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HOW WOMEN MAKE - exploring female making practice
through Design Anthropology.

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This making is dedicated to Elfi Levick.

HOW WOMEN MAKE - exploring female making practice through Design Anthropology.

This thesis explores the process of female making as a creative and socio-political act and how/where/why this creative labour gets 'spent', in terms of energy, outcomes and beneficiaries as well as how it might be situated in the context of contemporary Western Design ontology.

Fieldwork took place over a period of 10 Months, with 11 female participants in two countries, during a number of repeat encounters, which included co-making, participant and ethnographic observations as well as informal interviews. The findings are presented as focused narratives based on three of the participants, through a series of ethnographic/auto-ethnographic accounts, which each conclude in a discussion based on my thematic analysis of that particular woman's making. Drawing on the fieldwork with all 11 women, the three chapters which follow weave together data and theory into thematic discussions and analysis. The research documents and makes visible both the women's making practices and things acting upon it, through observations of the participants making, and conversations and co-making with participants. A design anthropological approach of 'anthropology as correspondence' (Gatt & Ingold, 2013; Ingold 2013a) informed all data collection, with informal interviews providing the core data and focus of analysis, supported by analysis of visual data such as photography and moving image, as well as field notes and reflective auto-ethnographic writing, based on my experiences with the women and their making.

As a design anthropological study, it situates and analyses female creative practices in a broader human 'making' context, whilst utilising a range of ethnographic, practice-led and co-creative methods, situated within a framework of a feminist inquiry and design discourse. Key theorists informing the analysis are Karen Barad (2007, 2008), Elizabeth Grosz (1999, 2010), Erin Manning (2016), Doreen Massey (2005) and Tim Ingold (2007, 2013a), whilst building on the work of Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock (1981), Cheryl Buckley (1986) and Sheila Rowbotham (1973/a, 1973/b), amongst many others. Key theories triangulated within the discussion and analysis stem from Material Feminism, Design Anthropology and Design Theory. This triangulation, woven around and into the observations and accounts of lived experiences, forms an emergent proposition which considers how female enactments of creative labour can provide us with ways to critique and un-ravel contemporary Design ontology, its modes of production and consumption.

Drawing on post-capitalist scholars such as Kathy Weeks (2011), amongst others, and the writing of Raoul Vaneigem (1967/2006), the penultimate chapter 'Implication for Design Pedagogy' discusses the implication that my findings should be considered in relation to design pedagogy and education yet to come, and to 'futures yet unthought' (Grosz, 1999).

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HOW WOMEN MAKE

Exploring female making practice through Design Anthropology

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the process of female making as a creative and socio-political act and how/where/why this creative labour gets 'spent', in terms of energy, outcomes and beneficiaries as well as how it might be situated in the context of contemporary Western Design ontology.

1.1. How Women Make

The value of women's work is woven into the fabric of our shared unconsciousness. The evaluation of women's work is ancient.

From Penelope's cloth in the *Odyssey*, woven each day and unravelled each night in order to maintain the maker's marital fidelity; and the bible, which tells us in Proverb 31:27-28, "*She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her*"; to the old adage of "*Man may work from sun to sun but woman's work is never done.*"

To date, women are paid less than men, less acknowledged in the workplace and still most likely to be shouldering the majority of domestic and care work (Stokes, 2018; Davaki, 2016; ONS, 2016; Karp, 2018; Fawcett Society, 2018).

Women have made up 70% of art and design student cohorts for the last three decades, but the creative industry remains disproportionately male (Mindiola, 2010; Maness, 2015; HESA, 2013; Siddal, 2014; Burgoyne, 2010). The disproportion increases dramatically when looking at higher management positions, mirroring statistics in most other areas of industry ("*Why us, why now*", 2016; "*Why iGDN?- iGDN*", 2017; Siddal, 2014). In the context of art and design, feminist scholars such as Parker and Pollock (1981), Pollock (1996), Buckley (1986), Ettinger (2004), De Beauvoir (1949/2011, 1987), have explicitly critiqued how particular structures within the patriarchal system have acted as barriers to women's full participation in all spheres for centuries, yet things have hardly changed. Women's creative labour is of less value to the system to this day.

1.2. Specific Focus

This thesis is not about how the system values women's creative labour, but how the women value it themselves. *How* do they make and *why*?

The aim was to make visible the conditions under which women pursue their making and both how they make and how *they* conceptualise their making. I felt there was a need to investigate making practice from the ground 'up', rather than viewing it from within the system 'down'. Inevitably these things are closely interlinked, but the primary objective was to make female creative labour visible from within its own space. This research grew from individuals' making practices, which I *then* situated in broader contexts of theory. I will go on to contend, that the move from 'small data' to 'big theory' is absolutely appropriate and necessary, grounded in a feminist epistemological conviction that: The personal *is* political.

My research questions were framed with this feminist epistemological context in mind. They are to be read as questions about how a particular woman makes, at a particular point in time, within her particular material, physical and social context. The more expansive title of my research 'How Women Make' points to my underlying epistemological stance - that data which is situated in the micro should be considered and conceptualised as relevant in the macro.

My research is built on the following two research questions:

- **How do women make within particular material and physical contexts?**
- **How do women conceptualise their making within their social contexts?**

Based on my research findings and analysis in relation to Design Pedagogy I go on to consider:

- **How might insights gained from the women's making practice impact future educational contexts?**

1.3. Using the Term *Make* and Using the Term *Women*

My use of the terms *make*, instead of *create* or *design* was a carefully considered choice. I felt that the terms *create* and *design* were too closely related to craft and art. My focus is on female creative labour and practice, but I wanted to have scope to investigate how this creative labour takes place without limiting it to activities explicitly connected to art- and design-based outcomes. Female creative labour is immanent in many different activities. I

believe it is diminished by assumptions that it needs to be expressed within the confines of traditional creative disciplines in order to be counted. However, the majority of my participants chose activities which *were* situated in this realm but, nevertheless, using the term *make* gave me the opportunity to engage in a broader contextualisation.

I have carefully considered using the term *women* as there are ethical implications, much discussed within feminist literature, of using the term un-critically. I have chosen to use the term because the people who I invited to participate were female and identified themselves as women. I will go on to discuss considerations in relation to using the term women in the next chapter.

1.4. Theoretical and Epistemological Background

In the second chapter I am discussing which literature and theory I have drawn upon to support this body of work. It explains how relevant theory, epistemology and methodology intertwine, making traditional distinctions between theory and method less appropriate. The theory and discourses underpinning my analysis is ‘intellectually promiscuous’ (Butler, 1999). This means that in order to situate and analyse my findings, I have drawn on theory and literature from across the epistemological divide, adopting an approach of bricolage (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004; Petersen, Sperschneider and Kjærsgaard, 2001) in my engagement with the different bodies of literature, in order to support my expressed aim of zooming out from the, to me, more familiar territories of art and design pedagogy. Design Anthropology as well as feminist theory shaped both the methodology and the methods used, as my research triangulates and enmeshes feminist theory and discourse in design and design anthropology with the observations and documentation of lived making experience, as practised and conceptualised by the participants.

1.5. Method

In chapter three I am explaining how methods drawn from my theoretical and epistemological background shaped the design, doing and analysis of my research. I have specifically chosen to situate my methods within a *feminist* design anthropological approach because Design Anthropology is a methodology with a specific aim of focusing on the investigation of people’s ability to create, craft and re-shape materials, systems or experiences (Smith, 2015; Gunn and Donovan, 2012; Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012), whilst

feminist epistemology has provided, through material feminism, its specific theoretical framework. Additional to a broad range of observation and documentation methods, Design Anthropology allows for the inclusion of co-creative methods as a means of data collection. Whilst some of my methods are not unique to a Design Anthropological approach, and could just as well have been situated within an educational research framework for example, I consider Design Anthropology as the best placed approach for this study because of its explicit commitment to human making and material practice, which makes it particularly suitable for research within the realm of design pedagogy.

My study combines ethnographic fieldwork with a critical holistic approach, which informs a research process that is concerned with the uncovering of social and material relations (Kjaersgaard and Otto, 2012). During my field work I have used traditional anthropological methods, such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews, as well as a range of visual methods and co-making. Eleven different women who came from a range of demographic and professional backgrounds have participated in this research. The women joined the project via personal and professional networks. Data created through the fieldwork was written up as ethnographic and auto-ethnographic accounts. These included a large amount of photographic and filmed visual data, as well as the examination of some of the secondary making data provided by the women.

1.6. Ethnographic Accounts

In chapters four to six, I have given space to three specific ethnographic accounts of the fieldwork with three particular women, with the aim of providing depth and richness to my presentation of female making. In terms of methods, the three field studies are, overall, representative of my engagement with the eight other women's making practice in this study. I had initially planned to include more of these, but had to limit myself to three, in order to have enough space for discussion in the 'weaving' chapters: 'The Origins of Making', 'The Spaces of Making' and 'The Benefits of Making'. The three in the sample were chosen because they elicited particular insights pertinent to the subsequent discussion and analysis.

The ethnographic accounts are built around a series of informal vignettes, with the aim of giving an insight into that woman's particular making practice, whilst also giving a flavour of my methods and overall engagement in the field. They conclude with reflection and analysis based on aspects of that particular woman's making. They are primarily ethnographic, part auto-ethnographic, based on both fieldwork material and secondary

data supplied by the women. The thematic structure of the vignettes varies slightly so that insights gained specific to the individual woman's making could be surfaced in more detail.

The focus here is on the **What** – ie what is the specific making practice of this particular woman, the **How** – ie the actual *process* of making; how this particular woman makes at a particular point in time, and includes the *emerging and analysis* of particular insights I gained in the context of that particular woman's making. The three field studies *do not* cover all the insights I gained from the encounter with each of those women. Insights, which were similar, comparative, or related to the themes emerging from my encounters with the other women, were largely saved for the discussion and analysis in the weaving chapters. The ethnographic accounts themselves, are structured as follows:

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Ethnographic Account: Disco Kaz – ‘Well sod that, just make your own loop’.

This is structured around the following vignettes:

What Kaz Makes - Kaz Making - Colour and Compromise - Co- making

In the last part ‘Making with heart and hand’, it teases out two particular themes in relation to Kaz's making. The first in relation to conceptions of the feminine in the public realm, the second is on the impact of materiality on her creative intentions for a particular piece.

CHAPTER FIVE

2. Ethnographic Account: Bill – ‘It tells you what it wants to be’.

This is structured around the following vignettes: **How I Know Bill - What Bill Makes -**

Talking with Bill about Making - Upcycling, Scale and Repetition – Immanence

The foci for analysis here are: firstly, on Bill's conception of immanence in her making practice in relation to ontological concepts of agency; secondly, on the re-working of normative identity positions in her crafting and up-cycling practice.

CHAPTER SIX

3. Ethnographic Account: Lucy – ‘... if I can't be in other people's work I want to create my own.’ This is structured around the following vignettes:

How I Know Lucy - What Lucy Makes - Lucy Making 1 & 2 - Making for Yourself, for Others, with Others, ending in analysis and discussion in Making Knowledge in

Space and Time. The analysis here focuses on one particular theme in relation to Lucy's making, which is, how through her Dance practice, I finally understood how the vicissitude of any making practice is temporally located in non-static space.

1.7. The Weaving Chapters

I have grouped chapters seven to nine under the term of 'Weaving Chapters', because in them I am interweaving different themes that emerged across the fieldwork with feminist and design theory in order to reflect on and analyse my findings.

They are: **Chapter 7 - *The Origins of Making***; **Chapter 8 - *The Spaces of Making*** and **Chapter 9 - *The Benefits of Making***.

In *The Origins of Making*, I am concentrating on making histories from the deeper past, ie, making practices remembered from childhood and in relation to family culture, which are discussed in order to understand and explain how the women's making first developed.

In *The Spaces of Making*, I am focusing my discussion on how physical space to make interacts with temporal requirements for making and how this is visible in the different women's making practices.

In *The Benefits of Making*, I am analysing *why* women make, *where* and *why* creative labour gets 'spent' in terms of energy, outcomes and beneficiaries, and how reasons to make are situated within a broader socio-political context.

Initially, there was another weaving chapter: *The Modes of Making*, which was to become the second of the weaving chapters. In the end, I judged it, and some other parts of analysis, interesting but not as essential to my thesis as the other three chapters, which I prioritised so to have space to develop and conclude my analysis sufficiently. I included the other material in the Appendix in order to show that I did consider and work on these themes in overall thematic analysis initially.

1.8. Implications for Design Pedagogy

In *Implications for Design Pedagogy* chapter 10, my objective is to show how my research findings might impact on how practice and education in design is conceptualised in the future and to problematise how this is situated within the broader context of contemporary Western Design ontology. I am drawing on a range of post-capitalist theories in order to consider how future design/making and work/wage binaries might be

supported through re-thought, rather than re-produced, design pedagogies and ontologies.

1.9. Boundaries

I have worked with a small group women, which although in line with anthropological practice and interpretative methods, means that my claim to knowledge is specific and small. I am using my 'small' data to conceptualise thoughts within the realm of 'big' theory, which might be contestable under traditional circumstances, but is in keeping with my feminist epistemological stance as I will go on to explain.

Although I am a design educator, I have not approached this research from a viewpoint of how particular aspects of curricular design and pedagogies might be changed.

Although my research does concern itself with design education, when it surfaces within the fieldwork, design education itself is not its site of research.

I have struggled with accommodating my research ambitions within the boundaries of an Educational Doctorate not in relation to scope, but in relation to space. When I was doing the fieldwork I had to stop, participants wise, although there were more women I could have worked with. Writing up, I constantly fought with the reality that all I could aim to present was a partial account of what I have learned – although I realise all accounts are always partial. 55 000 words did not seem enough, but I have tried my best to make them count. I have learned far more than I can write about, though I talk about it all the time.

'It marks the spot where women's cultures appears unreadable according to the dominant narratives of art, modernity and modernism, while to a different eye that seeks beyond the visible for the index of other meanings, lives, traces of other configurations of the subject and the body, the surface is rich in possibilities for those desiring to decipher inscriptions of the feminine as dissidence, difference and heterogeneity.' (Pollock, 1996, p.26)

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Introduction

This body of research is situated within a Design Anthropological approach informed by feminist theory on space, time and materialism, as well as critiques of gendered labour. In the latter part of it, whilst considering the implications of my research and to conclude, I draw on a range of anti-work and post-capitalist theory in order to propose possible futures of making in space and time. I will here attempt to carefully untangle some of the methodologies, discourses and histories that have been most pertinent to my research in order to explain how the literature I have engaged with has informed my methodology and the analysis of my data. Traditional distinctions between theory and methodology are in this context largely obsolete because when I discuss the literature I am at the same time referring to theory, epistemology and methodology whilst also constructing my arguments on the basis of Stanley's and Wise's (1993) feminist position that: 'the relationship between feminist epistemology and feminist ontology is one which positions ontology as the foundation: being or ontology is the seat of experience and of theory and knowledge' (p.14).

The object of study is female making practice, which means an investigation into the ways in which women create things with a particular focus on *how* they do this in practice, *why* they do it and how the choices they make materialise within their practice and their own conceptual framing of it. The theory and discourses underpinning my analysis are, as Butler (1999) would call it, 'intellectually promiscuous' (p.xi). This means that in order to situate and analyse my findings, I have drawn on theory and literature from across the epistemological divide adopting what could be described as a bricolage approach, which, according to Kincheloe and Berry (2004), supports research re-defining the object of inquiry, through the embracing of 'a critical, relational ontology' (p.xi). My own bricolage approach has meant that my writing and analysis triangulates and enmeshes Feminist Theory, Design Anthropology and Design critiques, with the observation and documentation of lived making experiences.

In order to structure this chapter, I have broken it down into three parts discussing the different bodies of literature most pertinent to my research. These are: 'Female Making'; 'Design Anthropology'; and 'Material Feminism'.

2.2. Female Making and Design

'Up until now the form-giving subject has always been male. And this structure has, unbeknownst to itself, clearly given form to culture, and to the history of ideas. They are not neuter.'

Luce Irigaray (2002, p.3)

I started out on this journey into female making practice with the explicit goal of attending to imbalances in relation to how value is ascribed to female making, by bearing witness to it and making it visible, so to counterbalance the historical void (Parker and Pollock, 1981; Buckley, 1986; De Beauvoir, 1987; Pollock, 1996; Ettinger, 2004). It is not exactly the destination I arrived at but as a trajectory it is an important aspect to understanding this body of work. Stanley and Wise (1993) point out that:

'...women's oppressions' are complexly varied and need equally complex means of analysing and understanding them' (p.12).

In 'Old Mistresses' Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock (1981) question the lack of acknowledgement afforded to female artists and makers by the mainstream art-historical discourses. They highlight how systemic patriarchal exclusion of women has meant that for centuries female creative work was either dismissed or sidelined. The most recent reflections on this in the media show that surprisingly little has changed up to this day:

'It is still the case that the art that we consider to be the most valuable, in monetary but also cultural terms, is almost all by men.' (Ellis-Petersen, 2017)

Since the inception of the women's movement in the 1960s, female creative practice has been the subject of much debate with the majority of discourse focussing on the invisibility of female cultural production in relation to the history of art. But the track-record of the design discipline is similarly dismal. Despite women's active participation in the field of design, things seem to have changed very little since Buckley (1986) proposed that this silence around women in design was not accidental or haphazard, but the result of methods which were inherently biased against women in their selection, classification, categories, styles, movements and modes of production. After five decades of feminist critique and fighting the case for equal opportunities and pay, the professional creative disciplines, and its high profile positions in particular, are still dominated by male practitioners, despite female graduates having outnumbered males in most design

disciplines in the West for decades (Mindiola, 2010; Maness, 2015; HESA, 2013; Siddal, 2014). It is thus hardly surprising that the international Gender Design Network (iGDN) states that:

‘Female designers do not yet enjoy equal participation in all areas of design: “female” and “male” responsibilities are distributed unequally (following societal clichés) and this means that the potential of the different genders is neither taken into account nor honored appropriately.’ (“Why iGDN?- iGDN”, 2017)

2.2.1. Female Making

All these critiques and discussions informed the conception of this research, but they also made me ask myself: ‘If female creative making is not of equal status within the discipline, what does that mean to the status of female making who have never been considered part of the discipline?’ I am acutely aware of how value is ascribed to particular making practices once you are enculturated into its practice and I felt that although my professional realm is situated within Higher Education (HE) Design education, I did not want to even unwittingly reproduce value judgements I myself have for sure embodied. It was the reason why I decided that I did not want to privilege any particular kind of female making practice, but pay attention to any form-giving and meaning-making activities that women willing to participate would want to share. Female cultural production and lived experience is traditionally under-documented because their often process- rather than artefact-focused making-practice is difficult to materialise into established cultural artefacts and is traditionally less valued (Parker & Pollock, 1981).

