ARTS AND HUMANITIES
RESEARCH
2015-2016

RESEARCH WITH
PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY
ARTS INSTITUTE
The academic year 2015-2016 marked the first year of operation of The Arts Institute (AI), which was established and run by its inaugural Director, Professor Roberta Mock. It was set up as a hub to encourage and facilitate cross-disciplinary research within the Arts and Humanities and to stimulate collaborations across subject, institute and institutional boundaries. During its first year, the institute was named and branded: we established an operations framework and raised the visibility of Arts and Humanities research within the university and outside through our digital and social media presence. We identified a series of three key research themes (Histories, Memory and Memorialisation; Transdisciplinary Creative Practices; and Marine Cultures), which broadly represent the main research interests of scholars and researchers across the institute. The Arts Institute commissioned a report on Research Leadership to align the university with AHRC research and Leverhulme research agendas and launched a competition to encourage interdisciplinary collaborative projects. We organised a programme of training for researchers (catering for PGRs to Professors), which stemmed from REF strategy and Open Access to grant writing and presenting research on the radio. Highlights of the last 12 months include several major grant successes, including a three-year Leverhulme Trust award and several AHRC network grants; the awarding of 4 PhD studentships; and the production of a significant number of books, articles, book chapters and conference papers. Arts Institute researchers collaborate with the very best universities throughout world, and have worked with a broad range of non-HEI external partners, including Tate Modern and the Victoria and Albert Museum, the BBC and Sir David Attenborough, and the Tchaikovsky Moscow state conservatory. What follows in the upcoming pages is a mere snapshot of some of the research activities conducted by members of the Arts Institute, but hopefully it gives a sense of the richness, vibrancy and diversity of the internationally leading research that goes on in the Arts and Humanities at the University of Plymouth.

James Daybell
— Director of the Arts Institute
Professor Daniel Maudlin awarded a three-year Leverhulme Turst Award

Professor Daniel Maudlin was awarded a prestigious three-year Leverhulme Trust grant to work on a monographic project, entitled ‘The Inn and the Traveller in the British Atlantic World’. The project is centred on the importance of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century inns along principal routes of the historic British Atlantic world.

From Canada to the Caribbean, the British Atlantic world was seen and experienced by travellers through its inns, which were built at ports and along key routes by independent inn keepers, breweries or landowners. Outside of major urban centres, they operated as meeting-houses, magistrates’ courts and trading rooms, becoming projections of British or British American cultural identity.

It’s the first time that such a transnational route-based study of British Atlantic architecture has been undertaken, and Professor Maudlin has identified 12 key routes encompassing Great Roads and coach roads, turnpikes and ports, linking shipping routes to land travel. He is also accessing regional and local archives, to assess the extent to which inns maintained a consistent British Atlantic architectural experience for travellers as the surrounding landscape and climate changed – and to do so before modern trends cause them to disappear.

AHRC Research Network: ‘Gender, Power and Materiality in Early Modern Europe, 1500 – 1800’

The ‘Gender, Power and Materiality in Early Modern Europe’ research network is a two-year project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The network is based at the University of Plymouth. The Principal Investigator is Professor James Daybell and the Co-Investigator is Professor Svante Norrhem, Lund University, Sweden.

This international and transdisciplinary network brings together four nodes to explore the theme of gender, power and materiality in early modern Europe. The project aims to highlight the relationships between gender, power and materiality, defined both in terms of physical objects or material texts and the social and cultural practices and spaces in which they were produced, consumed, exchanged and displayed. It focusses on different forms of elite power across the early modern period in Europe, and encompasses formal and cultural power.

In addition to the University of Plymouth, the three key non-UK Higher Education partners for the network are Lund University, Leiden University in The Netherlands and the University of Western Australia. Each will host an event based on the themes of the network project. The first two events (in Lund and Plymouth) were hosted by the local University and collaborating museum, archive or gallery: Lund University in association with Skarhults kulturminne and the Swedish Riksarkivet and The University of Plymouth with the Victoria and Albert Museum.


Liz Nicol, Associate Professor in Photography and Leader of the MA Photography programme at the University of Plymouth, is Co-Investigator for a new AHRC-funded project with researchers at the University of Hull.

The project, entitled ‘Remember Me: The Changing Face of Memorialisation’, explores the making of meaning in memorial practices in Britain.

Liz’s role in the project focuses on the photographic essay, evaluating the significance of creative photography and the role it can play in the process of memorialisation as both a creative and documentary process. Since the invention of photography in the 1840s, the medium has revealed our changing relationship to remembering and death.

She will be working closely with social science researchers on four case studies:

A) Heroes and loved ones; death arising from armed combat.
B) Countries old and new: memorialization among Polish migrants in Hull.
C) Who was S/he? Trans Identities and memorialization.
D) Celebrating the life? The hidden face of dementia.

Through this artistic research, Liz is exploring what visual language can communicate about what often remains unarticulated in processes of remembrance.
Professor James Daybell Launches new online history resource at the University of Oxford

In July 2016, Professor James Daybell (University of Plymouth) and Dr Kim McLean-Fiander (University of Victoria), co-directors of the British Academy/Leverhulme-funded digital humanities project ‘Women’s Early Modern Letters Online’ (WEMLO), publicly launched their new online resource at the Faculty of History, University of Oxford.

The project is a major collaboration with the Mellon-funded Oxford-based project ‘Cultures of Knowledge’, Early Modern Letters Online (EMLO), Oxford’s Bodleian Library, and scholars at the universities of Leiden, Glasgow and the Huygens Institute in The Netherlands. In September 2016, Professor Daybell spoke at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam as part of the project’s launch of the digital images of more than 3000 letters of Dutch and Frisian stadtholders’ wives in the years between 1605 and 1726 held in the Royal Archives.

