learned can be fully situated in advance, and where knowledge emerges in the relational field of making. He calls this space of knowledge incipience “a pragmatics of the suddenly possible” (p. 25). I would say that it is a concept that corresponds well with Manning’s (2016) study, in the sense that it calls for relaxing external and standardizing criteria with the aim of being fully attentive to the immanence of learning and its singular forms of expression. This is what Manning in the quotation above called *the ineffable*, what escapes and cannot be encapsulated by the given criteria.

Of six children that chose to participate in the Art Award only one finished and filed the portfolio. Despite this, during the sessions, all of them actively engaged in processes of artmaking of some sort, of which I have numerous field notes. These moments seem to speak not of children working in a given step of a planned project already underway, the Bronze Art Awards portfolio, but of ongoing moments that opened new trajectories towards forms of experimentation and expression in processes of making. This is, trajectories towards a *more-than*.

### **Being in common apart**

In this final section of the paper, I further think in the learning and living in the art studio through two ideas that I have partly presented and that I endeavour to extend. The first idea comes via Barad and

Manning, bodies come to matter in iterative activity that is reconfiguring (Barad, 2008). Bodies move, relate, and enfold with other bodies, and in doing so they enact atypical forms of expression that bring to the world something new (Manning, 2007). As Colebrook (2010) notes, this is an approach to expression that connects to Deleuze's idea of conceptuality, of how concepts are connected to life and the possibility of creating relations. Conceiving bodies in art-making's in terms of expression involves a thinking of art-making as a potential for unfolding further relations that differentiate both thinking and making. This seems to resonate with Manning's (2007) suggestion, that expression is the potential for thinking language as excess and beyond representation. She writes, "Expression articulates a body that it is not foreclosed by meaning" (p. 111). Perhaps, expression precedes while simultaneously resonates with the concept of *ineffable* that appears later on in *The Minor Gesture* (Manning, 2016), which presupposes that thought besides organizing and conceptualizing it can express difference not through language but through movement, feeling and making.

Study is the second idea that I seek to further. Manning (2016) affirms, that study appears in emergent forms of collectivity "that hold in place fragile comings-into-relation" (p.8) This is, study consists in inventing compositional time-spaces for being with others that are not foreclosed by the socio-cultural-material stories that these bodies carry to the study. As Schulte (2015) suggests, being with others in research is a *composition of concern* in which principles, forces, desires, environments, materials concern practices of art-making. Schulte also argues, that concern is not only constative but performative, concerns compose, collapse and recompose in its trajectory of a relational field that is not only made of the researcher and the children, but of the many other things in the world that are intra-acting. Concern "operates within a space that is differential" (p. 551). It seems then, that study as practice enacts forms of collectivity, that as Berlant (2016) describes, carry ambivalence. Making sense in common more than a production of likeness or shared beliefs (common sense) is the cacophony of incoherent and dissonant practices that deploy differential effects, and thus can outline new trajectories of life-living (Manning, 2016). I bring now a story from the field that resonates with the idea that being in common is not so much about institutionalized languages of cultural participation connected to terms such as belonging, positivity and fun, but to ordinary forms ongoingness and transitional practices of assembling (Berlant, 2016).

Today I brought to the art studio large pieces of paper, charcoals, boxes, tubes, bits and pieces of packaging, branches, and images of Phyllida Barlow's work. I wanted to propose the kids to begin planning a large installation where these objects will assemble to form a new object or architecture.

The children disliked the idea completely. None recognized anything motivating in Barlow's work. Wen Li asked me, "why do people think this is art?". Many agreed that it was not art. "Anyone can do this" Wen Li affirmed. "Some artists just do whatever because they know someone will pay them millions", Griffin added. Soon a conversation began around the question, "why I had not taught them yet how to do a *really realistic* drawing?"

I felt inspired by the works of Barlow because bodies are made of juxtapositions that I saw as playful and strange. I thought that after the work done with blobs of ink, lumpy drawings, performative photo-collages, and large bodied drawings the children would sense an affinity between Barlow's work and other artists that we had discussed and experiences we had in previous sessions.

We had been moved to work for few weeks in the larger space of the gallery. I thought we could take advantage of the space and work in a larger, collective, spatial piece. Although, I tried to explain myself, none of the children was eager to follow my proposition. "I do not see the value of putting random materials together. Anyone can do this. I would like to do something that requires effort, that is really well done like in the older times, like the Romans or the Victorians...", said Misbah. The kids were determined to use the large pieces of paper and charcoal that I brought that day to do what we ended calling "*really realistic portraits*".

"I dare you to do a *really realistic portrait*", Misbah said. I responded that if they wanted I could do that even I found it boring and predictable. I used Estel, my camera assistant, as a referent. As I drew in the floor of the gallery, I talked about the matters of concern of my drawing, observation, composition, keeping the main lines and shapes accurate, looking for balance, proportion. Because I had shared time-space artmaking with this group of children for more than seven months, I kind-of-felt that such matters were of little concern to them. Despite this, I held to the structure of habit, of trained craft, and ways of doing that for me constituted a *really realistic drawing*. As I drew, some began to realize the strictness of the structure. "Doing *really realistic drawings your way* looks too difficult. She moves too much", Sally said in allusion to Estel, who was holding the camera and recording the situation.

As the children initiated their drawings they began to do realism in *their own ways*, partially or fully leaving observation, composition, and my own sense of accuracy aside. They refused to draw with charcoals, "they are too messy and you cannot do fine lines", said Misbah. They drew (with) each other in hybrid

dynamic iterative configurations of talking, taking/searching/looking at pictures, posing, drawing, showing pictures/drawings. Sally drew Wen Lin's eyes by partially looking at a photo that she took of her, and images of enlarged Asian eyes that she searched with her phone, while looking at, talking, and showing Wen Li the drawing of Wen Li's eyes.