I have previously argued that women who leave the design discipline are ‘ontologically dead’ to it and that women who were never part of it are even more so (Levick-Parkin, 2017). At first sight, certain questions of design ontology do not always appear to be relevant to issues of gender, such as the amateur vs. professional practice discourse, for example, but once you look closely it is difficult to un-see the hidden biases that run deep even in the writing of the most respected scholars on design and craft. Buckley (1986) pointed out that the majority of the literature which discusses female creative practice, focuses on women’s participation in craft activities because of their traditionally perceived natural connection to female creativity (Buckley, 1986). Whilst craft is relevant to this research, this inquiry positions female creative practice in the broader context of ‘making’. This was a deliberate ‘swerving’ of the craft paradigm because it enabled me to

reach beyond already defined territory to conceptualise female making with the aid of literature not necessarily specifically conceived in relation to craft or design.

Whilst, as previously outlined, feminist theory has often documented and analysed exclusions of female creative making from history (Parker and Pollock, 1981; Buckley, 1986; Ettinger, 2004; De Beauvoir, 1949/2011), one of the goals of this research was to consider potential reasons for this exclusion in an expanded context of contemporary Western Design ontology and to ask 'How do women make, why and how is this cultural production valued?'. Engaging with a broad range of literature discussing female making practice was vital to this and my reading has spanned from literature in Design & Craft to feminist writing, as well as literature from Health & Wellbeing.

2.2.2 Design Pedagogy and Ontology

Design pedagogy makes use of processes of 'becoming', where design students are encultured into ways of being that are aligned to contemporary design's values and practices (Danvers, 2003; Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Orr, Yorke, and Blair, 2014). Niedderer (2013) points out that procedural and tacit knowledge, acquired through practice, is a central and very effective aspect of both practice and pedagogy. In order for procedural and tacit knowledge to be mastered and to be effective it has to be 'embodied' (Dewey, 1934; Polanyi, 1958; Merleau-Ponty, 1964). But within this embodiment of knowledge, we can also become 'forgetful' of the values we produce and re-produce (Levick-Parkin, 2017).

A wide range of scholars highlight that both within Design and Design Education, there are many silences around both what values are constructed and how they are re-produced (Danvers, 2003; Poyner, 2008; Orr et al. 2014; Souleles, 2013). Tony Fry (2015) conceptualises this as a gap 'between the agency of the object of experience and knowledge of experience' (p.14), pointing to a gap of structural awareness of Design's far-reaching agency in how our material world and our social systems are created. Similar to Escobar (2013), he calls for a critical archaeology of how we as designers are ontologically constructed in order to become fully aware of how we both future and de-future the world around us. Furthermore, a disproportionate amount of power is held in the hands of the few who determine and manipulate the social semiotic discourse for the majority of us and it is done through commercial design, political design, economic design and emergency design (Milev, 2011). Critique is an important tool to facilitate the *making visible* of these social constructs, but what Design Anthropology offers is a way to

facilitate the *making active* of this ontological questioning through a re-envisioned design process itself.

2.2.3. Why Design Anthropology for Design Education

When Gunn and Donovan (2012) highlight that people do not always have the conceptual tools to articulate relationships, transactions, values, and tensions in their ways of knowing and doing, it is worthwhile noting that, perhaps surprisingly, designers are often such people. Danvers (2003) called the system underpinning the training of artists and designers a 'pedagogy of ambiguity' (p.48), by which he meant that, because of the way in which it deals with primarily tacit and embodied knowledge, its values are often never fully articulated in language but are instead re-produced via the material practice. The development of anthropological capacities offers designers not only the opportunity to reframe relations between designer and user, company and customers (Gunn and Donovan, 2012), but through the lens of ethnographic engagement on the process of design, previously tacit and embodied values can be made visible.

Julier (2013) points out that Design activism's political drive often gets lost in the questions of implementation. I have previously proposed that the reason why its political drive gets lost in implementation is because most implementation imaginings are primarily conceived *within* Design's contemporary ontology (Levick-Parkin, 2017). This leads to ontological entrapment, because as Design's identity is axiologically that entrenched in patriarchal and capitalist conceptions of Design, all other potential ways of being in Design appear un-natural or impossible to imagine being implemented (Levick-Parkin, 2017). I believe that using Design Anthropology in order to explore female making, has offered me the opportunity to make female making visible in ways which facilitated a zooming out from contemporary Design ontology, out over space and time, gaining a farther sight of how and why humans make, and what that might mean to our 'futures yet un-thought' (Grosz, 1999).

2.3. Design Anthropology

Design Anthropology is a methodology that aims to aid the investigation of people's ability to create, craft and re-shape materials, systems or experiences (Smith, 2015). It is an emergent field, by nature interdisciplinary and encompassing Anthropology's concern with the human condition, whilst also embracing the Design discipline's hands on, future-directive approaches (Gunn, Otto and Smith, 2013). Design Anthropology as a

conceptual framework can accommodate a range of creative practice and anthropological approaches, as well as a wide field of literature and theory. Contributing to the developing discourse of the field are academics and practitioners from a wide and expanding range of disciplines such as Anthropology, Art & Design, Sociology, Archaeology, Architecture (Clarke, 2011).

2.3.1. Design Anthropology and Archaeology

I did not come to Design Anthropology through my professional and academic engagement with Design, but arrived there via a privately nurtured interest in Archaeology and Anthropology concerned with material practice. My interest in Archaeology in relation to ancient scripts and meaning-making through material form-giving meant that I had read with great interest works such as Elizabeth Wayland Barber (1994) 'Women's Work – The first 20,000 years: Women, Cloth and Society in Early Times', Marcia-Anne Dobres's and John Robb's (2000) edited volume on 'Agency in Archaeology', of which a chapter by Joan M. Gero (2000) called 'Troubled travels in agency and feminism' has been particularly food for thought.

Gero (2000) problematises the 'per-se' privileging of historical agency in relation to social agents as she argues this conception is often built on masculine notions that preclude or de-value 'other critical social moves such as building community and consensus, averting conflict, preserving social and economic balances, or restricting and controlling self-interested expression of power' (p.35). After Haraway (1984), she re-constructs this notion of agency into one where an individual active subject is constructed or constituted by discursive formations, 'but who is also capable of action' (Gero, 2000, p.37). In relation to my interest in human making this was an important thought as it pointed to human production that might not be materialised into artefacts or be deemed worth documenting.

Speaking of the material record and its interpretations furnishing our dominant historical discourses, Dobres and Robb (2000) furthermore point out that 'some archaeological reconstructions of agency seem to deal exclusively with adult male heads of households, leaving the majority of society relegated to invisible, passive non-agenthood' (p.13). This description of assigned non-agenthood reminded me of feeling aghast when I had first read De-Beauvoir's damning indictment on female cultural legacy:

'Because housework alone is compatible with the duties of motherhood, she is condemned to domestic labour, which locks her into repetition and immanence; day after day it repeats itself in identical form from century to century; it produces nothing new.' (1949/2011, p.75)

Since it was published, the *Second Sex* has been as influential to the feminist movement as well as widely critiqued as coming from an almost misogynist viewpoint situated within a patriarchal value system (Donovan, 1985; Grosz, 1994), but to me reading it, knowing it is one of the foundational texts in feminist literature, many aspects of it remain shocking in their diminished perception of women and their labour.

Thus, following Wayland Barber's (1994) account of tracing the technological advances of weaving, considered a domain of female making for millennia, is somewhat a vindication. She points out that women's work has largely consisted of making perishables, such as food and clothing, and as such has been dismissed by past scholars as unreconstructable (p.33). Through careful triangulation of scraps of artefact, tools for making, and classical and ancient texts, she shows how there *is* history of cultural production that can be ascribed to women - a history of making as old as the human record. It is not a vindication in terms of saying, 'See - women *did* do stuff', but a vindication in terms of how no-body has really been bothered to look for centuries. I would hazard a guess that the same past scholars, deeming these types of records as unreconstructable, would have been happily engaged in constructing narratives around any gaps in the records they deemed *worth* reconstructing, such as Schliemann did at Troy or Evans at Knossos. Of course, even the material record uncovered by Wayland Barber (1994) does not account for the silences around particular types of social agency, as described by Gero (2000), but I believe it goes some way towards accounting for some of which was previously not seen.

Wayland Barber's (1994) work has not only been influential on the starting point my research set out from, which was based on the idea of wanting to bear witness and to make female making visible in the record. Although her book is from a time where the very idea of Design Anthropology was nascent, not having been named or conceptualised as such, I would argue that she engaged in Design Anthropology. She describes how some of the knowledge she created, she explicated through weaving copies of ancient scraps of fabric on her loom and in the process found out how the cloth was constructed and how what had previously been assumed to be the weft, was actually the warp. She was, as such, engaged in creating knowledge of human making through making herself,

which Ingold (2014, 2017) considers an essential part of any Design Anthropological inquiry.

2.3.2. Approaches informing Design Anthropology

It was Tim Ingold (2013a), through whom I eventually arrived in Design Anthropology, in particular through his book 'Making – Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture' in which he proposes that '... making is a correspondence between maker and material, and that this is the case as much in anthropology and archaeology as it is in art and architecture' (2013, p.xi). In it he argues that the ultimate aim of Anthropology is transformational not documentary, which goes against traditional, but much critiqued, conceptions of it as being a practice of neutral observation and description of the human condition through fieldwork. He furthermore suggests that an active engagement in material practice is necessary in order to produce valid Anthropological knowledge. Similar to Wayland Barber (1994), he gives examples of how the re-making and using of archaeological artefacts makes visible knowledge, that is not knowable from pure observation and documentation of it, because it lacks vital 'in production' and 'in use' knowledge.

The majority of the researchers involved in Design Anthropology highlight its ability to shift the focus away from the designer or the design to the act of *designing* (Binder et al. 2011, p.1) as being of particular interest to them. In order to achieve this shift Binder et al. (2011) talk of the need to try to move beyond discussing the practice of Design merely as a professional competency or particular domain of expertise, but to 'conceptualize and expose a practice of designing as a mode of enquiry' (p.1).

Design Anthropology's largest community of researchers is located in Scandinavia, with Danish network at its centre. This geographical clustering of researchers and the home-location of the network makes sense as Design Anthropology as a field has to a large extent grown out of Scandinavian traditions of Participatory Design (PD), which was characterised by the concept of workplace democracy by focusing on the participation and inclusion of employees in shaping their own working conditions (Gunn, Otto and Smith, 2013).

2.3.3. Design Anthropology as material and political

Apart from this clustering, researchers active in Design Anthropology come from many different geographical and disciplinary location. As Kjærsgaard and Otto (2012) point out, many Design Anthropologists show acute awareness of Design Anthropology's

rootedness in PD by referring to foundational values of PD based on furthering goals of democracy and emancipation based on agendas of social justice (Schuler and Namioka, 1993), which in turn links it back to Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Action Research (AR) (Greenbaum and Loi, 2012) by which it was influenced. My research approach has similar such foundational values and I had also considered using PAR in order to both emerge themes and co-produce analytical findings based on the fieldwork with my participants, but proved unachievable within the constraints of this study.

Garvey and Drazin (2016) contend that Design in the discipline of Anthropology presents at least two, up to now distinct, scholarly trajectories. Namely, the way in which ‘... anthropology has engaged with design history on the one hand, and with design practice on the other’ (p.1). They go on to explain that in their view the anthropological engagement with design history disturbs disciplinary fields as it includes ‘the material and ideational undertow of political, institutional, corporate and creative human and non-human practice’ (p.2). They propose, that this presents an expansion of the conventional definition of design, which is primarily pre-occupied with the work of Design Practitioners in the Design Industry. Garvey and Drazin (2016) call on Lucy Suchman (2011, who argues that what is needed in order to disturb the disciplinary field are ‘[...] ethnographic projects that articulate the cultural imaginaries and micropolitics that delineate design’s promise and practices’ (p.x). Gavin and Drazin (2016) explain that this means that Design Anthropology presents the potential bringing together of those two distinct trajectories, similar to Ingold’s (2013) previously outlined conception of it. This is also the space that made Design Anthropology an interesting methodology with which to investigate female making, not only because it allowed me to pursue a wide range of methods in relation to making, but because it enabled me to both zoom in, in order to make sense of the material practice in the women’s making, as well to zoom out in order to understand what it might mean ontologically.

2.4. Material Feminism

My engagement with feminist literature forms the backbone of this body of work. Up to starting my doctorate my engagement with it had been somewhat haphazard, although I have read feminist literature of different kinds since being a teenager and have always identified as a feminist. Diving into the pool of knowledge created over the last 40 years of feminist writing has been as much a revelation as it has been challenging. The most difficult aspects of it were coming to grips with the differences within feminist approaches

and between schools of thought, which sometimes appear to be in opposition to each other. Irigaray (1993, 2002,) and Kristeva (1980) were a (difficult) revelation. Reading their writings on how language is implicit in the cultural formation of sex, gender and exclusion, was formative. Especially as it ties into my own background of teaching semiotics and multi-modality. I read Judith Butler's work on gender and whilst I admired her radical re-thinking of gender identity, the abstraction and cutting loose from the flesh made it difficult for me to fully agree with her main tenet: that gender is socially constructed (1999) with its roots in De-Beauvoir's assertion that 'one is not born, but rather, becomes a woman' (1949/2011).

2.4.1. Why Material Feminism?

Alaimo and Hekman (2008) highlight that feminism's turn to the linguistic and discursive has been extremely productive because it made visible the complex interconnections between power, knowledge, subjectivity and language, allowing feminists to understand how within cultural systems of difference which function like language, how gender is articulated through markings such as class, race and sexuality (p.1). Price and Shildrick (1999) explain that 'the post-Cartesian modernist period is marked by a rejection of the body as an obstacle to pure rational thought' (p.2). Alaimo and Hekman (2008) also point out that, despite the importance of the post-modernist de-construction of gender dichotomies, it also represented a retreat from the material which had serious consequences for feminist theory and practice, especially in relation to the body:

'While no one would deny the ongoing importance of discursive critique and rearticulation for feminist scholarship and feminist politics, the discursive realm is nearly always constituted so as to foreclose attention to lived, material bodies and evolving corporeal practices.' (Alaimo and Hekman, 2008, p.3)

This also articulated some of my misgivings when reading Butler in particular - I could not identify with the idea that my gender identity was entirely socially constructed - I felt that my gender identity lived within me and in the bodies of the women close to me, as much as it was constructed by being in the world. As Alaimo and Hekman (2008) put it: 'Women *have* bodies; these bodies have pain as well as pleasure' (p.4). This is relevant in relation to the potentially problematic use of the term women in the title of my work. To claim to speak for *women*, because one is a *woman*, has been rightly vigorously critiqued by a wide range of feminist scholars since the advent of second wave feminism (Code, 1991). I do not claim to speak for women, only to make visible and bear witness to a particular

woman's making and her conceptualisation of it and interweaving it with previous feminist thoughts as well as my own.

Whilst I was actively looking for women to participate and not men, I primarily did so with the thought that it could have been anyone identifying themselves as a woman. Having agonised over this, the difference between sexual difference and gender identity, I had also come to the conclusion that my feminist anxiety over using the term would be largely irrelevant to almost all of the women I know in my life whether straight, gay or bisexual. Pollock (1996) points out that for many women '... feminism is a practice, the means to make sense and survive and life; it is not a theoretical icing on an academic cake' (p.3) and I would argue that it is also often a practice that does not have the name feminism assigned to it. I *know* my grandmother was a feminist, yet she wouldn't have dreamed of using the term. Pollock (1996) alludes to a type of feminism, grown out of a certain maturity of women 'whose experience as mothers or in employment had brought them often painfully face to face with the concrete effects of contradictions which shape women's lives in the classed, raced and gendered structures of western society' (p.3). I thus call on Pollock (1996) once more to highlight my understanding that:

'Feminism signifies a set of positions, not an essence; a critical practice, not a doxa; a dynamic and self-critical response and intervention not a platform'. (p.5)

My study focuses on attending to the particular woman and with that her particular lived experience of her making practice. I am mindful that this research and its analysis is primarily based on my reflections on what I have observed and in no way means that I claim to be speaking for the particular women. It is primarily my interpretation even though the aim is to provide a space for that particular woman to have light shown on her particular creative labour.

2.4.2. Material Feminism and Agency

Acknowledging the importance of the body Barad (2008) asks:

'What is it about the materiality of bodies that makes it susceptible to the enactment of biological and historical forces simultaneously? To what extent does the matter of bodies have its own historicity?' (p.127)

She proposes that 'All bodies, not merely human bodies, come to matter through the world's iterative intra-activity – its performativity (p.141). Barad's concept of 'intra-

activity' has been one of the most important concepts for thinking about the women's making for me. As part of it she outlines that things come into being through 'intra-action', which she posits as an agential realism where meaning and material is made by 'material-discursive' encounters. She highlights that these:

'intra-actions are constraining but not determining. That is, intra-activity is neither a matter of strict determinism nor unconstrained freedom. The future is radically open at every turn.' (2008, p.143)

This means that at each point a myriad of potential intra-actions can create new futures (even if in small imperceptible ways), with agency located in the relationship between things, rather than something possessed by individual agents, where: 'agency is not an attribute but the ongoing reconfiguration of the world' (p.135).

This conception of agency had more resonance with me than, for example, the kind of agency conceptualised in Actor Network Theory (ANT). I ventured into Latour's 'Reassembling the Social' (2009) and Pandora's Hope (1999), because quite a number of scholars within Design Anthropology refer to his work and to ANT as a way of understanding how material agency can be understood. I found that it did not speak to me. It reminded me of McNiff (2013), when in relation to Action Research, she warns against the tendencies of some to use it to technicalise everything. Many scholars (Gad and Bruun Jensen, 2009; Ingold, 2010; Otto, 2015) have misgivings about ANT especially in connection with intentionality. Otto (2015) explains his in relation to design:

'Latour's approach to the social, as being in principle "flat", and to agency, as potentially equally distributed between humans and non-humans, appears to give insufficient space to design as involving intentionality and the creation of actor identities' (p.59).