Based on Professor Daybell’s research over the past two decades, WEMLO is a ground-breaking digital humanities resource for early modern women’s letters, as well as a meeting point and community resource for scholars working in this field.

"Women’s Early Modern Letters Online is a ground-breaking digital humanities resource for early modern women’s letters"
Doris Lessing and the Forming of History by Dr David Sergeant published by Edinburgh University Press

The death of Nobel Prize-winning Doris Lessing sparked a range of commemorations that cemented her place as one of the major figures of twentieth- and twenty-first-century world literature. This volume views Lessing’s writing as a whole and in retrospect, focusing on her innovative attempts to rework literary form to engage with the challenges thrown up by the sweeping historical changes through which she lived. The 12 original chapters provide new readings of Lessing’s work via contexts ranging from post-war youth politics and radical women’s writing to European cinema, analyse her experiments with genres from realism to autobiography and radical women’s writing to European cinema, analyse her science-fiction, and draw on previously unstudied archive material. The volume also explores how Lessing’s writing can provide insight into some of the issues now shaping twenty-first-century scholarship—including trauma, ecocriticism, the post-human, and world literature—as they emerge as first century scholarship—including trauma, ecocriticism, the post-human, and world literature—as they emerge as defining challenges to our own present moment in history.

In 2015/16 the Faculty of Arts and Humanities awarded four PhD studentships on the theme of ‘Histories, Memories and Memorialisation’. Three of those studentships were awarded in the Schools of Art, Design and Architecture and the School of Humanities and Performing Arts to Sally Sutton, Beth Richards and Jayne Buchanan.

Professor James Daybell publishes landmark collection, Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain with University of Pennsylvania Press

The letter is a powerfully evocative form that has gained in resonance as the habits of personal letter writing have declined in a digital age. But faith in the letter as evidence of the intimate thoughts of individuals underplays the sophisticated ways letters functioned in the past. In Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain edited by James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (University of Aberdeen) leading scholars approach the letter from a variety of disciplinary perspectives to uncover the habits, forms, and secrets of letter writing. Where material features of the letter have often been ignored by past generations fixated on the text alone, contributors to this volume examine such elements as handwriting, seals, ink, and the arrangement of words on the manuscript page were significant carriers of meaning alongside epistolary rhetorics. The chapters here also explore the travels of the letter, uncovering the many means through which correspondence reached a reader and the ways in which the delivery of letters preoccupied contemporaries. At the same time, they reveal how other practices, such as the use of cipher and the designs of forgery, threatened to subvert the surveillance and reading of letters.

The anxiety of early modern letter writers over the vulnerability of correspondence is testament to the deep dependence of the culture on the letter. Beyond the letter as a material object, Cultures of Correspondence sheds light on textual habits. Individual chapters study the language of letter writers to reveal that what appears to be a personal and unvarnished expression of the writer’s thought is in fact a deliberate, skillful exercise in managing the conventions and expectations of the form. If letters were a prominent and ingrained part of the cultural life of the early modern period, they also enjoyed textual and archival afterlives whose stories are rarely told. Too often studied only in the case of figures already celebrated for their historical or literary significance, the letter in Cultures of Correspondence emerges as the most vital and wide-ranging material, textual form of the early modern period.

The aim is to consider the role of architecture and the way in which the water’s edge has been appropriated and transformed through time and space thereby exposing a range of critical issues relating to riverside dwelling (on land and water) and the use of public space along the water’s edge. A variety of methods will underpin the research including a literature review, a series of interviews, collecting visual evidence and sourcing appropriate archival material. Comparative case studies in the UK and Germany documenting communities that live and produce ‘dwellings’ and public spaces along the banks of selected rivers. The work will be situated within the fields of architecture, geography and landscape studies thereby enabling an interdisciplinary approach that will adopt a framework of critical cultural practices and interpretations in changing urban environments.

The intended outcomes are to demonstrate the factors and processes that produce, dominate and control the shoreline space and how successive governments, urban planners, architects, developers and communities draw upon history and memorialisation in the creation of both space and place. The context for this research came from a variety of sources including my involvement with Hermitage River Projects - a river-based charity that aims to promote knowledge and understanding of the Thames, its history and the communities who live on it, and my practical experience of living on an historic barge on the Thames for several years.

From an academic perspective, my background in the History of Art (BA) and MSc in Tourism and Heritage have allowed me to understand the ways in which heritage, history and geography can be manipulated to satisfy the needs of the present whilst drawing on the past. My interest in architecture has given me an understanding of how space/place and the built environment can be contrived to serve the demands/needs of those that create them.
My MPhil/PhD research stems from my art practice, which focuses on bringing sited histories to life. Working with others is central to my practice: often collaborating with location- or interest-based communities. The historical narratives that I explore often relate to notions of the performer, macho and the absurd. My past works have engaged with macho personae as varied as Harvey Houdini, Robert Falcon Scott, Francis Drake, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and William ‘Buffalo Bill’ Cody; and with pop-cultural phenomena and their communities such as ‘tombstoning’ (a pastime often practiced in the South West of England by teenage boys, whereby they jump off cliffs into the sea), Mexican telonovelas, late ‘60s and early ‘70s action films, the obsesive acts of local mythologies, roller derby, Westerns and cowboys, scouting, and motivational speaking. I employ strategies of ‘failure’, changes of scale, and an embracing of historical inaccuracy to disrupt expectations and hegemonies in a playful way.