My desire to bring Phyllida Barlow to the children's attention and the possibility of all of us doing an installation relied on the idea that after seven months of weekly meetings there was a common sense amongst us. I presumed that we shared a feeling of continuity or resonance with aesthetic ideas about bodies and matter being expansive and excessive rather than contained and secured. Ideas that I thought clearly defined many of our past artmaking propositions. But as Berlant (2016) affirms, the process of building a sensorium with others should not equate to "analogical likeness" (p. 396). As she argues, the concept *common* "articulates many desires for a social world" (p. 396). It can well encapsulate Barthes' (1972) "a bourgeois order of truth", Williams' (1977) "a structure of feeling" or the Kantian *sensus communis* which refers to how things are.

Perhaps, what was common to the art studio was the ongoing precarious assemblages that we put together and enacted week after week in art-making propositions. Possibly our being together could also be thought as a time-space where we experimented with being together but apart made of a "dynamics of attraction and aversion" (p. 399). A form of being together that is not coherent but frictional. Bodies are both organism and extensive relational (Manning, 2007). Our bodies were organisms because I desired a collective installation, I felt that really realistic drawings could only be one thing, because Wen Li thought that Barlow's work was not art, and because Misbah longed for art practices connected to school lessons of Romans and Victorians, and to a moral view of practice linked to effort. But our bodies were also extensive relational because new conditions were found to study the practice of really realistic drawings. These brought the possibility to know really realistic drawings in a different way. I learned that really realistic drawing does not only include practices that align with art historical codes and techniques of realism. Really realistic drawings can also be those that materialize in the intra-activity of the bodies and matters that draw together. As seen in the story above, this intra-activity operates within the boundaries of the discourse of observation, measurement

and control but reconfigures itself iteratively with the matters of movement, desire and relationality. Expression as the potential for further differentiating relations takes place.

## References

- Atkinson, D. (2017). *Art, disobedience, and ethics: The adventure of pedagogy*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2008). Posthumanist performativity: Toward and understanding of how matter comes to matter. In S. Alaimo & S. Heckman (Eds.). *Materialist Feminisms* (pp. 120-154). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Barthes, R. (1972). Myth today. In A. Lavers (Ed.) *Mythologies* (pp. 109-159), New York: Hill and Wang.
- Berlant, L. (2016). The commons: Infrastructures for troubling times. *Environment and Planing D: Society and Space*, 34 (3), 393-419.
- Colebrook, C. (2010). Expression. In A. Parr (Ed.). *The Deleuze dictionary. Revised Edition*. [Kindle DX version]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>.
- Davies, B. (2018). Ethics and the new materialism: A brief genealogy of the ‘post’ philosophies in the social sciences. *Discourse*, 39 (1), 113-127.
- Gandini, I., (2005). From the beginning of the atelier to materials as languages; Conversations from Reggio Emilia. In L Gandini, L Hill, L. Cadwell, & C. Schwall (Eds.), *In the spirit of the studio: Learning from the atelier of Reggio Emilia* (pp. 6-15). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hickey-Moody, A. & Page, T. (2016). Making, matter and pedagogy. In A. Hickey-Moody & T. Page (Eds.) *Arts pedagogy and cultural resistance: New Materialisms*, (pp.1- 20). London: Rowman & Littlefield International.

- Kind, (2010). Art encounters: Movements in the visual arts and early childhood education. In V. Pacini-Ketchabaw (Ed.) *Flows, rhythms and intensities in early childhood education* (pp. 113-132). New York: Peter Lang.
- Lord, P., Sharp, C. Lee, B., Cooper, L. & Grayson, H. (2012). *Raising the standard of work by, with and for children and young people: Research and consultation to understand the principles of quality*. Slough, U.K.: Centre for Evaluation and Evidence at the National Foundation for Educational Research. Retrieved from, <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/ACYP01/ACYP01.pdf>
- Manning, E. (2016). *The minor gesture*. Durhan, NC: Duke University Press.
- Manning, E. (2007). *Politics of touch. Sense, movement, sovereignty*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V., Kind, S. & Kochner, L.L.M. (2017). *Encounters with materials in early childhood education*. New York: Routledge.
- Schulte, C. (2015). Researching Anna's drawing: The pedagogical composition of concern. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(6), 546–553.
- Snaza, N., Sonu, D., Truman, S. & Zaliwska, Z. (2016). Re-attuning to the materiality of education, In N. Snaza, D. Sonu, S. Truman & Z. Zaliwska (Eds.) *Pedagogical matters: New materialisms and curriculum studies* (pp. xv-xxxiii). New York: Peter Lang.
- Tarr, P. (2008). New visions: Art for early childhood. A response to Art: Essential for Early Learning, *Art Education*, 61(4), 19-24
- Thompson, C. (2015). Constructivism in the art classroom: Praxis and policy. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 116, 118–127.
- Vecchi, V. (2010). *Art and creativity in Reggio Emilia: Exploring the role of ateliers in early childhood education*. London: Routledge.
- Warwick Commission (2015). *Enriching Britain: Culture, creativity and growth. The 2015 report by the Warwick Commission on the future of cultural value*. Coventry, U.K.: University of Warwick.
- Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

---

<sup>1</sup> Institutional, geographical, and personal names connected to the participating institution, staff and children have been anonymised, and substituted by pseudonyms.

Draft