It is also the primarily descriptive and detached nature of ANT, which is troublesome – as it doesn't explicitly take account of how other factors such a power, affect agency and agents (Whittle and Spicer, 2008). I regard this as especially problematic in relation to feminist epistemology. I thus stayed with Barad's (2008) proposal of a:

'specifically post-humanist notion of performativity - one that incorporates important material and discursive, social and scientific, human and non-human, and natural and cultural factors.' (p.126)

The body of work that spoke the most to me about what I was looking at and thinking about is predominantly situated in material feminism, which although having its roots in Marxist feminism of the second wave, is a whole other animal.

2.4.3. Material Feminism and Time

Erin Manning's work 'The Minor Gesture' (2016) was important in my conceptualisation of both agency and time within making. Her conceptualisation of how our perception is primarily curtailed by the immediate parsing of everything at hand, deprives us of realising how our experience of the world is actually made up of myriad small event unfoldings which she identifies as minor gestures. She proposes that it is a perception in motion, rather than in stasis, which, if we are able to attend to it can give us entirely new ways of seeing and being. Focusing on agencement instead of agency, she places importance on how '... an emphasis on the in-act of event-time opens the way for a rethinking of power and the politics that accompany it' (2016, p.123). Her conception of time and agency brought together tentative thoughts I had had in relation the physical materiality of making and how this inhabited the process of making as I had started to question my previous assumption that some making resulted in more static outcomes than others.

It also related back to sensory ethnography, where Sarah Pink (2012) talks about Tim Ingold's (2000) idea of entanglement, where:

'places are not bounded zones that we live or engage in practices *in* but they are actually produced through movement. We might think not only of human movement but also of that of all types of things. As such the constantly changing constellation of things that we call places are constituted through the movement of these very things, and their subsequent entanglement.' (2012, p.25)

I would argue that this chimes with Manning (2016):

'This call for the coursing of minor gestures within frames of everyday life involves crafting techniques that create the condition not for slowness exactly, but for the opening of the everyday to degrees and shades of experience that resist formation long enough to allow us to see the potential of worlds in the making.' (p15)

This idea of resisting the perceptual formation of the world around us is, of course, also directly relevant to space. And in thinking about the space that the women made in, Doreen Massey's (2005) work proved to be invaluable.

2.4.4. Material Feminism - Space, Time and Freedom

I had first started reading Massey in relation to her work on 'Space, place and gender' (1994) in which she, amongst other things, explored how particular qualities of places and space, affected the emancipation of women during the suffragettes movement. But in relation to my research here, it was her book 'For Space' (2005/2012) which was the most influential. She critiques space being conceived as a:

'... lesser dimension than time: one with less gravitas and magnificence, it is the material/phenomenological rather than the abstract; it is being rather than becoming and so forth; and it is feminine rather than masculine ...'. (p.29)

Pink (2012) highlights that Massey (2005) 'situates place in the context of a wider politics of space, which reminds us that there is agency beyond place' (Pink, 2012, p.25). Massey (2005) does this by showing how space, which had previously been primarily conceptualised as static representation with a fixed meaning, is in fact fluid and multi-dimensional in time. She contests the prioritisation of time over space, saying that the imagining of one has implications on the other, and a failure to realise this, debilitates our conception of the political aspects of space. Her aim is to make this visible in 'ordinary space; the space and places through which, in the negotiation of relations of multiplicities, the social is constructed' (p.13), and I kept this in mind when looking at the 'ordinary' making spaces that my female participants inhabited.

Elizabeth Grosz (2010), and her nuanced conceptualisation of freedom in relation to feminist ontology and epistemology, informed my thoughts and analysis in the later part of this thesis. In her writing, I found ways in which to conceptualise why making was not a freedom conferred, but a 'freedom to', which is as anarchic and radical as any act of emancipation Raoul Vaneigem discussed in his 1967 'Revolution Everyday Life'. Sheila Rowbotham (1973a, 1973b) was important because she provided a link between the roots of material feminism to Marxist feminism, which she shares with Doreen Massey. Michele White's 'Producing Women' (2015) gave form to thought on how a contemporary critique and conceptualisation of women's labour and production linked to the women's making in this study, whilst Christina Schües (2011) provided a more expansive view of how time is conceptualised within feminist phenomenology, and

together with Massey (2005) and Manning (2016), enabled me to make sense of how the temporal and spatial themes emerging from the fieldwork are situated in relation to expanded concepts of making.

2.5. Methodology

As previously outlined, my research methodology was conceived within Design Anthropology, which accommodates a bricolage approach, with approaches and methods from both the discipline of Design and the discipline of Anthropology (Petersen, Sperschneider and Kjærsgaard, 2001). Design Anthropology is generally described as an emergent field (Gunn, Otto and Smith, 2013; Clarke, 2011) and according to Gunn et al. (2013) practised in different ways depending on one's methodological positioning. It is often described as both encompassing Anthropology's concern with the human, whilst also embracing some of the Design disciplines hands on, future-directive and interventionist approaches (Gunn and Donovan, 2012). Clarke (2011) alerts us that Design Anthropology is as much an emergent methodology as it is an emergent discourse, whilst Gunn and Donovan (2012) explain that 'Design Anthropology differs from material culture studies as Ingold has argued, in so far as it sets out to question the separation of production from consumption and the precedence of design over use.'(P.10)

The most visible issues and debates are primarily concerned with methodological differences, like, for example, whether ethnographic practice has to be active in order to count as Design Anthropology (Gunn et al., 2013), or the difference between Ethnomethodologically Informed Design, Participatory Design and Design Anthropology (Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012), whilst Yana Milev's (2011, 2013) account of Design Anthropology as a means for critiquing, disrupting and subverting the dominant social semiotic discourse of Design, marks a departure from the more subtle Scandinavian approach to a more explicit, central European, 'anti-Design' approach.

One of the methodological perspectives discussed by designers involved in Design Anthropology, is the focus on *designing* rather than on the designer or Design (Binder et al., 2011). In order to achieve this shift, Binder et al. (2011) talk of the need to try to move beyond discussing the practice of Design merely as a professional competency or particular domain of expertise, but to 'conceptualize and expose a practice of designing as a mode of enquiry' (Binder et al., 2011,p.1). This means that Design Anthropology can facilitate a shift from an overt focus on artefact to a focus on process, which means any

engagement with it by educators will have an impact on learning and teaching in Art and Design. One of the key attributes of it as an approach is that it can accommodate a multitude of methods and epistemologies.

In my research, I add to this an explicit feminist approach, giving particular attention to material feminist conceptions of making and space. As Van Santen (2014) referring to Smart (2009) reminds us, in order to capture the, often messy, everyday lives of women, we need to incorporate sensibilities, such as emotions, memories, inter-subjective meanings, which are not always tangible. Furthermore, I do not claim that my writing has captured a fixed *in time and space* picture of the women making, and it is helpful to consider that any narratives that emerged, should be understood as:

“text-in-context”: of a performance at a certain moment in time and in a particular space that together constituted the “context of narration”.
(Willemse, 2014, p.38).

The aim of this research was to make visible ‘How Women Make’, exploring female making practice through Design Anthropology. The reasons why this research was worth doing is that female creative labour in relation to both process and artefact is both woefully underrepresented in the official histories of the human record (Parker and Pollock, 1981; Pollock, 1996; Buckley, 1986; Ettinger, 2004; De Beauvoir, 1949/2011, 1987) and the full participation of women in the public creative and cultural life is of yet still not in sight (Mindiola, 2010; Maness, 2015; HESA, 2013; Siddal, 2014; Burgoyne, 2010; “*Why us, why now*”, 2016; “Why iGDN?- iGDN”, 2017; Ellis-Petersen, 2017). As an Art and Design educator this has been on my mind for some time (Levick-Parkin, 2017) and it was something that I wanted to explore further in order to better understand the complexities of female making practice in relation to contemporary Design ontology.

With these feminist epistemological considerations in mind, my research is built on the following two research questions:

- **How do women make within particular material and physical contexts?**
- **How do women conceptualise their making within their social contexts?**

Based on my research findings and analysis, in relation to Design Pedagogy, I go on to consider:

- **How might insights gained from the women's making practice impact future educational contexts?**

And I will go on to discuss the methods I used to explore these questions in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 3

METHOD

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will give an account of the way in which my research was designed and produced through a range of methods.

This is structured in the following ways:

3.2. Ethics

3.3. Being in the Field

3.4. Methods

3.5 Positionality

3.2. Ethics

3.2.1. Ethics Approval

I went through the Ethics Approval system at the University of Sheffield twice.

The initial one included the submission of my ethics application, and included the Participant Information sheet and the Participant Consent form (See Appendix A.2.1 & A.2.2). This was approved in February 2016. I then re-submitted my previous application with the view of doing some of the research in Greece - I was told that I did not need to repeat the process and it was approved under the previous application in October 2016.

3.2.2. Participant Recruitment

I took the decision to invite women into the research wherever I could. I told all my friends and colleagues and passed on my information and invitations to participate, while at the same time giving them to a random number of women I met and left them in places where interested parties might be found. In the end, only two of the 11 women who participated were entirely unknown to me before the research started. Toni contacted me after I had left my leaflets at the ROCO in Sheffield after an event on Makers. Lucy got in touch with me, because Jake at Access Space (a maker Space in Sheffield) whom I had met through Toni who works there, had passed my leaflet on to her.

Katy, Fotini and Becky are my closest friends, with Becky being a more recent relationship, which developed since she first started child-minding my sons five years ago.

Katy suggested her friend Kaz would be up for participating, whom though I had knowledge of, didn't know beforehand. Becky said to me 'Oh, you should really do this with Bill – she has always been a maker' and Bill is Becky's oldest sister.

Fotini, who is Cretan, is my oldest friend. Her participation was an almost seamless continuation of our being together and sharing making knowledge, which I wrote about extensively in my auto-ethnographic fieldnotes. Attie is Dutch, but has been Fotini's neighbour for years, and I met her through being at Fotini's house over my many visits and also had knowledge of her making through Fotini telling me what she had learned from her. Eirini, who is also Greek is a more recent friend but, again, it was developed through a shared interest in creative practice, as well as our sons befriending each other.

Vicky is a friend and an ex-student from a previous place of work. Ever since she was a student she had declared herself a feminist (unusual at the time) and we have over the years had many conversations about the state of the Design industry in terms of female participation and visibility.

The participants in this study were recruited via social and professional circles.

Data was created with 11 different women who pursue a range of different making practices and were recruited via social and professional circles. I had initially conceived the research be done exclusively with women previously unknown to me, but during research preparations I talked about the planned project with a lot of women I knew and the responses were overwhelmingly one of excitement. They would say things like 'Uh, - you could research me' or 'So and so, would be perfect for this.'

I mentioned this to my supervisor Kate Pahl at our next meeting and expressed my unease about both the thought of including women I knew and excluding women I knew. My main concern over including women I knew was that I feared the research would not be 'neutral' enough and might be discounted because of this. My main concern over excluding women I knew was that it was these very women who had made me want to make their making visible in the first place. Kate pointed out that there is a long tradition within feminist research to start with the 'here and now' and attend to lived realities close at hand. She also pointed me towards literature on friendship research and highlighted that as long as my research design, process and analysis was thoroughly grounded, there

was no reason why the inclusion of women I knew would diminish the credibility or validity of the research.

From within my own social and professional circle, the number of women willing to participate seemed almost endless. I didn't want to stop with these women, doing the research was a brilliant experience and a gift to my life. But my sample was initially only supposed to be eight women and I was drowning in data. My mentor at work actually told me explicitly to stop my 'data collection'. But outside of my social circles only two women had come forward and most other attempts of asking women at events if they might be interested had gone no-where. I mentioned the dichotomy about a dearth on one hand and an almost draught on the other to Kate Pahl the next time I saw her. We discussed that to some extent this might point towards the essence of my methodology actually residing in friendship research, which was interesting because I had discussed with other women how it would be great if one woman made visible the labour of two more women they knew well in their lives, and then those two women did the same, we could crowd source a whole feminist archive of female making. I still think that this might be a good idea for a future project.

3.2.3. Ethics in Friendship Research

Owton and Allen-Collinson (2013) highlight that: "Friendship as method" is a relatively underexplored – and often – unacknowledged method, even within ethnographic inquiry' (p.283), whilst Sassi and Thomas (2012) and Tillman-Healy (2003) points to its roots in a feminist methodological approach, through its contestation of the idea of value-free inquiry and in 'both reflexively attending and actively resisting hierarchical separation between researcher and participants' (p.732). The ethics underlying this research are very much aligned with this methodological stance.

Owton and Collinson (2013) assert that it demands the engagement in sustained reflexivity and scrutiny, whilst acknowledging that it does not in itself negate issues of power balances, but brings with it its own potential tensions and pitfalls. I also have to acknowledge that having recruited participants from within a friendship circle, will to a certain extent have circumscribed the kind of data I would be collecting. As Tillman-Healy (2003) explains:

'Friendships tend to confirm more than contest conceptions of self because we are prone to befriend those who are similar to ourselves, those more "self" than "other".' (p.731)

Whilst I cannot eliminate some of these aspects impacting on my inquiry, I have tried to remain alert and reflective of them throughout and used the theoretical grounding of my interpretation and analysis as a way of asserting the relevance of the data made in such close proximity. Tillman-Healy (2003) points out that in this ethnographic dialogue, 'we bring together personal and academic discourses, comparing, contrasting, and critiquing them' (p.736). But I also hoped that through 'empathic connection' (p. 737), the women would 'feel heard, known, and understood' (p.737).

3.2.4. On making Data

On 'collecting' data, I would like to call on Pat Thompson (2013), who asserts that when we produce our research 'things/people aren't data until WE make them data'. She explains that what she means by this is that if you say you are collecting data, you are assuming an ontological/epistemological position, which unless you are a convinced positivist is probably not one you really identify with (Thompson, 2013). It is not because I am ultimately a constructivist that I always felt saying that I collected data was wrong, but from a feminist point of view even talking about the material that came from my encounters with the women as 'data' makes me feel a bit ill inside. Although I realise that it is a part of the research vocabulary – I did not want to make these encounters *data* - I wanted them to *live on*. So, maybe that's why I would prefer to think of my 'data' as a record - albeit a partial one, which is not neutral. Thus, where possible, I talk of 'making' data in this body of research. More than that, I have been 'co-making' data, as the women themselves started to make data the moment they agreed to participate in the project. Behar (1997) proposes that 'Anthropology is wide-ranging enough to include many different ways of witnessing' (p.26) and reminds us that this witnessing is never a neutral observation of events, which would have taken place just the same if we hadn't been there. Thus, I am in the data, everywhere, through my presence, through my participation, in my decisions on what to pay attention to and most definitely in how I chose to sort through it when working on the thematic analysis leading to conclusions. Behar (1997) also reminds us that the narratives that we listen to, are not necessarily the same ones, the narrator would give to another person, but that this does not mean that they are not true – as Willemse (2014) puts it 'they are "texts-in-context"'.

3.2.6. Consent

I went through several different stages of recruiting participants and gaining and checking consent. All the women received my information sheet before we had an initial informal conversation about what the research entailed and what the activities and the

topics of discussion might be. This was generally weeks, sometimes months before the data making commenced. Before data making commenced all participants signed the consent forms, of which a copy was kept by myself and the participant. I then re-checked their consent at several different stages, right up to the completion of the final write up.

3.2.5. Participants Reviewing the Data Made

As part of my ethical consideration it was important to enable the women to review and comment on the data made together within this research. This included several stages, from sharing transcripts, to at the latter stages sharing those parts of the thematic analysis which referred to them by name, as well as reviewing the images I was using. This included offering them to anonymise the data and asking them if there was anything which they did not want to be included. Subsequently, two of the transcripts had parts removed, according to individual women’s requests, but these were generally very minor aspects and did not impact on any of my thematic analysis. One participant asked me not to include her transcript in the transcript samples in the appendix. None of the women requested to be anonymised at either the initial or later stages, nor requested to be removed from my written account, interpretation or analysis or for something to be amended. Two of the women did not respond directly to me emailing them about the last data sharing, but I followed this up, to make sure they had received it.

I also invited them to write a few lines of reflection or feedback about the material and the project in general. Some of them did, and I have included this in the Appendix.

3.2.7. Timetable of Data Sharing and Re-Checking Consent

	SEPT 2017	OCT 2017	NOV 2017	DEC 2017	JAN 2018	FEB 2018	MARCH 2018
SHARING TRANSCRIPTS							
SHARING PHOTOS/FILMS							
GETTING VERBAL FEEDBACK							
SHARING WRITTEN EXCERPTS							
GETTING WRITTEN FEEDBACK							

3.3. Being in the Field

'Even saying "I am an anthropologist, this is fieldwork," is a classic form of the use of the method to drain anxiety from situations in which we feel complicitous with structures of power, or helpless to release another from suffering, or at a loss as to whether to act or observe.' (Behar, 1997, p.6)

It is worth considering that as Madden (2013) highlights, "being with people" in ethnographic research is not simply a matter of "being" in an ordinary sense; it is not some form of unstructured "hanging out" with people' (p.78). The time I spent with the women was not un-structured even if some of the structure may have resembled the regular 'un-structured hanging out' we may have together at other times. Part of the reason why I chose to design my research in the way I did was exactly because I wanted to 'hang out' more with other women - but the reason why I wanted to 'research' into female making in the first place was because of what I had been *seeing* whilst hanging out with women for decades. I had seen things I found worth *noticing* and which I wanted to record. But it was only the framing of the 'hanging out' as research, which afforded me the space to follow up structurally on my *noticing*. Important to note here is that there was a marked structural change in the 'hanging out', which Madden(2013) describes as the instrumentality of ethnographic practice, where participation in 'being with' is 'bounded by the question(s) that drive the research'(p.78). The research space afforded me a time and space to extend the reach of my previous *noticing*, in ways both, much expanded and in ways never anticipated.