Recent projects include co-directing ‘Video Social Club’ with artists Steven Paige and Rachel Dobbs, creative producing ‘Social Making: Socially Engaged Practice Now and Next’, and exhibitions including: ‘Understand Better at Biquini Wax’, Mexico City; ‘Cornwall Autonomous Zone’s Square Eye’ at the Market Studios, Dublin and The Exchange, Penzance; ‘Groaners’ at Vdeoaf, Toronto. My practice-research project is entitled ‘Again and again and again: Contemporary Myth Making in Visual Arts Practice’. I was really excited by the Faculty studentship theme of Histories, Memorialisation and Memory Work as it encompasses so many of the questions that are central to my practice:

- How can creative practice destabilise the ways in which historical narratives are constructed to privilege contemporary hegemonic ideals?
- How can artworks present ‘hidden’ histories and provide space for voices missing from dominant historical narratives?
- How might the methods of making and presentation of creative practices of sited histories differ within and without institutional structures?
- What are the ethical and political implications of making artwork with communities and their histories? How do artists participate in and collaborate with that community? Who can speak ‘for a history’? How can artists present their position within this negotiation?
- How might we begin to resolve tensions between poststructural understandings of artworks as texts with almost infinite readings, and artworks created with the intention of activating a reconsideration of a historical moment and its construction?

Many of these questions sprang from the work I carried out during my MRes in Theatre and Performance, which I also undertook at the University of Plymouth. This was entitled ‘Investigations towards a poststructural model of reenactment practice’: I investigated reenactments within contemporary art that took a less historically exacting approach, in order to say something new about the history it explored. I found the research culture at Plymouth challenging yet supportive. The guidance on and encouragement of an interdisciplinary practice-as-research approach was what made me want to return here for my doctoral studies. Being able to engage with different disciplines within the Faculty is fantastic: Performance, Visual Arts and History all come into play when working with reenactments.

So far my MPhil/PhD studies have taken some unexpected turns - the two historical narratives I am currently exploring through my practice are both quite strange and under the radar! The first is Michael Jackson’s visit to Exeter in 2002, and a hoax Michael Jackson gig in Barmstape in 1999. I showed a video installation, artist book and a performance exploring this at the Exeter Phoenix in September and October 2016. The second is the practice of surrealism, artist, writer and occult practitioner Thel Colquhoun, who lived and worked in Cornwall in the mid-twentieth century. I am developing work from this investigation for two exhibitions: one taking place in September 2016 as part of the Plymouth Art Weekender, and one taking place in Lamorna Cove (an artist colony where Colquhoun lived), Cornwall in October 2016.

For more information about my practice please visit: [www.bethemilyrichards.com](http://www.bethemilyrichards.com)
AHRC Research Network: Whose Right to the (Smart) City?

Associate Professor Katharine S. Willis, based in School of Architecture, Design and Environment, has been awarded an AHRC International Research Network Grant for a project on ‘Whose Right to the Smart City?’ which will run for two years from February 2016 – January 2018.

The network will critically address the smart city agenda, and investigate the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in marginalised communities in a range of global contexts. Taking the right to the city as a framework, the network investigates the question ‘Whose right to the (Smart) City’?

It addresses a gap in current knowledge exchange and seeks to redress the balance of focus from the existing highly urbanised, first-world contexts to concentrate on more marginalised urban communities and people-centred urban change in relation to ICTs.

The network will examine how and why cities and people are shaping technologies to suit their needs and the role of civic inclusiveness in this process, and will draw on knowledge and perspectives from marginalised city contexts at a range of geographical levels including UK, Brazil and India. It involves academics working at the boundary between the disciplines of architecture, urban planning, urban studies and ubiquitous computing and comprises partners from the University of Plymouth (UK), University College London (UK), Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (Brazil) and Transparent Chennai (India). Network participants will be drawn from academics, city governance, NGOs, community groups and industry in a multi-sector approach.

The AHRC Research Network Scheme is designed to promote wide-ranging discussion and intellectual exchange upon specific thematic areas, issues, or questions. As such, the ‘Whose Right to the Smart City’ project spans multiple continents and encompasses multiple research groups; Dr Willis’s Co-Investigator, Ava Fatah is based at University College London, Ana Paula Baltazar is from the Federal University of Minas Gerais and Satyarupa Shekhar is from the Transparent Chennai non-profit group part of the CAG, Chennai.

The AHRC network develops the School of Architecture, Design and Environment’s research on critically evaluating the smart city agenda, such as the 2015-2016 Newton CONFAP Network – smart urbansim led by Professor Alessandro Aurigi.

“The network will critically address the smart city agenda, and investigate the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in marginalised communities at a range of global contexts”

Digital Artwork Created By i-DAT for the opening of new Tate Modern Building

i-DAT, working with Tata Collective London, created a new interactive sculpture called ‘This Is Where We Are’, for the opening of the new Tate Modern building in London, on 17 June 2016.

i-DAT is an Open Research Lab at the University of Plymouth for playful experimentation with creative technology.

‘This Is Where We Are’ was fuelled by collectively generated data. Audiences were invited into an immersive space where they could see, hear and interact with the data of our everyday lives, contributing to an evolving art work which questions the influence of algorithms on our behaviour.

The artwork explored:
- Behavioural data: individual and collective movement and touch. Sensors captured collective movements through the studio space.
- Social media data: Hashtags #Tatemodern helped collect the ideas and sentiment of present and distant audiences
- Environmental data: Temperature, Co2, Humidity and Energy Consumption, captured by the Buildings Energy Management System, represented the life of the building and the collective behaviour of its inhabitants.