3.3.1. Autoethnography, Ethnography and Participant Observation

My engagement with the field is arguably not just ethnographic but autoethnographic. This is relevant especially in relation to pairing a feminist epistemology with Design Anthropology, as a feminist stance traditionally calls for explicit positionality (Thompson, 2013). Nencel (2014) highlights that:

'Reflexivity is both epistemological – how we should learn about knowledge, as well as methodological – how we should obtain this knowledge. Reflexive analysis and practices are intimately related to the researcher's epistemological standpoint.' (Nencel, 2014, p.76)

Thus, my work is also autoethnographic as it expresses my own stance towards my subject matter and in writing my field notes and reflections it was very clear how the ethnographic stories I was surfacing entangled me intimately with the women's making.

Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis (2015) highlight that 'auto ethnographic stories are artistic and analytic demonstrations of how we come to know, name, and interpret personal and cultural experience' (p.1) explaining that auto ethnography provides an opportunity to 'confront the tension between insider and outsider perspectives, between social practice and social constraint' (2015, p.1). Whilst, I have not had time in this body of work to extensively reflect on the insider outsider perspective, I acknowledge its importance and the need to a critical reflexivity in this context. Especially in field notes written up based on the data made with Fotini, my oldest friend, I needed to critically reflect on how the research was entirely entangled with our entangled biography. That particular piece of writing is not included in the final thesis, but it made me realise how writing ethnography, and particularly autoethnography is very much about storying. In Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis (2015), Stacy Holman Jones, who has a background in ethnography talks about her journey into autoethnography being inspired by her love of story and that now after years of developing her practice, her work focuses 'less on the story of *doing* research and more on storying lives *as* research' (p5).

I propose that one would be hard-pressed to easily distinguish between ethnography, autoethnography and participant observation in many contemporary interpretations and practices. Whilst Ingold (2017) is insistent that participant observation is not to be confused with ethnographic practices, I would argue that many contemporary accounts of ethnographic practice is not as rigid as he makes out in some of his critiques. And, indeed, writing on his ethnographic (not autoethnographic) practice, Madden (1999) explains that:

'For my part, I do not see the approach of the confessional tale as self-absorption for its own sake. Rather, its reflexive dimensions have methodological implications in the context of the home-town field: in other words, it influences how I 'do' my ethnography.' (Madden, 1999, p.260)

Behar (1997) highlights that it is traditional conceptions of anthropology which regarded any forms of self-revelations as taboo, because that is how it derived its historic evaluation of scientific inquiry and Western views of the barbaric other. But she explains: 'The irony is that anthropology has always been rooted in an "I" – understood as having complex psychology and history, ...' (p.26).

3.3.2. Writing Up my Field Notes

My write up of the fieldwork with the different women was based on a whole range of

material (data) that each woman and I created together. We had conversations about their making following the previously outlined format. I often had the camera mounted and running as we were making and I made some field notes after the time spent together and reviewed the materials collected. Because of the constraints on the length of my thesis, I had to do a considerable amount of editing of the written and visual materials created with each participant.

The material created in relation to just one participation was well over 5,000 words, as well as the transcripts, video tapes and photos taken. The edited vignettes of the ethnographic accounts focuses on three different women in particular, as that was all I could fit in and even that has been heavily edited.

Madden (2013) explains this process as encompassing the following three stages:

‘I see the act of inscription (including image capture) as a core element of ethnographic practice and I utilise a three-phase approach that I refer to as ‘writing down’ (notes), ‘writing out’ (data) and ‘writing up’ (text), but there is much more to consider besides.’ (p.6)

My research process definitely included these three stages, as well as more pronounced aspects of participatory observation through the elements of co-making. But he also highlights how ethnographic inscription should be viewed ‘as part of a larger narrative’ (p.6) and it is through the thematic analysis and storying of my ethnographic accounts in relation to theory, that I am emerging the larger narrative of my research.

3.3.3. Deciding what to include

My final thesis highlights ethnographic accounts of my fieldwork with three out of the eleven women. I had initially started to write up these specific ethnographic accounts for each of the women, but then began to realise that I would not be able to discuss things in depth if I tried to ‘cover more ground’. During my thematic ordering and analysis, it also became clear that many of the themes I was surfacing and beginning to analyse, would be best discussed in relation to each other, rather than being presented strictly apart, based on individual participants. I thus decided to focus on a sample of three to present as specific ethnographic stories, followed by analysis and discussion, and combining of other emergent themes in relation to the different women into the ‘Weaving Chapters’, supported by an overarching analysis supported by theory.

3.3.4. Sample Selection for the Ethnographic Accounts

The three women I choose to focus on are discussed in chapters three to five. These are not convenience samples but were chosen because each of their accounts surfaced aspects of making not necessarily shared with the other women, but which were very important to how my thoughts and analysis of making practice developed. The structure of these themes is highlighted in the introduction to the empirical chapters four to nine.

3.4. Methods

Research methods included participant observation via co-making, conversations and observations, which were recorded through field notes, photography and film. My primary research method was participant observation, which was overt because the women knew what I was doing and had knowledge of the conceptual framework behind the research. It was also structured because, although many aspects of it were informal, I was looking for particular things in relation to making, which shaped my research methods as well as my analysis.

I recorded informal interviews, which were transcribed and followed a basic structure in order to surface themes from my research questions. Some of the research encounters stretched out over months, especially when the women were more local, whilst others were more condensed in specific visits.

3.4.1. Participant Observation

During Participant Observation, - after Ingold, (2013a) and Gatt and Ingold, (2013), I mostly participated and observed, whilst at other times I would also have a camera running to record the making. I didn't really make any scratch notes (written at the same time as you are observing), as I felt it was distracting from the 'here and now'. Instead I generally wrote field notes afterwards.

3.4.2. Filming

I watched the filmed footage several times over, a few times with the sound on and some with the sound off. I did this because I found that when I watched with the sound on I got engaged in what was being talked about, which distracted me from looking closely at the 'minor gestures' (Manning 2016) taking place within the making process. The beauty of the visual recordings was that I could stop, start, rewind and look again.

3.4.3. Informal Interviews

I used field notes written immediately after the participant observations, in order to record particular aspects of conversations which happened that may not have been recorded on film. I also had an informal interview with each of the participants in order to make data specific to my research question in relation to the woman's own conceptualisation of their making. These interviews, were structured around a series of questions, which were:

- What is your history of making? Who has encouraged you to make in your life?
- What are your favourite ways in which you make and why?
- What particular materials do you favour in your making and why?
- Who do you think benefits from your making?
- What stops you from making?

Most of those interviews lasted about an hour with the shortest lasting 40 minutes and the longest 1 hour and 19 minutes. I more than once, switched the recording back on after the last question was discussed, as the conversations generally kept going and revisited issues previously discussed.

3.4.4. Transcription

All the interviews were recorded on my phone and I paid to have them professionally transcribed. I had initially tried to transcribe them myself, but failed miserably – I always ended up stopping typing and just listening, so after spending some days doing that I realised that I would never get this finished left to my own devices. Luckily, someone recommended Jill, who with her excellent transcription of the lively and messy recordings, saved me hundreds of hours of invaluable time.

3.4.5. Listening and Watching Back

Listening back to the interviews and reading the transcriptions, it struck me how much was not there, which had been there in the moment. I could still picture a woman's face, seeing the gestures which had gone with a particular thing she said or recall the smell of the space we were in. I have tried to include some of this sensory ethnographic data (Pink, 2015), when I wrote of the different vignettes. But I was also 'drowning' in data, which meant much had to be left out in the end.

I feel that I can't adequately confer in writing, how the interviews and films have impacted on my research, because part of them I have embodied in ways which are tacit

and not entirely transferable, but I have done my best to share this knowledge in a truthful and accurate way in the ethnographic accounts and the visual material included here.

3.4.6. Drawing

I did a little bit of drawing when I observed because one of the tenets when we push our students to draw is 'It's not how well you draw it's about learning to look.' But drawing has never really been my forte - having always favoured other ways of image making and looking. There was also another aspect to this, which I hadn't anticipated beforehand - the research space was a space where, apart from when I observed Lucy making, chatting was a natural part of the process. Both taking notes and drawing turned me into a silent observer and the participant into the observed, rather than the active participant observation that the research called for. I found that I simply could not draw, observe, listen and talk, whilst also being fully present with the woman in the room.

3.4.7. Photographs

The photographs I took during the research had a primary objective of providing a visual account of what I was seeing. Somehow, taking photographs was far easier to integrate naturally into the research process than writing notes or drawing. It didn't interrupt or stop conversation in the same way and it also linked to most of the women being used to taking photographs of their own work. Me taking photos often also prompted them recalling and sharing photos they had taken of past work or things that had inspired them.

3.4.8. Secondary Data and Social Media

The women often showed me photos on their phones of previous things they had made and Bill actually sent me her whole back catalogue of things she had made over the last few years. Kaz sent me a link to her website and also befriended me on Facebook and we had discussed that it was okay for me to look at and consider what she was doing online.

3.4.9. Informal Follow Ups

With some of my participants, conversations about the project and making in general has been ongoing. With Katy, Becky, Fotini, Eirini, Dylan and Vicky, this has been informal and just part of catching up generally. With Lucy, I met for a coffee to catch up on how the project she had been working on had gone in the end, as I missed the final parts of it,

because of a meniscus tear. With Toni I had some email conversation, whilst I was working on her ethnographic accounts and I am looking forward to sharing all of this work with all the women who have participated and to catch up with them in general.

3.4.10. Co-making

The majority of my research encounters included co-making elements. Sometimes this was participating in the actual making of something like with Kaz, Becky and Bill, at other times it might be me trying a little bit of an aspect of making they were doing, like with Katy, Fotini, Attie and Toni. With Eirini and Vicky, we were not in a space where that was easy to accommodate, but we looked at things they had made and talked about their material explorations. As part of all this, I have made some mosaic, sewed (badly), brushed wool, sorted through buttons, held something waiting for glue to settle, danced with others, splayed the image layer of a napkin, messed up some stitches of blackwork embroidery, plus gained an insight into a number of other material practices. In Dylan’s case, her making was not physically accessible to me because at the time her making time was at the dead of night, when she couldn’t sleep. I gave her a go-pro to try recording some of it on time-capture, but it was too disruptive and cumbersome as well as intrusive. I would still argue that I co-made to some extent, as I drew a crappy picture of myself as a wolf, because when Dylan talked me through her illustrated stories she had told me that she turned most of the people into animals.

3.5. Fieldwork Activity

	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sept 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Jan 17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17
Field Work UK										
Field Work Greece										
Informal Interviews	1	2	1			1			1	5
Co-making										
Other research Encounters										

3.7. Thematic Structuring of Data and Analysis

I started out with the intention of using Nvivo, a programme designed for the structuring and analysis of research data, for the ordering and thematic analysis of my data as it had been introduced to us on the doctoral programme. After discussion with my supervisor, I decided that a more un-structured and open immersion would be more suitable to both my research approach and individual practice.

The process of thematic analysis did not just begin once all the data had been made, but thematic areas of interest started to emerge very early on during the research process.

I noticed both similarities and groupings as the research progressed, as well as certain specific occurrences within the data. Whilst I didn't categorise or attempt to code anything until the fieldwork had been completed, I had a range of mental and post-it notes, which were beginning to give my inquiry further direction. I was also reading quite furiously throughout the whole of my research process, which no doubt started to shape my thoughts and ethnographic storytelling, long before I started to 'write up'.

Whilst I had decided against Nvivo early on, I did start with some coding of the data, through the particular themes emerging via colour coding within specific accounts and also copying out to cross-reference. As I became more and more immersed in and familiar with the data, this became more of an obstacle than a help, as it was starting to feel like I was putting an un-necessary layer of admin between me, the data and the emerging themes.

My whole process of analysis ended up generally being very holistic and cyclical in nature. I had read things, which influenced how I viewed the data emerging. I started a rough coding based on the merging themes. I then went back to more open ended viewing, to get a broader overview of the data, which then led back to linking it to 'bigger' theory, based on the ethnographic accounts. Towards the end my knowledge of the data was that intimate that I would know exactly who said what in what context and could quite easily find those parts to include for the support of my thematic analysis. Having said it was easy – this was a process that took the best part of a year.

From the beginning, my research questions proved invaluable in keeping me on track with the things I was looking for both in the sorting and the analysis of the data.

But it was working towards a conclusion, based on the range of discussions pursued in the dialogue between data and theory, which shaped the final version of this body of work. It meant that I was able to make decisions on which of the emergent themes were absolutely necessary to support the overall tenet of my work. Deciding what was most important and what I could edit out in order to make my argument more succinct and cohesive was difficult but, ultimately, liberating.

In the end, I structured the thesis around six themes of discussion based on the three individual ethnographic accounts, whilst the weaving chapters altogether had 11, supporting the main discussion and analysis at the end of each chapter as well as directly informing the implications for practice and overall conclusion. As previously highlighted, an overview of the thematic analysis can be found in the introduction to chapters four to nine.

3.8. Positionality

I am writing this thesis from a position, which considers Design's relationship with the ecology; neo-liberal capitalism; social exclusion (including gender) as either fundamentally sick or terminally broken. I have little interest in examining spaces and margins, from which bargains might be struck, as that is the reality I already negotiate professionally during my 'day life'. Where, if not in here, in this headspace which is (almost) all but my own, should I take the space to think through ambitiously hopeful thoughts? Whilst I feel slightly squeamish about including biographic information within my positionality, I believe that a feminist approach should not shy away from this and I have read many such positionalities which have helped me understand the person's viewpoint and research approach better. As I am also aware that some of my biases spring from my autobiographic data, I shall go on to give an overview of what I deem relevant to situating my research.

I am a white female academic and would be considered middle class in relation to many aspects of my life. I am married, with four sons, have studied Design, worked as a creative in Advertising and have been a Design lecturer for almost 15 years. I am German. And a feminist. My adult life is comparatively stable and mundane, and has been so for many years.

I have experienced discrimination based on my gender during my professional Design career in industry, more so, once I became a mother, which I internalised and put to one side for a long time. I am also the result of a teenage pregnancy, my mother died when I was 12 due to mental health problems, my beloved grandmother suffered from bouts of depression and alcoholism, and my dad has been to jail. I was taken into care when I was five; have been a warder of the state; was for a number of years looked after by a mentally and physically abusive foster mother, and then spent my teenage years in a children's home. Until the age of 11 I was stateless because my English mother could not pass on her citizenship to me on account of being a woman, and my German father couldn't pass on his on account of not being married to my mother. My home city of Hamburg kindly adopted me when I was 12 and made me a citizen. I have generally been very lucky throughout my life - I have always found people who have taken an interest in me, supported and helped me, just when I needed them the most. I believe that this is the reason why, despite a difficult childhood, I have remained 'normatively' healthy up to this date.

All the above things are part of who I am - they intersect - but are they relevant to my positionality in this research? Yes, and no. My focus on women and their making is connected to how I have conceptualised my mother's and grandmother's mental health problems as an adult. My intellectual make-up is connected to a learned necessity of critically analysing my environment in order to understand (and survive) things. To some extent my research is also connected to my grandmother's death in 2008, which, amidst all my grief, made me think a lot about female 'legacies'. My anger about any forms of exclusion, based on power and privilege is connected to all my life experiences. But my research is also connected to my sons and the hopes I have for them to escape entrapment by patriarchal conceptions of gender, having witnessed how male friends and family members, had to negotiate and struggle to transcend the assumed privileged roles assigned to them. All of these things, though, are far outstripped by my concerns over how Design plays a major, but largely unrecognised, role in the de-futuring of all our lives ecologically (Fry, 2010); via systems, artefacts and processes, hidden in plain sight.

This Research is, of course, not *about* all these things *per se* - it is about *how women make*, and it is based on a genuine fascination with human making - informed by, but also aiming to be beyond any biographical biases. As a feminist writer, I believe in being present in my research, in the importance of the every-day and lived experience. I have aimed to show myself in my research, to the extent that I am reflexive, and reflecting on my entanglements, but my research is also driven by a conviction that *anyone* could have

done this research - *in this way* - and would have found things out about female making, which would be worth knowing, worth making visible, and which would offer broader societal benefits, deriving from analysis and critique in relation to any particular system female making might be situated in. That is, of course, not to claim that the same methodology would confirm or replicate *my* findings or, indeed, *my* conclusions, just that I believe that the subject has positive capacity, yet to be fully explored or acted on.

My somewhat critical stance towards design as a Western, patriarchal, capitalist discipline, is a subtext in all my research. As a practice, I embody and love it, but as a discipline I find it lacking – in both practice and education. As a Design educator and researcher, I have been struggling to zoom out of my own ontological entrapment of *who designs* and *what design is for*, and engagement in this research has provided me with an opportunity to understand my own ambivalences towards Design, Design history and contemporary Design education better, whilst gaining a much desired grounding in broader philosophical debates. With this thesis, my aim is to prove that my contribution to knowledge in relation to female making is both passionate, as well as critically situated and rigorous.

When Parker and Pollock (1981) explored women's place in the History of Art, they pointed out that the way the History of Art had been evaluated and studied up to that point, was 'not an exercise of neutral "objective" scholarship, but an ideological practice' (p.xvii), which unconsciously reproduced existing beliefs and values, through particular ways of seeing and interpreting. Having trained and practised as a Designer/Design Educator within a patriarchal and Western value system, I was keen to ensure that I remained alert to how this impacts on my own value perception - as to what counts as creative practice and what doesn't. Part of the reason for choosing the term 'make' was to release me of my own potential bias and ontological entrapment.

The focus of this work does not lie with the specifics of the artefactual outcomes of the participants' making practices. Whilst the outcomes of the making were observed and the makers' interaction with their practices documented and reflected on, this was done in the context of a holistic looking at the different aspects of 'how women make'.

INTRODUCTION TO FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Outline of the Thematic Structure of the Next Six Chapters

In the following six chapters discuss how the data made during fieldwork connects to theory and how my interpretative discussions and analysis was constructed based on emerging themes, relevant to my research focus.

The next three chapters focus on data made with three of the women who participated. These are:

Chapter 4. **Disco Kaz – ‘Well sod that, just make your own loop’.**

Chapter 5. **Bill – ‘It tells you what it wants to be’.**

Chapter 6. **Lucy – ‘... if I can't be in other people's work I want to create my own’.**

The core of each of these chapters is based on a series of vignettes, which build a specific ethnographic account through aspects of the data made with each of the three women. I am using the term vignettes as these written pieces were edited into snap-shot narratives to give an insight into what is particular about that woman’s practice and conceptualisation of it. These specifics are then built on to form my interpretive discussion and analysis.

These accounts could also be understood as case studies, but as White, Drew and Hay (2009) point out, potential methodological issues relating to the case study and ethnographic approaches need consideration. They highlight that a case study approach from certain perspectives, where cases ‘are found’ and the assessment of the empirical bounding of cases is based on ‘cases as objects’, are not compatible with either feminist approaches nor ethnography. However, as they go on to explain, current conceptual approaches to case studies research stress the importance of reflexivity and acknowledgement that data is made, and cite Willis (2007), who suggests ‘that case studies are much more similar to ethnography than dissimilar’ (White et al., 2009, p.22).

For my purposes, I am framing these potential case studies as ethnographic accounts as ethnography is most closely aligned with Anthropology. My ethnographic accounts and their vignettes are also reflected by Van Maanen’s (1995) description of ethnography as storytelling, which White et al. (2009) highlight, entails the ‘researcher drawing ‘close to people and events’ and then writing about what was learned in situ’ (p. 24). Humphreys

and Watson (2009) describe the use of vignettes within ethnography as a 'descriptive scene-setting', with an emphasis on 'being there' (p.46), from which the interpretative discussion and analysis can be constructed (2009, p.46). As such, my vignettes are to be understood as representational devices, which I am using to enhance the understanding of the 'story' within the ethnographic accounts and how and why the interpretative discussion and analysis which followed emerged.

The three chapters that follow on from these specific ethnographic accounts are the 'Weaving Chapters', in which I am presenting a thematic analysis of the data from across all 11 women's accounts, interwoven with theory, in order to construct my interpretative discussion and conclusions.

These are:

Chapter 7: **The Origins of Making**

Chapter 8: **The Spaces of Making**

Chapter 9: **The Benefits of Making**

My discussions and analysis here are both interpretative and reflexive and as Nencel (2014) highlights:

'Reflexivity is both epistemological – how we should learn about knowledge, as well as methodological – how we should obtain this knowledge. Reflexive analysis and practices are intimately related to the researcher's epistemological standpoint.' (Nencel, 2014, p.76)

Thus, my reflexive analysis is related to my previously outlined feminist epistemological standpoint of assigning value to in-situ knowledge and lived reality, and connecting this micro data to theories and context of the macro, based on the feminist tenet that *the personal is political*.

Overview of Thematic Analysis Based on Research Data

This is an overview of how the thematic areas analysed are situated in relation to the ethnographic accounts and the weaving chapters.

In chapters four to six the data discussed in the analytical themes follows on from the ethnographic accounts and their vignettes.

Analytical Themes	Where in Ethnographic Accounts
In Discussion Chapter 4: 4.7. Kaz: 'Making with Heart and Hand'	
4.7.1. Exploring conceptual themes visible across Kaz's making practice	4.2. What Kaz Makes 4.2. Images of Materials, Pieces of Work and Social Media Sites
4.7.2. Material Properties, Acting on how Kaz Makes a Particular Piece of Mosaic	4.2. What Kaz Makes 4.3. Kaz Making 4.4. Colour and Compromise 4.5. Co-making
In Discussion Chapter 5: 5.6. 'Immanence, Death and the Subversion of Beauty'	
5.6.1. Concepts of Immanence in Bill's Making and her Conceptualisation of it	5.3. What Bill Makes 5.5. 'Intra-action' with Material
5.6.2. Subversion of Concepts of Motherhood and the Feminine in Bill's Making	5.3. What Bill Makes 5.3. Images of Bill's Furniture and Upcycled Ephemera
In Discussion Chapter 6: 6.8. 'Making in Space and Time'	
6.8.1. Material and Immaterial Making in Time	6.4. Lucy Making 1 6.5. Lucy Making 2 6.6. Process Artefact Process 6.6. Images of Lucy's Sketchbooks
6.8.2. Making Knowledge in Space and Time	6.5. Lucy Making 2 6.6. Images of Lucy's sketchbooks 6.7. Making in relation to others

In the 'Weaving' chapters, the approach to the way in which data and theory inform the overall thematic ordering and analysis is more fluid in order to construct a cohesive overall research narrative.

Weaving Chapters Analytical Themes	Thematically Ordered Accounts
Chapter 7. THE ORIGINS OF MAKING	
7.7. Discussion: 'Developing Making Literacy within Family Making Cultures'	7.2. Making as a Natural State 7.3. Adult Making Support 7.4. Early Experience of DIY and Scrap Materials 7.5. Making Memories Situated in Space and Senses 7.6. Autonomy in Making During Childhood
Chapter 8. THE SPACES OF MAKING	
8.2.5. Making Spaces 'Call to Action' 8.2.6. Making Space Intra-acting with the Maker's Mind 8.3. Making Space in Time	8.2.1. Curated Making Space 8.2.2. Images of Curated Spaces 8.2.3. Ordering and Storing Future Spaces 8.2.4. Images of Mapping in Making Spaces 8.2.5. Making Space Intra-acting with Making 8.3.1. Things Impacting on Making Time
Within 8.4. Discussion 'The Demarcation of Space is also the Demarcation of Time'	
8.4.2. Making Time is More Important than Making Space	8.2.2. Space Intra-acting with Making 8.3.1. Things Impacting on Making Time 8.3.3. Making Making Happen
8.4.2. Silences around Making Time	8.3.2. Competing Signals 8.3.3. Making Making Happen
8.4.3. Empowered Space in Time	8.3.2. Competing Signals 8.3.3. Making Making Happen
Chapter 9. THE BENEFITS OF MAKING	
9.3. Permission to Make	9.2.1. Benefitting Yourself 9.2.2. Near Benefaction 9.2.3. Far Benefaction 9.3.1. Conferred Value
9.4.1. Making in Capitalist Space and Time	9.3.1. Conferred Value 9.4.1. Resisting Benefaction
Within 9.5. Discussion 'Freedom to Make'	
9.5.1. The Valuing of Making 9.5.2. Reasons to Make	9.2.1. Benefitting Yourself 9.2.2. Near Benefaction 9.2.3. Far Benefaction 9.3.1. Conferred Value 9.4. Resisting Benefaction

Chapter 4

'DISCO' KAZ – 'Well, sod that, just make your own loop.'

4.1. Introduction

My encounters with Kaz are presented as an ethnographic account structured into a series of vignettes, leading to a more in-depth discussion and analysis in the latter part:

What Kaz Makes - Kaz Making - Colour and Compromise - Co-making

Discussion: **Making with Heart and Hand**

From the first four more informal vignettes based on the participant observation and subsequent ethnographic and auto-ethnographic writing, two key themes emerged, which I go on to discuss and analyse in further depth in 'Making with Heart and Hand'. The first part of the thematic analysis focuses on some of the conceptual themes visible across Kaz's making practice. It reflects on their apparent normative femininity in the context of the castigation of public female making practices as evidencing the 'frivolity of women's cultures' (White 2015, p.ix).

The second one centres on the analysis of how material properties, both textual and economic, act on *how* Kaz makes a particular piece of mosaic. It considers how she re-directs her creative and conceptual intentions as she responds to the material, which according to Ingold (2010) does not evidence material agency, but points to an ontology of making, where making is the ongoing flow 'between improvisation and abduction, and between becoming and being' (p.100).

The following literature informed my discussion and analysis in this chapter builds around some of the following literature: Simone De Beauvoir (1949/2011), Ingold (2008, 2010), Michele White (2015), Foster (2016), and Manning (2016).

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4.2. What Kaz Makes

Kaz's making practice is visible all around her mum's house in which she lives. Her paintings are on the wall, her artefacts dotted about and her materials stored in different

nooks and crannies of the house. Her making practice is very wide ranging. She draws, paints, makes mosaics, builds websites and makes animations. There is not enough room in the house to display all her work. The little lean-to behind the kitchen has canvasses of her oil paintings stacked on top of her mosaic materials and various paints and utensils. A lot of paintings and mosaics have motives that revolve around her idols such as Eric Cantona and Dolly Parton or loved ones such as a portrait of her Grandma that hangs in the hall. Her work regularly goes beyond the pictorial and includes statements and phrases, some her own, others chosen, as explicit clues as to what the particular piece is supposed to communicate.

When I ask her about her history of making she goes back to being five/six years old in primary school, doing those portraits with crayons and just loving the colour:

'I think from, I can remember really, as a child I was always artistic and I think it just led me to everything, like my earliest memory was at school.'

She goes on to say how she spent ages on her piece and when it was pinned up on the wall at the end of the day, she had the realisation

'Oh my God, mine's really colourful.'

This love of colour is very clearly evident in her work. Across her work she does not work within any particular colour palette, but she curates her colours according to the mood of the piece, something she mentions she takes great care to construct when she first starts working on it.

'So then, like the little studies, that were in the outhouse, the weird black and white ones, so now I'm up to the stage where I'm going to be doing it in colour, because I can get likenesses but I can't always get colour so it's a nice challenge for me rather than for anyone else. I feel a lot more freer painting.'

Her work although ranging across a broad range of media appears to be thematically very consistent. When you see it all together, you get a strong impression of the things that drive and inspire her. Many of her images have themes of love - using both the word love in phrases and sayings, or having a heart-based motive (Fig.1) On some of her work the word love and the image of the heart are combined (Fig. 2). Juxtaposing her pink/red, heart and love based themes, is her work which is themed around her love of football, in particular Manchester United and Eric Cantona, her identity as a Northerner and images of beverages ranging from Guinness to vodka. In her online presence, these are intermixed with collected images that feature the word love or heart, as well as images

of hearts.

Many of the phrases she uses in her work are of an inspirational, motivational or consoling nature (Fig. 3 & 4). The mosaic she is working on when I am there combines many of her themes (Fig. 5). It shows an angel clutching a heart to her chest and the text framing the image reads: 'Grief is the last act of love we have to give to those we love. Where there is deep grief there was great love'. We don't talk about the phrase on the day, and I later wonder why I didn't ask her about it. I think I felt if she had wanted to talk about it she would have mentioned it. Maybe I was also more hesitant because it was my first piece of fieldwork. Kaz encouraged me to go and have a look at her online presence and when I do, I see that there are two posts about loss on her Instagram. One about her dad and one about her grandmother. I think about the painting of her Gran and about losing my own mother and grandparents. Maybe that's why I didn't ask - sheer avoidance.



Fig.1

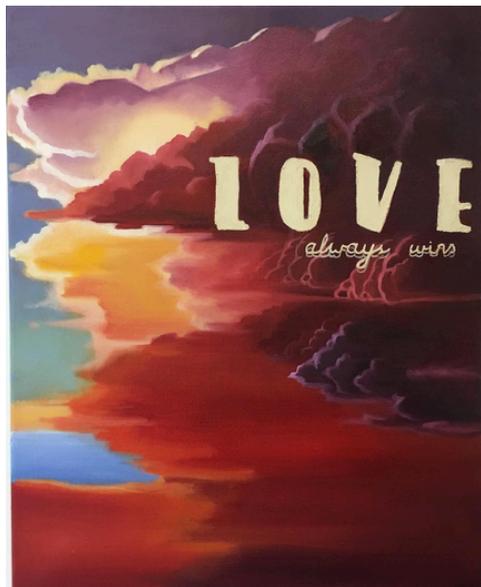


Fig.2

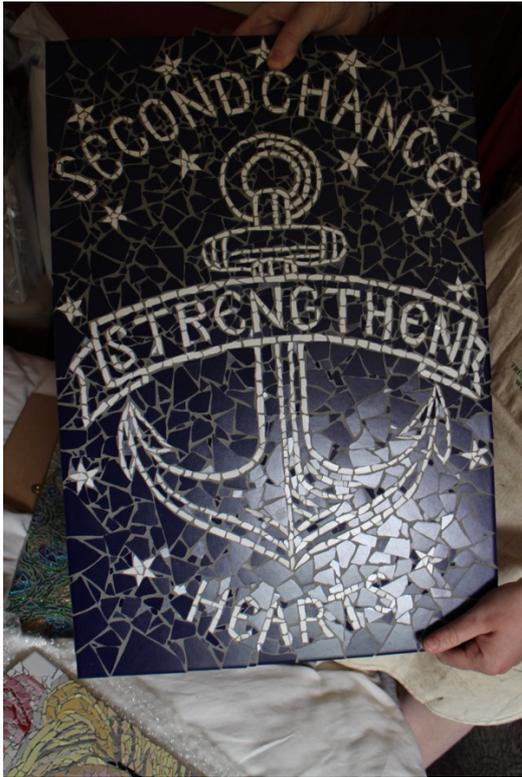


Fig.3

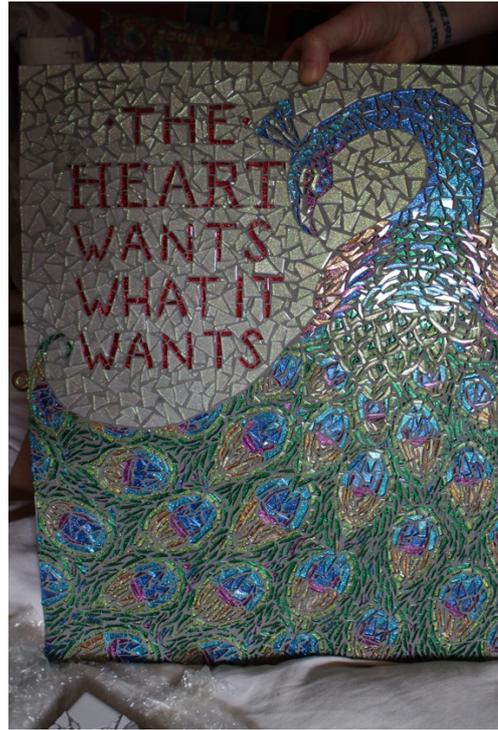


Fig.4



Fig.5

Please see appendix for more images of Kaz's work

4.3. Kaz Making

Kaz is on the living room floor with her back against the sofa and her legs stretched out under the coffee table, which is pulled up right up to her body. In front of her on the table is a thick piece of MDF about 50 x 70 cm big, with bits of finished mosaic in various patterns, loose tiles of various colours and a large proportion of the brown MDF with its pencil drawing still visible.

She is wearing a beige apron over her pink summer dress and her long hair is tied back. We are chatting, but while we are talking Kaz is working on her mosaic. She continues on the type elements. Streaks of sunlight are thrown across her work in progress and I think about light coming through a church window. There is a re-purposed glass jar full of the brown porcelain bits she is making the type out of, pre-cut from larger pieces. There are also quite a few of those pieces still loose on the board as well as the already glued down part of the type. Kaz is working on the piece upside down, which means that although the type she is working on is right at the top of the layout she has it right in front of her but upside down. The main bones of the layout are visible on the MDF as a lovely pencil drawing, that I almost feel is too good to be covered up, but I guess the whole reason it exists is to be covered and its form translated into another material. I am wishing I had been there to watch her draw it - I am imagining that when drawing for a mosaic Kaz must already be making certain decisions about how to draw shapes that might work with the translation into the very different medium of the mosaic and I wonder about the process. So, I ask her 'Before you drew it out on there, did you have some sketchbook stuff?' Kaz:

'Yeah I just do it straight on, because I didn't in my head think it would look like that, because I wanted like a renaissance style painting and I wanted all the flow, then it was like it's the cost of the tiles, the colours like to get the best colours they're really expensive, so then it kind of shrinks.'

(Gesticulating shrinking space with both hands.)

She sticks her fingers into the jar to fish out a presumably random piece of material and as she is chatting, turns it over a few times between both thumbs and index fingers, swapping the piece over several times, whilst looking at its different sides. The pieces are mostly little rectangles, ca. 6mm wide and 12mm long, plus the thickness of the tile they came from, about 3mm. She places the piece on an outline of the type and then picks it back up, turning it over again, putting some glue on, then placing it, then picking it back

up and rubbing the glue off, then putting glue back on and then finally placing it into a position that she is happy with. The PVU glue is in a little white pot, which may have been recycled but could also come from a DIY or Craft supply. Resting in the container is a tubular wood stick, roughly pencil long but half as thin, and she uses it to transfer the glue from the pot to one side of the tile she is handling. I notice that it is the other way around to tiling a bathroom because for the mosaic the adhesive is put on the tile and then tile is placed rather than the adhesive going on the board with the tile getting stuck to it. This not only makes sense when you look at the intricacy of what she is doing, but also when you see how she re-applies and rubs the glue off the tile when she is not happy with the position. If the glue went on the board first this would be very messy and it would be very difficult to just put glue on where the tile was supposed to go, so you would have more glue on the board than necessary. Once the piece is on the board she nudges it around a few times before moving on to the next bit.

Sometimes her gaze scans over the loose tile pieces already on the board and she picks one of them up, turns it over, puts it back down and looks at another one, tries it out on the pencil outline and then glues it. Other times she picks a piece out of the jar, places it, then takes the tile cutter to make it much smaller and then places the part she wants onto board to test it again, before gluing it. When she is having to fill smaller parts of a letter she looks over the pieces on the table, picks up the jar to look into it, then tips a small handful of bits into her palm, and picks out a number of them to put them on the table, ordering them into little groups according to their shapes and sizes. The ones remaining in her hand get tipped back into the glass. I guess this is how the first ones I saw loose on the board got there, before I started observing. While she is working her way along the letters, she moves the board, so that her immediate field of work is right in front of her.

Kaz talks about how her experience of painting influences her mosaic practice and how she tries to translate her knowledge of how to use different brush sizes on a painting for a particular effect into using different sizes of tiles on the mosaic for similar effects. She also tells me how sometimes a particular piece of tile, created by chance becomes so perfect for a particular part of the mosaic that it is very satisfying to be able to put it on.

4.4. Colour and Compromise

Kaz talk about the strain of the cutting on her body and shows me a gardening glove with the fingers cut off she often uses when she does a lot of cutting. She comments that she is worried about doing too much cutting at a time because of potential strain injury. She

tells me that when working on a mosaic she does a lot of prep work in longer sittings listening to music or sitting in the garden just cutting the bigger tiles into the more manageable pieces I can see in the jars. She comments:

'I prefer to do one part cutting one part sticking - But I like cutting, it's a lot of luck - it's finding out what you can do.'