ICCMR in the USA: Bio-processors, Music and Slime Mould

ICCMR is a laboratory for Computer Music research at the University of Plymouth and the impact of their recent research into building bio-processors from slime mould is now gaining ground in the USA.

Professor Eduardo Miranda and his PhD student, Ed Braund, were invited by BBC Earth to join underwater astronaut David Reichert, award-winning wildlife filmmaker John Downer and Sir David Attenborough to present fresh insights into the boundary-pushing technology used to reveal wonders of our natural world at the prestigious EG Conference in California.

Professor Miranda shared the stage with big thinkers from a broad array of disciplines such as virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell, Oscar-winning filmmaker Hugh Welchman and Nicholas Negroponte, the founder of MIT Media Lab. They discussed the worlds of innovation, creativity and insightful thinking. In addition, Ed Braund demonstrated ICCMR’s interactive musical biocomputer system, which was on display at BBC Earth’s EG base camp, for all participants to play piano duets and contribute testimonials for a forthcoming BBC documentary.

By Google Maps (Public domain), via Wikimedia Commons

Image: TIWWA – A Quorum Project @Tate Modern

Image: Eduardo Miranda Bio Computer

Image: Earth's EG Conference in California
Short Story by Lucy Durneen published in Neon magazine

Dr Lucy Durneen’s short story ‘Noli Mi Tangere’ was featured in the online literary magazine Neon, where it was one of the magazine’s ‘Five short stories to read this month’ for June 2016. They described her story as ‘flawlessly-crafted and filled with haunting detail’. ‘Noli Mi Tangere’ can be read online at: storgy.com/2015/03/17/noli-me-tangere-by-lucy-durneen

The University of Plymouth Signs Research and Education Partnership with Tchaikovsky Moscow state conservatory

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities signed a memorandum of understanding with the Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory, which sees the two organisations collaborating on a range of research projects.

The new partnership sees members of Plymouth’s Interdisciplinary Centre for Computer Music Research (ICCMR) working alongside Moscow’s Scholarly Centre of Interdisciplinary Studies of the Art of Music. Work has begun on joint research into music and biology, with academics at Plymouth looking to develop ways to encode musical information on biological media, while partners in Moscow are studying how our genetic structure resonates to music. The collaborative research has the potential to make important contributions to biocomputing and medicine.

Professor Eduardo Miranda, Director of the ICCMR, stated “It is a privilege to have the opportunity to collaborate with Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory and I am really looking forward to making progress with our research and musical exchanges. We hope to promote both scientific and cultural common ground, and that our creative collaborative ventures and exchanges will serve our students, academic staff and, ultimately, our nations.”

The Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory is the second oldest conservatory in Russia, having been founded in 1866. At its opening, the renowned composer was appointed Professor of Theory and Harmony (with the conservatory bearing his name since 1940), and its notable alumni include Boris Berezovsky, Aram Khachaturian and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

First ResM completion for Faculty of Arts and Humanities at The University of Plymouth

The Arts Institute is pleased to announce that Alex Lorimer has completed the first ResM (Research Masters) in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Plymouth.

The thesis title for Alex’s ResM in Architecture was ‘Mass-participation Architecture: Social Media & the Decentralisation of Architectural Agency as a Commercial Imperative’. His Director of Studies was Dr Sana Murrani.

Alex’s project provides fresh insight into the future of the architectural design industry, drawing on interview content from notable industry figures, while extrapolating from an historic comparison with the consumer goods industry. It indicates that web-based mass-participatory design platforms will come to present an increasingly viable approach to the practice of architectural design and urban planning in the following decades, given appropriate regulatory conditions, and against the backdrop of the rapidly developing culture and technologies encompassed by social media.

Alex’s thesis anticipates that the traditional roles and relationships between the public and professionals of architectural design will be significantly altered, in favour of an anti-authorial, decentralised approach to decision-making, characterised by self-organised design solutions.
TRANSDISCIPLINARY CREATIVE PRACTICE
— PUBLICATIONS

The Footbook of Zombie Walking by Dr Phil Smith published by Triarchy Press

In this Footbook, Associate Professor in Theatre and Performance, Phil Smith (Mytho, Crab Man) extends his critical account of the gentle walking arts to the predatory lurch of the living dead.

Phil Smith has been a keen observer of the zombie mythos for the past 35 years, and here he draws on the mass of plots, images and metaphors that can be found swarming in zombie movies and comics. Instead of treating zombie media as a kind of parallel universe, he concentrates on the ‘normality’ of the zombie apocalypse - showing how zombies have been used to depict, slave labour, wage labour, the consumer, the dispossessed, the disenfranchised and the underprivileged, and then moving on to explain how much more complicated it is than that.

He uses his analysis of zombie media to set out a ground-breaking way to have presence in everyday life. Invoking slowness, fragmentary consciousness, thickness and thingness, the author describes in theory and in practice, how to walk from Night to Day and away from the old Dawn into a radical nothingness.

Drawing examples from across the spectrum of zombie media, with plenty from its margins, Phil Smith celebrates and berates the zombie; then turns it into a meditation, a manifesto, a dance score and the herald of a social movement.

Starting with the three key principles of interiority, carnival and an end to ends, The Footbook of Zombie Walking offers a way back to a vital Life and an art of living. It is the next step, beyond mythogeography, to ending media predations, putting subjectivities back on the streets and coming to be present in everyday life.