Kaz says she avoids using reds on large areas because reds are a nightmare to cut as are the navy-blue ones, which she found out on previous pieces of work, where her ambition to use red tiles over a large area made for punishing work – 'yeah, I am not doing that again!' I ask her about the glue she is using and she says she just uses PVU glue because her pieces are for indoor rather than outdoor mosaics. Kaz:

'I just use pvu glue because I do indoor mosaics, if you want an outdoor one you need to use a different adhesive which is almost cement like and with my work I change a lot of it and rip it all up. If I don't like it I just pull the whole lot off and it's really hard to do that with the cement. It's like you need to start again. It's hard with the glass, I had to rip some of the glass up off these bits here, that was hard 'cause obviously it's glass so it was shattering, this might be a bit easier cause its porcelain. But mm yeah.'

I am quite surprised by how she describes ripping whole parts of what she has made back up. I suppose I was thinking about the mosaic as a more static thing than a drawing, for example, where you might rub something out or a painting, where you might paint over an area you are not happy with. Considering what Kaz told me about how long it takes to make a mosaic, it also signals to me that it is more important to her that the piece looks how she wants it to look than the extra time she has to invest to get it there. This is in contrast to how she describes the cost of the material impacting on the compromises she had to make when first starting the piece. Her monetary resources are impacting on the piece in that she had to compromise on the size and colours. Her time resources impact on the piece in that she can afford to invest time to re-do parts of it if she isn't entirely happy with it.

It is interesting to think how Kaz's love of colour plays out in different ways in different parts of her practice. In her paintings, she is used to re-working her colour schemes through different iterations of the same motive, exploring how different hues and tonalities create different effects. In her mosaic practice, colour is also a motivating factor for her, but she makes compromises based on the costs of different colours as well as on

how hard cutting a particular colour is on her body. In a way, the colours of the tiles are fixed, though she can change the hues through placing them next to other colours. When she shows me the different mosaics around the house, she also mentions how a particularly sparkly coloured tile inspired her to pursue a particular motive and theme. So, in that case the materiality of the colour actually guided the form-giving and meaning-making from the outset.

4.5. Co-making

During the latter part of our time spent together she invites me to have a go myself. I start using the tile cutter with a sense of trepidation. I don't have a very strong grip and my wrists are naturally quite weak, so I am having real trouble getting the tile to split and to yield a smaller piece I can work with. Kaz shows me how to angle the tile cutter and tells me only to use it on the edge of the tile not with the full blade on the tile, a technique which then enables me to actually get some smaller pieces to work with. I still have to keep re-positioning the cutter several times to make it work each time and adjusting my grip on the handle. Katz shows me how different edges of the tiles are harder to cut than others and how to change the direction of my cut. After I have managed to cut a few pieces my hand and wrist are already starting to hurt, so I start pushing the pieces around on the MDF thinking about my motive. I start following a similar process that I had observed with her earlier, only much slower and more hesitantly. I hadn't drawn anything on my board so I just keep cutting and pushing the tiles into a shape that starts to make some sense to me visually. The tiles Kaz has given me are in several pink and purple shades and as I am looking at her in her pink dress, the colours give me the idea of making a little mosaic representing her. As the little figure starts to come together I am finding myself trying to be more directive with the cuts that I am making because I need pieces of particular sizes and shapes. I continue to catch my body flinching every time I successfully cut a piece, thinking I might cut myself or send something flying, but I gain an embodied insight into her process that I would not have been able to experience through mere observation. In the end, I have made a small, messy mosaic, vaguely female human shaped with pink skin and a purple strappy dress featuring a little fragment of red tile on her chest as a heart connected to her right hand by a larger fragment of red tile. Kaz is right – the red tiles are a bastard to cut.



Fig.5

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4.7. Making with Heart and Hand

4.7.1. Exploring Conceptual Themes Visible across Kaz's Making Practice

In 'What Kaz Makes', I highlight how her practice utilises a broad spectrum of media, materials and skills. Her styles of expression change in relation to the media she is working in, but across it all there is evidence of a conceptual continuity – the thematic of how Kaz expresses who she is. Kaz's conceptual continuity intermingles with her collection of the work of others, on both her Instagram and Facebook pages. Her re-posting of love-based visuals, reflects the hues of pink and red, cursive scripts, glitter and uplifting messages in her own work. (Please view images in the appendix.)

The re-occurrences of the word 'love', heart, heart shapes, expressions of hope and ideals of life in Kaz's work could easily be construed as representing the timid, passive, typically 'female' insipidness so condemned by De Beauvoir (1949/2011) in the 'The Second Sex'. I choose to read these themes in a very different way. I would argue that read in a particular way, Kaz's thematic concepts could also be considered radical. Patriarchal, neo-liberal capitalism often asks of women (and men) to accept divisive loneliness in order to attain success and get ahead (Foster 2016). During my conversations with Kaz, emerged an account of the long intellectual and emotional struggle she had been through to reclaim her making and define success on her own terms. Which is why, to me, the conceptual themes in her work communicate a refusal of the harshness of these external pressures, whilst putting forward an alternative narrative of lived and aspirational values she situates herself in.

Kaz's conceptual themes are also not always based on traditional female ones, but include one, which would often be assumed to denote masculinity – football, beer, vodka, anchors, frigates. She uses different colour ranges for these, fewer pastels and pinks more dark blues and other 'stronger' colours. Colours that are culturally constructed to denote masculinity are widely used in corporate Design, which aim to communicate values or attributes also constructed as masculine. White (2015) points to the dichotomy between the 60 per cent of content producers on social media sites such as Facebook, which are female, and the efforts of the male dominated corporation to define itself in opposition to frivolous or obsessive behaviour, associated with the feminine. She highlights that this is done through 'sober visual semiotic of sober male iconography ('like' icon white hand

with blue- buttoned cuff)' (p.10), crisp blue branding and logos communicating the idea of global communication networks. She comments that:

'... cultural conceptions of masculinity are often used to elevate sites and new media technologies while traditional femininity and women's pleasures are employed to dismiss these settings and women.' (2015 ,p.10).

She also points to a quote from the Urban Dictionary which posits Facebook as a place where 'fake girls can "write on each other's walls how much they 'LOVE' each other"' (2015, p.10). Thus, the idea of LOVE is rendered at once feminine as well as fake, negating such posts' validity as a meaning-making gestures. Women are not unaware of how they are judged - they experience more trolling and abuse online than their male counterparts (White 2015, Foster 2016), which is why an insistence on posting themes that could be described as displaying normative femininity, could be considered as an act of resistance in itself, because of the broader misogynistic context that this is situated within.

Kaz's work plays with both the conceptions of femininity and the subversion of it. She works with both overtly feminine themes and some which are overtly male. In Kaz's work, this also links to her use of glitter tiles. She had told me how she just *had* to make something with them when she first saw them because they were so beautiful. In body adornment, glitter is often read as an amplification of femininity and indulging in excessive femininity carries its own moral cultural condemnation (White 2015). White (2015, p.10) explains that through the societal lens, excess of glitter is often read as a demarcation of infantilism as well as sexual deviance, yet many women knowingly choose to ignore such connotations, because glitter affords them a personal aesthetic experience that is deeply satisfying. Thus, I would argue that, at least in the context of this societal lens, Kaz's themes of love, hearts, pinks and glitter are intrinsically subversive, because they overstep and ignore boundaries of moral judgement associated with excessive femininity, while her masculine themes subvert because they play with stereotypes of gender and are juxtaposed to feminine 'softness'.

4.7.2. Material Properties acting on how Kaz Makes a Particular Piece of Mosaic

The apparent feminine 'softness' of many of her conceptual themes, is also put into stark contrast in relation to what she has to make her body do, when she makes her mosaics. She describes the strain of cutting the tiles on her hands, her back – the worry about damaging herself. To some extent it appears as if her body and mind are in conflict over

the aesthetic and material aspirations in her making. She has to compromise her mental image of what it is she wants to make in order to self-care and accommodate her body. She loves particular colours, but she has to take into account the hardship that cutting the red colour tiles, for example, puts on her body. Added to this is the expense of glitter tiles, which she has to take into account when making Design decisions, thus seemingly thwarting her agency in realising what she had in mind. Schools of thought in relation to Actor Network Theory (ANT) and material culture might identify this as the material 'acting back', thus bringing its own material agency into play which in turn acts on the human actor (Latour, 2009).

Ingold (2008, 2010) strongly opposes this conception - he frames this process as simply *following the material*. He objects to the concept that objects can act like subjects and that subjects can be acted upon like objects, because for him agency is inextricably linked to intentionality and, as such, he argues, objects cannot possess agency but rather are 'possessed by action' (2010, p.95), although he does not claim that the material is passive or inert. I would argue that although Kaz's red tiles do not possess agency in terms of intentionality, she may experience them as if 'acting back', thus altering the forward projection of her making. The material forces her to deal with the *here and now* of the making. Ingold (2010) calls upon Deleuze and Guattari (2004) who suggest that 'this matter-flow can only be *followed*' (2010, p.451), only that matter-flow in his conception is simply 'material'. In his framework, Kaz's encounter with the material is as much a case of 'imposing form on matter as bringing together diverse materials and combining and redirecting their flow in the anticipation of what might emerge' (Ingold 2010, p.94). This makes sense when considering how, when I observed Kaz making the mosaic, there was a constant shifting and trying of the different fragments of tile emerging from the process of cutting, as rhythm of chance, sorting, selecting, placing and discarding during which Kaz constantly re-evaluated how her materials were moving forward her making. Ingold (2017) relates this kind of movement in making to what Manning (2016) calls 'patient experimentation' – Ingold (2017) proposes that the one important ingredient in this kind of 'minor gesture' (Manning 2016) is time and that 'it works more by intuition than by reason; opening from within rather than penetrating from without' (Ingold, 2017, p.41). By being able to be with Kaz while she was making, and co-making with her materials, she allowed me to be part of *reading creativity forward* - which Ingold frames as a view in which 'making is a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways or lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld' (Ingold, 2010, p.91).

Chapter 5

BILL - 'It tells you what it wants to be.'

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I have written up vignettes based on my encounters with Bill into the following ethnographic account, with a discussion of some of the themes emerged at the end:

How I Know Bill - What Bill Makes - Talking with Bill about Making – Interaction with Material

Discussion: **Immanence, Death and the Subversion of Beauty.**

In Appendix: Thematically ordered images of Bill's work

Here I am using the first four narrative vignettes to show how Bill's making is an integral part of her life and the varied ways in which she pursues her practice. I give a flavour of our conversation about her making throughout her life and then focus on part of our conversation where she talks about her engagement with particular parts of her making material. Based on our conversations and aided by images of her making archive, I go on to discuss specific themes relating to concepts of immanence and to acts of subversion within creative practice. Conceptualisations of immanence have historic importance in feminist theory, stemming from De Beauvoir's (1949/2011) critique of immanence vs. transcendence in relation to gender. They are of interest because of how they surface ontological concepts of agency and how such concepts relate to value judgements. Barad (2008) highlights that for both feminist and scientific analysis, understanding how foundational inscriptions of nature/culture dualism forecloses 'the understanding of how "nature" and "culture" are formed' (p.145) is crucial. I end my discussion with an analysis of Bill's making archive, proposing that her subversion of concepts of the feminine and motherhood in particular parts of her practice, point to a reworking of normative identity positions (White 2015), set within seemingly mundane practices of crafting and up-cycling.

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5.2. How I Know Bill

I met Bill a few years ago when she was visiting her sister Becky, who is a friend of mine and lives a few doors down from us and looks after our three younger boys a couple of times a week. Before I ever met Bill I knew that she had made a lot of up-cycled furniture and artefacts because Becky had told me about it and had also shown me some images on her phone. I had heard about the two of them going to auctions in Sheffield and buying job lots of stuff to do things with.

Sometimes Bill comes and stays with Becky for a few days so I will see her when I pick our boys up and stay for a brew (or even some food if I am lucky). One of those times I remember going over and Becky's dining room table was covered in newspaper and there was an old cable reel on it. Bill was painting the cable reel with swift decisive motions, carrying on as we chatted for a bit. I asked her if she had bought the reel somewhere local while she was over to visit and she said 'Oh, no - I just brought all my stuff with me, because I get bored just sitting around.' Turned out the cable reel, which she was turning into a little side table was just one of the items she had brought over. I remember the three of us laughing about the idea of 'So, what would *you* pack if you went to visit your sister for a few days? Oh, just a cable reel, some saws, a sander, paint and brushes, etc. lol.'

5.3. What Bill Makes

At that time Bill had a stand in a craft unit space in Sheffield from which she was selling her work, which she has since had to give up due to ill health. Currently her making practice has moved on to smaller, but a very wide range of more craft-based, items encompassing anything from decorative picture frames, cake toppers, key rings, to typographic decorations and lots of other things. Many are wood based, but interact with lots of other materials depending on intended use and visual effect.

Bill also talks about how she has always been 'making'. At work, she would find time to make extra things that she found interesting - like when working for an etching firm she would go into the archive to find 'pretty things' to find out how to make her own plaques. She recalls that even when working 60-hour weeks in the factory, she would always be doing things on the side like decorating the kids' bedroom, beyond just papering, building porches etc. It doesn't seem that any particular material or artefact production defines

Bill's making, but the particular contexts and materials she can get her hands on determine her materials practice at any particular point in her life.

After the fieldwork Bill sent me a large back catalogue of her previous work that we had talked about so I could have a look at it and include it in the project. In order to make some sense of it, I ordered the images based on the visual thematics of the work.

There is a range of furniture which would be considered traditionally pretty and feminine. It has floral themes, pastel colours and adopts the currently trendy 'shabby chic' look. Bill interprets existing themes of the old furniture, such as embellishments on the wood, fussy lines or curved legs, into soft, light colour palettes and organic wooden appliques of leaves and flowers (Fig. 7). When she is working with furniture that has clean lines, based on squares and rectangles, she reverts to a more modern interpretation with bright more primary colours. She also appears to be picking up on hints of Western interpretations of 'oriental' themes from previous decades - a 1920s dresser with particular types of wood decorations is turned into a 'Chinese' styled piece, with black, red and gold dominating. In her child-themed furniture, Bill works with contemporary popular culture in order to structure her making and aesthetic choices. Bill is an adult, but she is making those items with children in mind, and like the children in Pahl's (2002) study, she draws on 'popular culture as a "cultural resource"' (p.146) and unites them with her own interest, ie with the making, selling and re-use of the furniture.

Bill also seems to take great joy in the macabre - when she showed me around the house she talked about working with old fashioned coffins she managed to get hold of and how much she loved doing them up, as well as her amusement in freaking out her sisters when disfiguring dolls and teddies for her Halloween range (Fig. 8).



Fig.7



Fig.8

5.4. Talking with Bill about Making

When asked about her history of making Bill says:

'I've always mended stuff. I've never been able to afford new things and I think it's wasteful having new things, you know, just because you need black worktops in your kitchen, your appliances need to be so and so colour. Me I'd rather just wait until they break and then mend them.'

She says that now she is older she can afford things, but that it **'goes against the grain'** and that she has always loved recycling furniture. She identifies that she has always been creative - always liked making and as a kid used to make clothes, built things and helped her dad with cars, the scrapyards being her favourite place. This was unusual in her community and because of what she was interested in she was always told that she should have been a boy. I ask 'By whom'? Bill: **'Mum and dad, sisters, you know, friends.'** She explains that she has never been one for girly things and comments on that being a stereotype. Bill was really into art in school, all kinds of art but most of all painting. Talking about doing painting at school, she says:

'I'm not very good but, yes I right enjoyed that and I got offered a job as a sign writer, well with a sign writer, and I was going to do that but mum say no so, and what mum says goes, or did.'

Her mum had said no because it would have meant her as a 16-year-old girl travelling around the country with the other workmen, who were all male. Bill reflects:

'Which I can understand now but at the time I thought she was totally unreasonable, like you do.'

Instead she ended up making coils for alternators in cars before moving on to an etching firm:

'Then I went to an etching firm and I right enjoyed that, it was with acids and you had enough downtime to do your own stuff as well so I used to go in the archives and find all the pretty things and how to make my own plaques and what-have-you. I right enjoyed that. That was in the eighties.'

She highlights that she has always had a very strong work ethic and that she worked right close up to the birth of each of her three children who are now in their mid-twenties and early thirties. When I ask her where that work ethic comes from she credits her

parents, saying it's always important to contribute things and when I ask her why it is important she answers: **'It's just old-fashioned I think.'**

She says that the decision to work for herself around a decade ago came about mainly by accident because her husband who was a decorator was snowed under at work and she was helping him at weekends:

'He was having a hard time of it I says "Why don't you go on your own? I could drive." Paul doesn't drive so he said "Right that's it." He packed his job in and worked for himself and I was doing it with him.'

They did this for around 10 years, working long hours and over weekends, whilst also having the unit with the upcycled furniture until Bill got ill, triggered by a neck injury. Since then she had to scale down, give up the decorating and the unit and is currently focusing on making smaller things which she wants to sell at craft fairs or online.

5.5. 'Intra-action' with Material

She highlights her frustration with having had to change her material practice because of her health problems, saying **'I liked the upcycling of furniture, I loved that'** and that she would still be doing that if her health would allow it:

'I wouldn't have looked twice at the little stuff that I make now, I like the big stuff, I like the, it's, with big stuff it's like instant gratification. You see something worn down and not being used and then you turn it into something beautiful, not like the stuff I make now.'

I ask her if it's the repetition of the smaller craft items, which she makes from scratch that bothers her. She says that although she will make quite a sizeable batch of a particular item, she then moves onto the next thing:

'There's no shortage of ideas it's just what I fancy do it and once I've done it and got it out of my system that's great and I'll move on to the next thing.'

Me: 'So you don't necessarily do the same things again?'

Bill: 'No because I've been there, done that, it's kind of scratched that itch.'

When I ask whether the reason why she likes up-cycling furniture so much is because each piece is by necessity different, she doesn't only confirm this explicitly, but also goes deeper into her experience of up-cycling:

'Yes and each piece tells you what it wants to be. I know that sounds crazy. I got a wooden coffee table, a big coffee table and I thought "Oh I know what I'll do with that. I'll carve a river in it, carve a river with all the little inlets and what-have-you and then fill it all with photo luminescent resin." So, I started carving this river and it turned into a tree. It honestly wouldn't go where I wanted it, every time I got to it, it would carve another bloody branch or something and it just did it itself. It didn't want to be a river.' (Fig.9)

I ask her if it feels like the thing is already there and she says **'Yes, it's just screaming to get out.'** I comment that she seems to feel quite strongly about this and she says:

'Absolutely. I did another one and that started as something else and it turned into an ammonite with the photo luminescent, but I didn't like that as much as the tree because that really, really spoke to me.'

We talk about her having more control over the smaller craft items, she makes from scratch and she says:

'Yes, yes, but they're boring. They're boring. The things that I can let my imagination go on they're the kind of bigger things, you know, not necessarily furniture but – There's a cable reel end there, that big one and I'm turning that into a clock. I really like that –'

Bill seems to feel strongly that the larger items she has worked with and up-cycled, bring a kind of immanence with them. Another thing that is part of her up-cycling practice is the act of naming her creations:

Me: **'So, you were just talking about that you'd done a light and then you said that you named it. Just describe what the light is and what you called it.'**

Bill: **'Yes, it's a round brown wagon wheel kind of thing with three drops, three pendants, and the bottom of the pendants are hats, ladies' hats, and I call it Ascot, or Ladies' Day. It's just a nice thing, it tells you what it wants to be.'**

Me: **'And do you just call it that in your head or do you put that on a label when you sell it?'**

Bill: **'Oh I put that on the label, yes, yes.'**

Me: 'Do you name your stuff often?'

Bill: 'Yes, all the time. Yes, yes. I had, there's been furniture that's been called Elvira, that was beautiful, it was black with red. Lady Eleanor and all sorts, yes.' (Fig.10)

Me: 'And do you write those things down somewhere or do you just remember them in your head or - ?'

Bill: 'I just remember them, yes.'

Bill: 'Yes, I could tell you what they're called, yes, definitely.'



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

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5.6. Discussion: Immanence, Death and the Subversion of Beauty

5.6.1. Concepts of Immanence in Bill's Making and her Conceptualisation of it

When Bill talks about why she loved up-cycling so much, she is very clear in her assertions that part of the enjoyment is a feeling that the objects already come with a making destination of their own – 'It tells you what it wants to be.' What she is describing appears to be a kind of power immanent in the objects - her material/matter, which are strong enough to 'act back' even against Bill's personal plans for the object. (The planned tree carving turning into a carving of an ammonite.) In order to challenge the positioning of materiality as either a given or a mere effect of human agency, Barad (2008) proposes 'a post-humanist materialist account of performativity' (p.145), which positions agency as a matter of intra-acting. This account of intra-acting also aligns to some extent to Ingold's (2008) understanding 'textility of making' (p.92) and of 'correspondence' (2013a), though he is less willing to divorce agency from human intentionality.

For Bill the smaller craft items she is producing from scratch 'are boring' - to her they do not possess the same strength of power to act back as the old furniture and other re-purposed artefacts have. When Bill works on the furniture she appears to be experiencing what Barad (2008) calls 'a congealing of agency' (p.139), where 'matter is a substance in its intra-active becoming – not a thing but a doing (p.139)'. When the intended tree becomes an ammonite, Bill's account of this is very reminiscent of what Ingold (2010) describes as the 'textility of making'. He refers to Deleuze and Guattari's (2004) account of the splitting of timber with an axe, where the blade enters the wood and is then guided by the history of the growth within the tree. This means 'surrendering to the wood and following where it leads' (Ingold, 2010, p.451). I also propose that Bill's perception that there is a pre-existing force or power within the pieces, is a kind of belief in immanence. Roelli (2004) reminds us that in Western metaphysics, the concepts of immanence and transcendence can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle, representing two divergent tendencies which place reality, as it can be known, either within or outside of the world. In religious terms, believing in transcendence is closely aligned with the 'one' god, external to oneself and materiality (Haynes, 2012). In contrast to this, immanence is aligned to beliefs of animism common in many religions around the world, where 'god' or spirit can exist in matter and material alike. De Beauvoir (1949/2011) repeatedly critiqued women's supposed leaning towards beliefs in immanence and situated it negatively in relation to men's apparent striving to transcend.

De Beauvoir's (1949/2011) particular take on immanence, which followed a deeply

patriarchal tradition of Cartesian dualism with its roots in Greek philosophy, has been much critiqued in feminist literature (Bartlett, 2004; Donovan, 1985; Grosz, 1994). De Beauvoir's (1949/2011) evaluation is not only an explicit value judgement in terms of the idea that transcendence is a nobler concept than immanence, she also re-positions the term specifically to denote different types of labour - creative labour is equated with transcendence primarily pursued by men, whereas women's repetitive, mundane labour resides in immanence (Donovan, 1985). I would argue that Barad's (2008) suggestion that 'crucial to understanding the workings of power is an understanding of the nature of power in the fullness of its materiality' (p.128), is typical of a material feminist epistemology, with its plasticity to examine power and agency, both within the micro and the macro. It furthermore questions the Cartesian tradition of considering matter as primarily passive and immutable, whilst granting language and culture their own agency and historicity (Barad, 2007, 2008).

In that context, Bill's belief in immanence would have to be differentiated from her actual activity of carving the wood, which based on De Beauvoir's (1949/2011) distinction, would be an act of creativity and, as such, transcendent. De Beauvoir's differentiations between acts residing in immanence or transcendence have been contested by many feminist theorists because of their construction within, and acceptance of, patriarchal hierarchies and value judgement (Haynes 2012, Grosz, 1994). I would argue that De Beauvoir's (1949/2011) distinction still has some importance if only because it inadvertently makes visible how (female) labour was, and often still is, viewed and valued within patriarchy. I reject those evaluations in terms of having any ontological validity to my feminist world view and agree with Grosz (1994), who points out that feminist writing that adopts patriarchal philosophical assumption about the mind and body and its actions 'can be regarded as complicit in the misogyny that characterizes Western reason' (p.3). To understand the 'making/feeling/imaging' trajectory of Bill's belief in immanence, it is more helpful to consider Barad's (2007, 2008) proposition of Onto-epistem-ology as the study of knowing in being, which she suggests as a better way of understanding how specific intra-actions matter, which I also think is more fruitful in relation to understanding female creative labour in general. The relational and dialogical nature of agency is easier to understand when we consider Barad's (2008) proposition that 'Agency is not an attribute but the ongoing reconfiguration of the world' (p.126) and that 'the very idea of matter as being vibrant is a philosophical as well as a political one' (p.135).

5.6.2. Subversion of Concepts of Motherhood and the Feminine in Bill's Making

Thematically ordered images supporting this discussion can be found in the appendix. When Bill had sent her archival material of her previous creations we had talked about during my visit, I was struck at how different her aesthetic was to Kaz's work, for example. But what I thought was interesting was that they were possibly similarly subversive in that they defied normative value judgement of femininity. Bill's work showed a lot of correlation with some of the female-making cultures Michele White discusses in 'Producing Women – the internet, traditional femininity, queerness, and creativity' (2015). Bill's augmented dolls for Halloween, reminded me of when White (2015) explains that the 'reborn' artists' community (who create life-like baby dolls for adult collectors), disturb understandings of the human, because the dolls are so lifelike that people outside of the reborn community often 'read' them as dead babies. As such the women who engage in the reborn community become the most monstrous of humans – 'mothers who allow their children to die or kill them' (p.86). This perception is further strengthened by the creation of reborn premature babies, which are ill and attached to tubes and machinery to keep them 'alive' (p.87). Bill's augmented Halloween dolls are not augmented to make them look kept alive but to make them look 'deader'.

Bill's creations, lovingly de-constructed with their scars, decay, bloody wound and added tech components, are deeply subversive. They disturb not only because of what they are but also because they are created by a woman and, as such, transgress strong held societal beliefs about mothering and care. White (2015) describes the preborn community as also intersecting with the zombie bride community, where women dress up, use make up and plastic prosthetics in order to become 'zombies' in public. She highlights that one of the reborn artists she observed made her first 'creepy monster babies' for a friend who is part of the zombie bride community and how the public's reaction to these creations is often very hostile (p.87). She proposes that the reason for this is that the public, consciously or un-consciously, identify it as a subversion of the societal norm of mothering and female stereotypes, and the zombie babies are identified as 'contorted and perverse' (White, p.87). Although Bill's Halloween creations are clearly not life-like, there is a similar subversion at play, and she uses very similar themes in making the toys dead-like - bones stick out, stapled together bloody wounds and discarded computer components are added, to tell narratives familiar from horror films.

Bill's enjoyment of the macabre is also evident in her themed coffins. She told me how she used to be able to pick up old-fashioned (un-used) coffins quite easily and that because of

the way the lid was constructed, the hexagonal lines and the quality of wood they used to be made from, they had great potential to do stuff with. She said she had made all sorts of themed furniture out of them, drinks cabinets, shelves, hall wardrobes. There was one in her archive that she shared with me, which is extensively prettified, lined with rucked soft pink satin and purple hued Perspex shelves, designed to display Bill's collection of augmented high heeled women's shoes. Again, she re-iterates her theme with words - the graveyard themed sign tells us that these are 'Shoes to die for' and 'Killer heels', with the first in a gothic style font and the latter in red letters, reminiscent of fonts on horror B-movie posters from the 60s. Again, there is a certain subversion at play - ultra feminine visual and material themes; with feathers, glitter and sparkles; shoe styles which are often critiqued as symbols of female enslavement with a certain element of menace thrown in – these are shoes fit for a diva, dominatrix, prostitute, transvestite or just you.

It's worth recalling Bill talking about why she loved up-cycling so much more in contrast to making smaller craft items from scratch:

'You see something worn down and not being used and then you turn it into something beautiful, not like the stuff I make now.'

Whilst the coffin shoe shelf is a thing of beauty, this could not really be said of Bill's Halloween range, but I think her description of her experience of up-cycling does not just talk about the beauty value of the end product, but of the beauty she finds in the process of 'making new' itself, even if the making new involves death and horror. In her making, Bill plays with juxtaposing concepts, such as beauty, nature, death, femininity, motherhood and womanhood, across a range of her work, whilst holding strong beliefs of immanence in connection to the material she works with. It points to a discursive material practice where agency is not an attribute located in either her *or* her material, but is as Barad (2008) calls it "'doing"/"being" in its intra-activity' (p.144). Which means that agency in Bill's making is what happens between her and her material during making. It is not static, but flows.

Chapter 6

LUCY -

'... if I can't be in other people's work I want to create my own.'

6.1. Introduction

The following vignettes forming my ethnographic account of being with Lucy have been edited from a much larger body of ethnographic and auto-ethnographic writing. Here I am aiming to give an insight into the different types of encounters we've had, before focusing in the discussion on particular aspects of her practice, which have been influential in developing my thinking on making in general:

How I Know Lucy - What Lucy Makes - Lucy Making 1 & 2 - Making in Relation to Others - Process/Artefact/Process

Discussion: **Making in Space and Time**

The analysis here focuses on one particular theme in relation to Lucy's making, which was, how through her Dance practice, I finally understood how the vicissitude of *any* making practice is temporally located in space. One of the people who helped me do so is Doreen Massey (2005), whose thoughts on space in relation to time, gave form to my changing thoughts about the difference between material and immaterial practice. Erin Manning's (2016) concepts of 'parsed perception' in her work 'The Minor Gesture', clarified this further, whilst Vincs (2010) was helpful in thinking about Dance practice specifically in relation to practice as research.

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6.2. How I Know Lucy

As part of my attempts to cast my net more widely I had left my leaflets with Jake who runs Access Space, one of the Makerspaces in Sheffield. In late October 2016 I was excited to see an email arrive in my inbox:

Hi Melanie

I was given your info sheet by Jake at Access Space.

I am a woman and I create!

**Would be great to be involved with your project if I have the time
depending on what it involves.**

best

Lucy

Lucy Haighton

Freelance Dance Artist & Practitioner

I was even more very excited when I saw she was a Dance Artist. I had envisaged working with all kinds of practices, depending on what people would invite me into, but Dance had never even crossed my mind.

I sent her some more information and we arranged to meet for a coffee so she could ask me about things in a bit more detail, before she agreed to anything.

We met at the RO-CO in Sheffield and I spotted her immediately even though I didn't know what she looked like. When I saw her, I thought 'It must be her', because she held her body in that particular way people who are trained in Dance do. I may have just imagined that, though, and it is clearly a stereotype. We had a chat and immediately got on - we found ourselves naturally chatting about things in connection with HWM, and I had to stop myself from asking a lot of the questions, similar to the ones I used in my research conversations. She agreed to participate there and then, and shared her diary with me based on the project Ruido she was currently working on and for which she invited me to share in her project's journey for some of the way. Ruido was an Arts Council-funded project which aimed to explore concepts of language and communication barriers through Dance. Lucy was working with a range of community groups and language academics. We arranged for me to join her during one of her next Dance workshop sessions with refugee women in Leeds and then take it from there.

6.3. What Lucy Makes

I could say 'Lucy makes Dance.'

But that does not really sufficiently describe all the different aspects of making that go into her practice. As part of her making I have seen her: making with her body; making with her face; making with her voice; making with time. She makes with other people, with sounds, with props, with writing, with research, with drawing, with diagrams, with light and with conversation.

In Lucy's practice some of what is the process becomes an artefact, such as her notebooks, recordings etc., whilst her actual outcome remains forever in the process.

I like that.

Lucy is a Dancer and I spent more research time with Lucy than with any of my other participants. This was partially because just in the period earmarked for my main 'data' making, she was doing a lot of things that gave me perfect opportunities to spend time observing. But it was also because in many ways getting involved with Lucy's practice had probably worried me a little, because I wasn't sure if I could observe it and triangulate it in the same way I was sure I could with the more material practice of my other participants.

6.4. Lucy Making 1

Lucy - Observation with her Mentor

Doncaster CAST Theatre

Once I find the right studio I knock and enter. Lucy is sat on the floor with another woman who I am assuming is her mentor, who she said was going to be there. I say hello and am introduced to Beth. I had obviously interrupted them during a conversation so I try to quickly disappear into a corner to start observing without distracting them too much.

Lucy and Beth are talking about Lucy's ideas and material. Beth comments that there are probably lots of ideas already. Lucy performs a piece with a mic as a prop, moving towards and away from it in different ways and laughing, somewhat manically.

They talk about the sequence of the piece and how it might be read. Then they go on to discuss parts of the performance in relation to other people's Dance pieces.

I notice how 'grounded' both of the women seem to be on the floor. Is this a dancer thing?

Lucy keeps looking at her notebook to think about her next piece - I am intrigued to see her notes - How do you write down Dance?

Lucy is barefoot, which again I think is a Dance thing - I feel cold just looking at her.

Lucy goes through different Dance sequences. She stops, looks at her notes, then tries out other variations of previous movements. She does a spoken bit about the word 'foreign' in a mic on a boom stand and I am quite surprised by the amount of language 'permitted'. Beth is talking about questions of 'how' Lucy is communicating with the audience. She comments on how Lucy uses her face, whether to reign it in a little. It's a very dialogic process, discussing previous pieces and ideas and what might be done with particular sequences. What is a 'traverse'?

They are talking about Lucy's sound collaborator and how he fits it. Beth talks about the difference between a solo and a duet and Lucy comments that she wants it to remain a solo - 'to be greedy', they move on to discuss who is on stage.

Listening to their conversation and Beth feeding back, it feels very familiar in terms of my experience of feedback in Art and Design. Beth comments on the use of the song and the soundtrack. It's a track that is very well known and could, therefore, overshadow her performance, because it brings a lot of pre-conceived meaning with it. Talking about the process of creating appears very similar to teaching Design, though specific terms are different.

Lucy discusses a conference paper on using techniques to gather stories.

The whole project is about language and not understanding others' language. They talk about method and how it takes many years to develop a 'method', so it won't be solved in 12 months. Beth asks Lucy to think about 'What is your method as an artist?'



Fig.11

6.5. Lucy Making 2

Lucy Solo practice session 10.02.17

Yorkshire Dance

When I arrive, Lucy is just setting herself up in Studio 2. Top floor, old factory building, big windows, exposed roof beams and a wood framed full length mirror at one end. We have a chat and catch up on a couple of things and Lucy shows me her sketchbooks that I have been interested in, but as she only has the studio until 12:00 and it's already 11:10,

she needs to crack on.

I get my cameras out, am conscious of fiddling around with them quite a bit as the setting on the Canon seems to have changed and I don't know how to switch it back. I set up the tripod for the smaller camera in the corner and press go, at which point it tells me that the memory card is full and I remember that I got an error message last time I tried to empty it, which I didn't follow up. Really need to check and prepare my equipment better!

So, I use the Canon to both film and take photos. But, really, I just need to look.

Lucy has propped her iPad up against a water bottle and is doing explorative work to a quite dark and daunting ambient sound. I can recognise some of the movement sequences from when I observed her with Beth, but there are lots of new things, which must have emerged since I last observed her. In-between she lies down or sits against the wall for a bit and I find it hard to know which bits are just her, thinking, and which bits are part of the piece. She tries out different hissing and growling expressions, sounds and movements that go with it. Some movements close to the floor or floor bound squirming, others more upright and abrupt. Some of it I find quite intimidating. Later on, she follows it up with some yelping which changes the expression of the hissing. Her body is doing all kinds of movements, some of which communicate to me, others which don't. I am really interested in how certain themes of movement seem to develop quite quickly, are then innovated and maybe discarded.



Fig.12



Fig.12

6.6. Process Artefact Process

Towards the end of the session, whilst Lucy and I are chatting, two other women arrive as they are booked into the studio next. They are also working on something. Lucy introduces me and why I'm there and they both say that 'How Women Make' sounds really interesting. People are kind.

Lucy gets changed in the corridor outside, whilst I take photos of the different pages in her project sketchbook. At some point, she goes, 'oh, I hope I haven't written anything bad about anyone', and I am reminded about how intimate these things are and how generous she is to share like this. I try to assure her that she will get to review any of the material and I will delete anything she doesn't want to be seen and she says, - 'I'm sure it will be fine', and then tells me about how when she went to an event some years ago, one of her mentors had all kinds of things out in the studio to share, including all her work diaries. Lucy says that she gorged herself on them as she found them really inspiring and thought it was great that the woman was willing to share these quite intimate things that had informed and shaped her practice.