Dr Katherine Williams published a new book about Rufus Wainwright

In January 2016, Equinox Publishing published Dr Katherine Williams' new book, Rufus Wainwright. Canadian-American singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright is famous around the world for his multi-faceted musical style, shown through both his recorded output and his engaging live performances. In this book, Katherine Williams combines aspects of his life story with scholarly readings drawn from several methodologies. Popular music studies, opera, queer studies, music and geography, the sound-box: all combine to give a rich biographical and interpretative overview of Wainwright’s life and music.

Routledge publishes Netspaces: Space and Place in a Networked World by Dr Katharine Willis

The focus of Katharine Willis’ new book, Netspaces, is on understanding and explaining the way that our increasingly networked world impacts on the legibility of cities; that is how we experience and inhabit urban space. It reflects on the nature of the spatial effects of the networked and mediated world: from mobile phones and satnavs to data centres and wifi nodes and discusses how these change the very nature of urban space. It proposes that netspaces are the spaces that emerge at the interchange between the built world and the space of the network. It aims to be a timely volume for both architectural, urban design and media practitioners in understanding and working with the fundamental changes in built space due to the ubiquity of networks and media. This book argues that there needs to be a much better understanding of how networks affect the ways we inhabit urban space. The volume defines five characteristics of netspaces and examines in detail the way that the spatial form of the city is affected by changing practices of the networked world. It draws on theoretical approaches and contextualises the discussion with empirical case studies to illustrate the changes taking place in urban space. The book is aimed as a valuable resource for architects, urban designers, planners and sociologists for understanding how of networks and media are creating significant changes to urban space and the resulting implications for the design of cities.

Professor Anthony Caleshu’s The Victor Poems published by Shearsman Books


‘Who is Victor? Like Browning’s Waring he eludes the grasp of his friends and admirers, but remains a vital presence in their lives. Anthony Caleshu’s superb long poem conjugates our needs and our guilts, our misfortunes and our longings, by narrating an epic quest through polar regions in an aphoristic idiom that dazzles and shimmers like an arctic horizon. Victor lurks somewhere, perhaps up ahead, perhaps behind. ‘What’s so great about Victor?’ the journeying band of brothers are occasionally asked. You must read this poem to find out.” — Mark Ford
MARINE CULTURES — FELLOWSHIPS

In 2016 Dr Elaine Murphy was awarded two prestigious research fellowships – the Edith and Richard French Fellowship at the Beinecke Library at Yale University and the Caird Short-Term Fellowship at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich – to work on a major new research project on ‘Women and the Stuart Navy’. The project will analyse some of the complex ways in which women encountered and interacted with the navy at sea and on land in the seventeenth century. Dr Murphy’s interest in investigating this has developed out of her research into maritime aspects of the British Civil Wars during the 1640s and 1650s. From a 1645 report which suggested that the presence of female refugees on board a man-of-war turned it into a ‘water baulie house’ she became fascinated by the ways in which women found themselves on board naval vessels and how their presence was perceived and portrayed. The role and position of women within early modern British society has undergone considerable scholarly research in recent years. In particular scholars such as Margarette Lincoln, Cheryl Fury and John Appleby have begun to explore some of the ways in which women were part of the maritime world and community. Within this research women and the navy in the seventeenth century has remained relatively neglected. Her research, therefore, seeks to broaden our understanding of the interactions between women and the navy in this period. It will open up issues such as female agency in maritime communities, how women reacted to the masculine environment of a man-of-war and naval perceptions and depictions of women on land and at sea.

Research undertaken during these two fellowships will produce a series of articles and a monograph to be based on the findings.

At the Beinecke Library in Yale, Dr Murphy mainly made use of the Osborne collection of early modern British history. The manuscripts in this collection contain a wide variety of material relating to women and the navy. The correspondence of Walter Strickland, the parliamentarian ambassador to the Hague in the 1640s, sheds considerable light on the efforts of Queen Henrietta Maria to get ships and arms to sail for England. In November 1642 he reported to London that ‘she is not satisfied with the small number of ships which are said to be eight’. Royalty travelling on man-of-war also feature in other documents as James, Duke of York ordered that a ship be sent to collect his wife as she ‘had rather be five or six days upon the water then go so tedious a journey againe by land’. Other women with connections to the navy on land can also be found in the files such as Mrs Tucker who received £14 per annum as a housekeeper at Chatham Dockyard.

At the Caird Library in the National Maritime Museum, she has been focusing on admiralty administrative paperwork and the logs and correspondence from mariners from the period. Senior officers rarely mentioned the presence of women on board their ships but other crew members such as surgeons and chaplains were often shocked by what they say. Henry Teonge, a chaplain on his first voyage on the Assistance, was clearly shocked by what he saw. He noted in his journal ‘You would have wondered to see, here a man and woman creepe into a Hammack; the womans Leggs to the hams hanging over the syds’. Administrative paperwork held by the museum highlights many of the issues that wives and widows of seamen faced such as late payment of wages and pensions and being defrauded of the money the husbands were owed. One widow and her children found themselves in dire straits after the captain of her deceased husband’s ship stopped the wages due to him to pay for tobacco. She petitioned the admiralty as she claimed that her husband never smoked. Unsurprisingly some enterprising women seized the opportunity to defraud sailors. Anne Pearson impersonated the sister of John Hardy, a deceased mariner, to claim his wage arrears of £20. She was found out and sentenced to repay the money and stand in the pillory for her crime.

“Administrative paperwork held by the museum highlights many of the issues that wives and widows of seamen faced such as late payment of wages and pensions and being defrauded of the money the husbands were owed”
RADIX: Interdisciplinary Research and Art Practice

How does the transposition of data from biological experiments to the level of sonic vibration influence public understanding of scientific practices? Does the display of laboratory snails within a gallery space reconfigure the relationship between scientist, the public and experimental animal? Can interdisciplinary fieldwork generate a new, less-anthropocentric response to the effects of climate change? These types of questions are those that are addressed by the interdisciplinary research carried out by the RADIX research collective (https://radixplym.wordpress.com/).

RADIX was formed in 2010 by artists Deborah Robinson and David Strang and biologist Simon Rundle. It has since grown to include a network of associate members. Together they work to create a platform for the development of innovative interdisciplinary research projects, using workshops and fieldwork as a catalyst for discussions around a particular idea. The shared models and artistic practice that result, seek to move away from anthropocentrism and draw on the creative tensions between aesthetics and scientific thought. Spaces of knowledge-making – the laboratory, the studio and the field – are used to elicit the often, overlooked assumptions and power relations that underlie the construction of disciplinary knowledge.

The first work produced by RADIX was ATRIA, an immersive sound installation that drew on theoretical ideas in developmental biology and the sociology of science, and practical, laboratory investigations into the development of microscopic embryos. Data on the cardiac function of embryos of a marine snail, sorted using conventional diagrams and statistical techniques were 're-mapped' as low-frequency, sound projections into a three-dimensional building space – the three atri within the Portland Square building at the University of Plymouth. By re-mapping biological information from contained microscopic life into a large immersive environment, ATRIA transposed scientific knowledge into a public experience. This re-contextualisation of knowledge sees the development of a marine snail’s hearts, a scientific ‘matter of fact’ becoming a ‘matter of concern’ that takes into account the snail, the observers, the science and the immersive space.

The changing role of art in society is one where it does not just create a new aesthetic but gets involved in co-constructing patterns of social, scientific, and technological transformations. Current research within RADIX questions the relationship between humans and the environment, by reconsidering practices around the use of animals in ecological research. To stimulate new ways of thinking we use artistic strategies that raise questions about how we perceive animals that are used as models for investigating the effects of the Anthropocene.

The first work to result from this approach was the installation ‘Wandering Snail’, which was exhibited at the FIELDs Art and Communication Festival at RIXC in Riga (2014). This exhibit drew on a shared interest in a creature, the wandering snail Radix balthica – an emerging, model species for investigating the effects of environmental change on development (http://we-make-money-not-art.com/wandering_snail/). It comprised an improvised laboratory with live snails contained within vessels holding water of different salinities – one of the stressors predicted to affect freshwater habitats in the Anthropocene – and sound and vibrations generated by the sorting algorithm Radix Sort. The data sorted were generated from the travel journal of Carl Linnaeus from his collecting trip to the Swedish island of Gotland in the eighteenth century – the trip on which he named Radix balthica.

Wandering snail is now being extended to include research that juxtaposes the use of model species in the laboratory with the ‘messy’ process of the fieldwork used to collect the animals being used in experiments. A forthcoming exhibition, ‘Noisy Embryos’, at the Ruskin Gallery in Cambridge, will draw on interdisciplinary fieldwork carried out by RADIX during a residency at the Baltic Arts Centre on Gotland. During the residency the group’s field work retraced Linnaeus’ steps, visiting the original site, Hoburger, at the southern tip of Gotland, where he discovered and named Radix balthica in 1758. It will also incorporate the theme of ‘slowness’, drawing both on the ways that science practice can distort perceptions of time by and the practice of filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky who used Närsholmen, a location on Gotland for his last film Sacrifice.

Plymouth historian Dr Harry Bennet publishes new book on The Royal Navy in the Age of Austerity

Bloomsbury Press published a new book by Dr G.H. Bennett, which reassesses naval policy of the early 1920s and considers the lessons for today. Bennett is Associate Professor (Reader) in History at the University of Plymouth.

The Royal Navy in the Age of Austerity 1919-22: Naval and Foreign Policy under Lloyd George thoroughly explores and analyses naval policy during the period of austerity that followed the First World War. During this post-war period, as the Royal Navy identified Japan its likely opponent in a future naval war, the British Government was forced to ‘tighten its belt’ and cut back on naval expenditure in the interests of ‘National Economy’.

Bennett draws connections between the early-twentieth century and the present day, showing how the same kind of connections exist between naval and foreign policy, the provision of ships for the Royal Navy, business and regional prosperity and employment.

The book engages with a series of important historiographical debates relating to the history of the Royal Navy, the failures of British Defence policy in the inter-war period and the evolution of British foreign policy after 1919, together with more mundane debates about British economic, industrial, social and political history in the aftermath of the First World War.
The University of Plymouth hosted 15th annual conference of the Transatlantic Studies Association

On 4 July 2016 academics and scholars from around the world came to the University of Plymouth for the 15th annual conference of the Transatlantic Studies Association (TSA), which was organised by Dr Kathryn Gray, Associate Professor in English and Creative Writing. The three-day conference attracted well over one hundred delegates and featured keynote lectures from Professor Mary Nolan (New York University), Professor Fionnghuala Sweeney (University of Newcastle), and Professor Barbara Keys (University of Melbourne).

In addition, the opening roundtable discussion, ‘The State of the Art: The United States and Transatlantic Relations as an Academic Field’, which included discussants from the British Library and the British Association for American Studies, provided a unique opportunity for all conference delegates to reflect on the implications of the recent Brexit referendum results and the (then) upcoming US Presidential elections for Transatlantic international relations.

Over the course of the three days the conference featured papers on a huge array of topics, ranging from contemporary poetry to cartography, Native Americans to nuclear disarmament, and cinema to slavery.

“Over the course of the three days the conference featured papers on a huge array of topics, ranging from contemporary poetry to cartography, Native Americans to nuclear disarmament, and cinema to slavery.”

The University of Plymouth hosted 23rd New Researcher’s Conference of the British Commission for Maritime History

In April 2016 the University played host to the 23rd New Researcher’s Conference of the British Commission for Maritime History. The conference is one of the key gathering points for all maritime historians in the United Kingdom. Over 60 delegates attended the conference which saw more than a dozen papers presented. Those papers covered the full diversity of maritime history from technical innovations, to the lives of seamen in the age of sail, through to more modern topics. Approaches to the topic ranged from strategy/politics, to cultural history through to fully interdisciplinary. The conference also provided an opportunity for new researchers to see around the Devonport Dockyard Museum and Heritage Centre, where they received a briefing on some of the archival collections held there that have been virtually untouched by scholars.
During the 2015/16 academic year the Arts Institute held a series of public presentations from the Arts and Humanities Professoriate on the theme of ‘Histories, Memory and Memorialisations’.

The first of these lectures took place on 16 January at the Duke of Cornwall Hotel. Cabaret PaR-ty featured a party/practice-as-research (PaR) performance by Roberta Mock of Pearl Williams’ classic 1961 ‘adult only’ party album, ‘A Trip Around the World is Not a Cruise’. There were also performances by Marisa Carnesky, Fantastic Ms Fanny, Dr Maggie Irving’s SEDUSA and the Klezmer fusion band Hazaar! In February Professor Elizabeth Tingle, then the Head of School for Humanities and Performing Arts, gave her inaugural Professorial Lecture titled ‘Long-Distance Pilgrimage and the Counter Reformation in France: sacred journeys to the Mont-Saint-Michel 1520 to 1789’. During the Protestant Reformation, Pilgrimage declined across Europe, but in the Counter Reformation, a great upsurge in pilgrimage activity occurred. Much of this journeying was to local shrines, often newly created. Another destination was Rome. Less well known is the post-Reformation refashioning of ancient, long-distance pilgrimages to places such as Santiago de Compostela and Cologne. Professor Tingle’s lecture examined the origins and nature of such revived pilgrimage, using the example of the Mont Saint-Michel in northern France.

March saw Professor Liz Wells give a talk at the Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, one of the last University talks to be held here prior to the temporary closure of PMAG in September. Professor Wells’ lecture titled ‘Photography, Time and Place’ focused on the unsettled relationship between photography and history. She reflected on images and on photography as a means of investigating histories of place. Focussing on rural areas, the talk included references to recent photographic projects in the South-West.

The final lecture in the series was held in April at the newly constructed School of Creative Arts. ‘Body, Space, Memory (and a little bit of sushi)’ by Professor Bob Brown looked at the relationship between space and the body. Some of us think about the space around us. Others (like architects) think about space all the time. But we all engage with the space around us through our bodies. In a similar sense, while our brain can store memories of spaces, our experiences of space can equally become (unconsciously) embedded in our bodies. His talk explored the body, space and memory, with the setting of the Plymouth School of Creative Arts and concluded in the making (and eating) of sushi, further helping to explore these ideas.

During 2015/16 academic year The Arts Institute ran a series of research workshops for staff and students in the faculty of Arts and Humanities.

The first workshop, Open Access and the REF, took place in February 2016. Hosted by Senior Information Specialist Amanda Russell the workshop focused on new policies surrounding Open Access and what it means for REF 2020. Open Access aims to make the findings of academic research available electronically, immediately, without charge and free from most copyright or licensing restrictions. As the government and research funders have started to encourage research outputs to be as widely accessible as possible a new open access policy has been adopted for REF 2020.

The second workshop of the series, also in February, was by Professor Henk Borgdorff of Research in the Arts at the Royal Conservatoire / University of the Arts, The Hague. ‘Reasoning Through Art: The Articulation of Embodied Knowledge’ asked whether research by artists, so-called artistic research, is equivalent to other forms of academic research. Professor Borgdorff developed a positive understanding of research in and through the arts, touching upon its epistemology and methodology, and addressing the form and relevance of its outcomes. He focused on four related issues that are pertinent to research in and through art: an advanced understanding of discursivity and reasoning; the methodological relevance of material practices and things; innovative ways of publishing art in academic; and advanced forms of peer review.

Two further workshops were held in March. Professor Ann Hughes of Keele University delivered a workshop titled ‘Recognising internationally excellent textual research outputs in the arts and humanities’. As a member of the history sub-panel for REF 2014 Professor Hughes discussed how we might recognise ‘internationally excellent’ or ‘world-leading’ research outputs in humanities disciplines. Dr Ed Baxter from Resonance FM delivered a workshop later in the month focusing on arts and humanities research for radio audiences. Resonance 104.4 FM is a London-based non-profit community radio station specialising in the arts run by the London Musicians’ Collective (LMWC). Dr Baxter discussed what type of research might make a good radio programme and how researchers might work with Resonance to make a programme based on or deriving from their research.

The final workshop in the series took place in May. “Recognising internationally excellent’ practical research outputs in art and design” by Professor Naren Barfield, Royal College of Art, discussed how we might recognise an ‘internationally excellent’ or ‘world-leading’ research output in these fields. As an Art and Design sub-panel member for REF 2014 Professor Barfield focused on the presentation and assessment of practical outputs such as artworks, exhibitions and performances.
**RESEARCH CLUSTERS**

**Art History**
The research specialisms of the Art History team stretch from the Medieval to the Modern era. Europe is a key focus but we also have specialist knowledge in American art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and in transatlantic exchange. Our work is characterised by our interest in the social history of art, the role of art in the staging of national, political and sexual identities, the reception of art, and the history of exhibition practices and display strategies. We work as guest curators for galleries and museums in the UK and in Europe, and this means we also contribute to cultural debates generated by exhibitions of the present day.

**Artistic Research Cluster (ARC)**
Artistic Research Cluster (ARC) supports practice-led research that is generated through experimental art practice. Our main areas of interest are:
- **Painting:** gesture, philosophy and calligraphy: exploring questions of context, symbols and meaning, ontology and temporality.
- **Radix:** trans-disciplinary research exploring questions related to environmental change in areas that include: aquatic ecologies, technologies, experimental systems, sited-ness, noise and evolutionary theory.
- **Creativity and mental health:** embodied methodologies that include re-enactment, performativity, and equivalence as a means to investigate disorders of self.
- **hotwire:** research exploring questions of creativity in relation to playful making/thinking playful through development of experimental systems.

**Culture Theory Space (CTS)**
Research in Culture Theory Space currently revolves around three main interests:
- **Critical urbanism:** theories and practices of urban change from the early modern period to the present, seen through cultural, social and political frameworks.
- **Digital cities:** new technologies of communication, through cultural, social and political frameworks.
- **Interdisciplinary Centre for Computer Music Research (ICCMR)***
The Interdisciplinary Centre for Computer Music Research (ICCMR) is devoted to developing musical research at the crossroads of art and science. Our research expertise ranges from musicology and composition to biomedical applications of music and development of new music technologies.

**Design Knowledge**
Research in design revolves around four main interests. The intention is to conduct research with and for people, products, places and their interactions. We work with a variety of organisations to provide fresh perspectives on real-world issues. These can be characterized thematically: people / spaces / products / experiences.

**English and Creative writing**
The research interests of the English and creative writing department at Plymouth range from the early modern period to the present, and cover a diverse set of approaches and priorities based primarily in imagination, judgement and representation. We are particularly interested in developing interdisciplinary projects across a range of themes and topics, including: the transnational and the transatlantic, environmental literatures, poetry and poetics, and scientifc discourses. Through our world-leading and internationally recognised research, we are making significant interventions in local, national and international cultural and creative industries.

**History**
The history department at Plymouth has an established tradition of internationally recognised research excellence in British and Irish, European, US and world history from the late medieval to modern periods. Our strengths lie in social, cultural, political and maritime history, and encompass expertise in early modern religion, women and gender; Victorian and modern British social, political and cultural history; twentieth century criminology and law; labour history and popular politics; modern US and civil rights; material culture and architectural history; military and diplomatic; and naval and maritime history; India and the British Empire; modern Japan; gender and sexuality; and digital humanities.

**i-DAT**
i-DAT is an open research lab for playful experimentation with creative technology

**Land/Water**
Land/Water and The Visual Arts Research Group consists of artists, writers and curators who embrace a diversity of creative and critical practices. As a research group it operates as a forum for interrogation of nature and culture, aesthetics and representation. We generate work that addresses a range of issues that include environmental change, sustainability, journey and site.

**Message**
MESSAGE, a communication arts research cluster, is dedicated to the development and discussion of contemporary visual communication messages through research, particularly, but not exclusively, within graphic design, typography, illustration, fine art and publishing.

**Moving Image**
A transdisciplinary research hub focused on practice-based enquiry into moving image. We provide a critical forum for presentation and discussion, and PhD supervisory support.

**Music**
The music research group concerns itself with music as a reflection of culture and with analytical insights into musical works and repertoires. Themes which we find significant include questions of proprietorship and interpretation, dialogues across cultures and between genres, and what music may be able to teach us about the experience of consciousness, performance, experience, presence. The P.E.P. research group focuses on issues of embodiment, representation, culture and identity through the making, training for and analysis of performance in a wide variety of genres (including theatre, dance, somatic practice, live art and popular performance forms).

**Photography**
The Photography Research Group is concerned primarily with the production and study of the photographic image. It encompasses practice-led research, as well as curatorial, historical and theoretical work, which situates photography in its wider cultural, social and political contexts.

**Planetary Collegium**
Within a transcultural, transdisciplinary perspective, the Planetary Collegium is concerned with the advancement of emergent forms of art and architecture, in the context of telematic, interactive and technostatic media, and their integration with science, technology, and consciousness research. The Collegium’s hub (CAiA-Hub) is located in the School of Art, Design and Architecture, with nodes in Trento, Lucerne and Shanghai. Since its inception, over 80 doctoral candidates have graduated from the programme with the Plymouth University PhD.

**Plymouth University Medieval Arts Research (PUMAR)**
The University of Plymouth Media Arts research. Exploring pedagogy for a changing media. Integrating creative research practice into commercial and community media, through relationships between academics, students, community, audience and industry.

**Plymouth University Nineteenth Century Studies (PUNCS)**
The University of Plymouth Nineteenth Century Studies (PUNCS) is a research group designed to foster opportunities for collaboration, including doctoral research and digital humanities projects. Academic members come from the disciplines of English literature, historical geography, history, art history, law and criminology.

**Transtechnology**
Transtechnology Research is a transdisciplinary research group situated in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Its constituency is drawn from historians, philosophers, anthropologists, artists and designers and is led from a historical and theoretical perspective with the objective of understanding science and technology as a manifestation of a range of human desires and cultural imperatives. Its aim is to provide a doctoral and post-doctoral environment for researchers who need to undertake academic research informed by their own and others creative practices. Its overarching research project concerns the historical and philosophical aspects of science and technology and the popular arts.
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