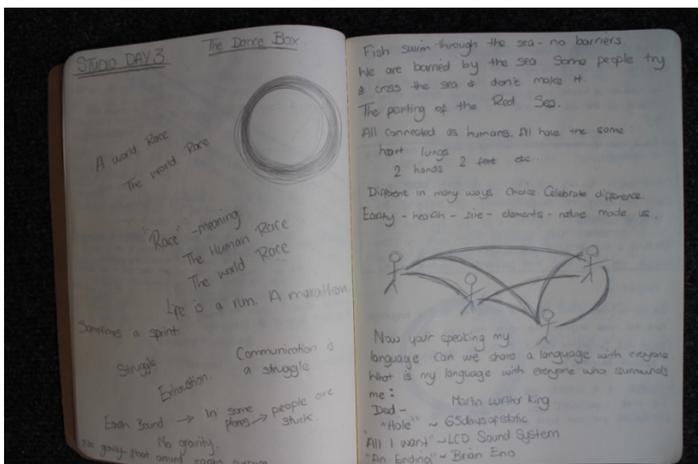
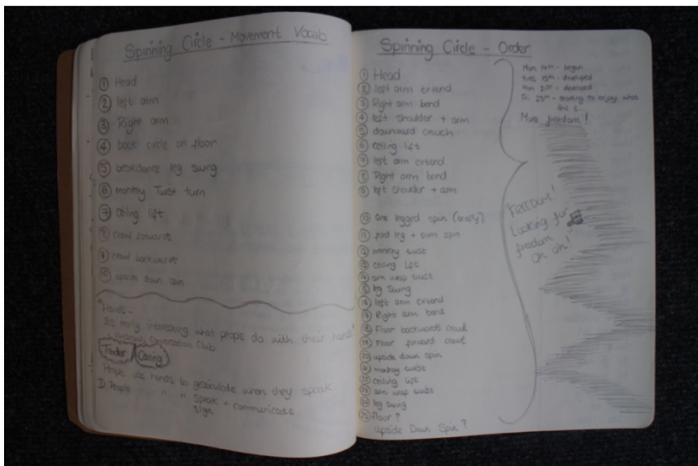


Fig. 13

6.7. Making in Relation to Others

Lucy and I had a long conversation about her making practice and one of the things that she highlighted was the difference between making for yourself or by yourself; making for other people within a Dance company; and making with others, as in, working in collaboration with other dancers or teaching students. Talking about working for others, within a Dance company, she comments:

'I always enjoyed creating work for other people, so you're still being, even if you work for a company or you're being employed by someone else you're still being creative, because you're still -- Unless the choreographer literally puts every single movement on your body then, okay, you're not doing much creative work but that's very, very rare, because, why would you? Why would you create something that's, that's just so dull and I have seen pieces where that's happened and it's dull.'

This highlights that even when dancing for others, she would normally expect to have some autonomy in her making and that if the making is only a 'reproduction' of somebody else's will, the making becomes devalued and 'dull'. But she also says that it is often difficult for dancers to find work in Dance companies, which requires a certain kind of resolve in order to find or create opportunities for making:

'So if you're as passionate about what you do as I am and other people are, there's lots of people that go to dance training and then don't do anything with it because they can't be bothered, whereas you've got to make it happen. So, I guess one of the main things is "Well all right, okay, if I can't be in other people's work I want to create my own." And then you start to create your own work and then you're like "Oh this is good."'

Whilst creating your own work is obviously empowering, it also means that there is very little buffer between you and the audience. The concept is yours, the choreography is yours, the body is yours. Over coffee, Lucy tells me about how she had done quite a few 'Shares' now, and how weird *funny*, but kind of good, it had felt when people recognised her from previous shares. She also talks about meeting some friends of friends in a non-dance setting, and that when she introduced herself, one of them said, 'yes I know who you are, I have seen you perform 3 times.' Lucy comments how it made her feel a bit vulnerable in that moment. When I ask why, she says '**... because, like they kind of know part of me but I don't know who they are**'. When I first saw her perform, I thought how brave she was - with her body, in a space and in front of other people she

didn't know. But I had assumed that it doesn't bother her because of her years of performance-based training. But her body in a public performance is still the same as her body when she is in private and there must be a tension between being in these different spaces that can also overlap in such a way and make you feel exposed. I suppose being trained to perform does not mean you are not sensitive to this tension but, maybe, that you make yourself brave enough to make yourself vulnerable through making with your body.

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6.8. Discussion: Making in Space and Time

Observing and participating in Lucy's Dance practice has afforded me a space in which I have been able to re-conceptualise all forms of making in a different light. I had already read a lot about movement: becoming, entanglement, space, time, artefact, and outcomes, but many of those discussions are at times almost impenetrable to someone like me, who does not have a long-term grounding in Philosophy. I have only really started to understand some of the things I have been reading about by thinking about Lucy's practice.

I had started out thinking that Lucy's making might be more difficult to capture because (other than it being transcribed into another medium) its 'artefacts' only exist in a temporal space. The making seemed to disappear, once the production of it was completed, because it existed in a space in time.

6.8.1. Material and Immaterial Making in Time

Her materials consist of her body, sound, space and time. It is only when those materials are engaged in a particular 'intra-activity' (Barad 2007, 2008), that her making becomes visible as such. Compared to other making I observed, which *did* have artefactual, material, outcomes, Lucy does not end up with a physical outcome that continues to 'speak' of the process once she has finished constructing and can continue to speak to an audience at a later point in time. Instead, what she materialises through her making, in that temporal space, would need to go straight into the audience through their sensorial experience of it and could then speak to them. An artefact, that you have looked at and

handled, can, of course, also do that. But it almost seems like Dance cuts out the 'middle man'. At first I came to think of this, as being a kind of purer form of creative practice than creative practice embodied in an artefact, because I thought there was something beautiful about how its materialised essence resides in the fourth dimension. But then I began to think about how all artefacts materialised, exist and cease to exist, in this dimension. Reading Massey (2005), Springgay and Truman (2016) and (Manning 2016) helped me understand that different conceptual frameworks of perceiving time, space and materiality can make these dynamics more apparent.

In 'The Minor Gesture', Manning (2016) explores how perception of solidity of the world, in space and in time, can be experienced entirely differently by different people in different contexts. She describes that how to a neurotypical person space and its objects appear to present themselves in an instant - ie immediately parsed (because the time it takes to perceive, is in itself im-perceivable to them). In contrast to that, many autistics describe how their environment comes to them as a series of reveals (p.14). Manning conceptualises this process of revealing as 'minor gestures', which modulate frameworks of everyday life. She explains that in autistic perception: 'there is here not yet a hierarchical differentiation, for instance, between colour, sound, light, between human and non-human, between what connects to the body and what connects to the world' (2016, p.14).

What Manning (2016) is saying is that, the autistic is able to perceive the complexity of the world directly, before and between the parsings, whereas for neurotypicals, the parsing is immediate, but at the cost of not being able to fully see the complexity. This means we prioritise form and content because temporally we are not able to perceive that 'form and content are short-lived', and that the only real constant is the motion of constant unfolding (p.15). Applying this concept to making, I would argue that if we were able to experience the other women's artefactual making *autistically*, it would *not* appear very different from a *neurotypical* experience of Lucy's making through Dance, because the 'minor gestures' would be parsed at a similar rate. So, the artefactual making would reveal itself in an unfolding movement just like Dance making does.

Springgay and Truman (2016) suggest another way of conceptualising bodies, animacy and the senses differently, by unravelling anthropocentric taxonomies of knowledge. They do this by situating their knowledge in relation to stone and how stone's materiality often appears to be static to humans over decades, centuries and even millennia, but:

‘... lithic ecomateriality is not reducible to human scale or even human time. Stones’ inhuman animacy lies in the fact that its rate of change, its queer reproduction, its ‘in’ difference and intimacy are slow or imperceptible compared to how humans perceive chronological time, scale, and space.’ (2016, p.8).

Engaging in a non-anthropocentric conception of time, space and material, further foreshortens the distance between Lucy’s making through Dance practice and Kaz’s making through mosaic practice. Both are a coming together and an unravelling of material in its ‘intra-activity’. They exist, through process, at a particular time in space. Massey (2005) would possibly argue that they exist, rather *in a particular space in time*. She critiques the prioritisation of time over space in Western philosophy, whilst at the same time warning against conflating thoughts on space and time, into un-differentiated concepts of four-dimensionality or space-time (p.27). Instead she urges that we should consider space and time together whilst being alert to the idea that imagining one has implication for the other. Following Springgay and Truman (2016) and Massey (2005), I would argue that by conceptualising making in relation to both space and time together, it is possible to see its process more clearly, because it enables us to see beyond the artefactual form. Manning (2016) highlights that:

‘When we engage in practice, when we are subsumed by process, we often seek this kind of perception, and it is available to us all: autistic perception does not exclusively belong to autistics. The difference is that, except in extreme circumstances, most of us parse experience before having any direct experience of the field in its complexity.’ (p.14)

This means that the process of making may already inherently behold changed time and space perception for the maker and that making itself is in itself a means for the maker to facilitate this changed perception. I would argue that trying to see ‘autistically’ has a similar effect to applying a non-anthropocentric chronology. We can slow down the parsing and thus consider the making practice as movement, which although it reveals at different paces, is governed by the same laws of space and time. But rather than this being an intellectual and abstracted effort, it could be that through making, we can experience this shift in an embodied way which changes our perception of bodies, animacy and materiality within space and time.

6.8.2. Making Knowledge in Space and Time

It has to be acknowledged that Dance is not traditionally perceived to be without

'artefact'. Although engaging with Lucy's making gave *me* a way of thinking about it as something that is not artefact bound, as Vincs (2010) points out, traditionally, dances have been viewed as 'objects to be investigated' (p.100). This only changed when the shift from 'dance as an object of investigation to dance as a means of investigation' (p.100) occurred and the idea of *practice as research* gained traction.

Mostly conceptualised as research within the arts, *practice as research* has only recently become more widely understood and accepted within the academy, even though as Barrett (2010, p.4) outlines, its genealogy stretches from Bourdieu's 'Logic of Practice' and Heidegger's 'praxical knowledge', to Merleau-Ponty and Polanyi, and as others have discussed (Ingold, 2013a), all the way back to Plato. It's through those texts that it also become clear that *practice as research* is not unique to the art, but that it resides in all disciplines in one form or another. It's just often 'not parsed' as such. It is not to be confused with research *about* practice.

Vincs (2010) explains that in post-graduate Dance education, the idea that Dance research is defined by both writing and Dance, has been implicit for some time, whilst the methodological foundations of this assumption took longer to clarify. She proposes that in order to understand the methodological foundation of Dance research it is essential to differentiate *research about practice* from *practice as research*. She highlights that although admission into the academy might be less bothersome via research *about* art practice, it would not be possible to develop art *practice as research* as a field, if it wasn't pursued as such:

'If art practice can only do what other kinds of research can do, can only work in the same kinds of structures, methodologies and epistemological frameworks, ... then the question becomes why do it at all?' (2014, p.101)

She goes on to assert that art practice-as-research is only worth doing, '... if it can contribute something unique to the field of knowledge it operates in' (p.101). Observing Lucy in her making, it is clear that she engages in many different modalities within her making. From the dancing in the studio on her own, with others, on stage, and interviewing people about her subject and doing shares, to her notebooks where she transcribes her thoughts, plans ahead, makes drawings and squiggles, collects notes to guide her thinking as well as to guide her body. But, ultimately, the focus is her making with her body, which requires a different kind of making of knowledge to the other modes. Vincs (2010) reminds us:

‘Rather than dance being the outcomes of thinking done previously, dances are the actual process of thinking, and this process is the core methodology of studio-based dance research.’ (p.100)

In observing Lucy’s making, I observed some of her *practice as research*, where she was creating knowledge by doing practice, but I also interviewed her, looked at her notes, took my own notes, recorded and filmed. All the women I observed, were to some extent doing *practice as research* during their making because during making they were developing specific forms of knowledge within themselves.

In many ways that part of their making was the most inaccessible to me because, although I can observe, I can ask, I can even try it out myself, my body is not theirs – I cannot *be in* their making.

But having said that, in theory I could have developed my thoughts on the temporality of making, just based on what I was reading. But it only started to make sense to me in the context of *being with* practice. Being *with* practice can, however, not generate the same kind of knowledge as being *in practice*. Part of my research aimed to co-make in order to gain insight into the women’s making in an embodied way. It had always been the intention to do some co-making with Lucy, in the form of joining her in her making space to explore how it felt, in *my* body. I had participated in one of her earlier Dance workshops but had meant to also try out how it felt to move within the Dance studio with her. But I ended up with a meniscus tear in the middle of the fieldwork so that I remained a primarily ‘static’ onlooker on crutches, whilst my knee was making ‘minor gestures’ at healing itself, annoyingly imperceptible to me at the time.

As previously mentioned, I had been slightly anxious about whether I would be able to understand Lucy’s Dance practice enough to make sense of it, particularly in relation to the other woman’s making practices. In the end, this worry turned out to be completely unfounded. Working with Lucy created a very interesting space in which to consider female making practice in relation to time, materiality and movement. Because I had to think very hard about what Lucy’s outcome is and where it resides, I gained some valuable insights into, not only her practice as a dancer, but it also developed my thinking on the importance temporality has in any making practice. I cannot claim that I understand Dance (much) better as a result of this fieldwork, but Dance has helped me understand making better, or at least differently. Engaging with Lucy’s making did not only give me an insight into some of the similarities with the other women’s making in

terms of materiality but also, and more importantly, it gave me a vital opportunity to expand my thinking on how making is *always* situated in space and time.

THE WEAVING CHAPTERS 7, 8 & 9

Introduction

In the following three chapters I am interweaving different themes that emerged across the fieldwork with the different women, with Feminist and Design theory in order to reflect on and analyse my findings, and to formulate a cohesive narrative overall.

The Weaving Chapters are: Chapter 7 - *The Origins of Making*; Chapter 8 - *The Spaces of Making*; and Chapter 9 - *The Benefits of Making*.

In *The Origins of Making*, I am concentrating on making histories from the deeper past, ie making practices remembered from childhood and in relation to family culture, which are discussed in order to understand and explain how the women's making first developed.

In *The Spaces of Making*, I am focusing my discussion on how physical space to make interacts with temporal requirements for making and how this is visible in the different women's making practices.

In *The Benefits of Making*, I am analysing *why* women make, *where* and *why* creative labour gets 'spent' in terms of energy, outcomes and beneficiaries and how reasons to make are situated within a broader socio-political context.

They build on previous discussion in the ethnographic accounts, but also expand on them both in terms of calling on the voices of all participants as well as connecting my intimate data to what would traditionally be considered 'big themes' within theory and philosophy. Schües (2011) highlights that:

'A feminist approach is always concerned with the revaluations of power relations within society, as, for example, the question of the relevance of time when discussing power relations or asymmetrical hierarchies between men and women' (p.6).

Whilst I am not explicitly discussing female making in relation to asymmetrical hierarchies between men and women, I am linking, situating and analysing my findings in relation to patriarchal and capitalist value structures.

Initially, I had also been working on a chapter called *The Modes of Making*, which was to become the second of the weaving chapters. In it, I had thematically structured the different modes of making that were visible in the women's making practices, with the aim of further analysis on how these correlated with modes of making theorised in Art and Design practice and education. Whilst pulling together my thesis, I made the decision to put this chapter with just the thematic structuring and some analysis into the Appendix. Although it contained a range of interesting findings, I judged those not as essential to my thesis as the other three chapters, which I prioritised, so to have space to develop and conclude my analysis sufficiently. I included it in the Appendix in order to show that I did, however, look at and think about the modes of making at play.

Chapter 7

THE ORIGINS OF MAKING

7.1. Introduction: Family Making Cultures

In this chapter I will be discussing how making starts, based on the women's responses to my question: 'What is your history of making and who has encouraged you to make in your life?' During some of the interviews I elaborated on this slightly- mainly if a woman gave me a quizzical look or directly asked for more context. Like Vicky, for example, who asked: '**How far back?**' to which I answered '... as far back as you can remember, anything you might find relevant'.

Although most of the accounts started in childhood, the majority of them then moved onto adolescent and adulthood in terms of how making developed further or was impacted on. Here I am primarily concentrating on making histories from the deeper past, ie from childhood and in relation to family culture. I have used these making histories, as told by the women, to identify emerging thematic areas that appeared significant, similar or connected across the different accounts, whilst also aiming to pay attention to nuances of difference. I believe that the identified thematic areas form a vital foundation for understanding the women's historic, as well as current, making practices. Some of these areas also went on to inform how my subsequent thematic analysis was constructed and conceptualised in the next chapters.

In this chapter, the thematic areas emerged, are as follows:

- **Making as a Natural State**
- **Adult Making Support**
- **Early Experience of DIY and Scrap Materials**
- **Making Memories Situated in Space and Senses**
- **Autonomy in Making during Childhood**
- (In Appendix: Cultures of Support in Home, Education and Work since Childhood).

Discussion: Developing Making Literacy within Family Making Cultures

Here I am analysing particular insights gained throughout these themes, drawing in particular on Kress (1997), Pahl (2012), Ingold (2007) and Bolt (2010) in order to make sense of how the women's making practices were formed by their childhood making experiences. Additional material in relation to how support for making continued/dis-

continued in the women's life in school, at home, at university and at work can be found in the Appendix under: 'Cultures of Support in Home, Education and Work Since Childhood'. There are some interesting and relevant insights into how gender interacts with making, but it was ultimately not essential to the overall discussion within this thesis.

7.2. Making as a Natural State

Often the first mentioned references are in relation to making things at home or at school and realising it was something they were good at or really enjoyed. These are 'just so' accounts, where making appears as a *natural* state of being to the individual woman and is then identified as a *desired* state of being. The desire to make then quickly appears to become part of their lifeworld in how they talk about making. Remembering *making* as a natural state of *being* in childhood, often seems to be linked to discovering and enjoying the aesthetic experience of making. Like Kaz talking about being in love with colour:

'I don't know, it just attracted me to that, it just was natural. There was never a need to make it was just --.'

This realisation that something was a pleasing aesthetic experience is then connected to the idea of the self and being able to both find pleasure in making and the satisfaction of having made something, which Kaz surfaces when she comments:

'...it just felt like "Oh this is really good and you can do this and this is okay".'

When Kaz says 'it was just natural', it points to a feeling that the desire and ability to make was there, part of her from the start of her being. Vicky also refers to a feeling of her *wanting to make* as being natural, when she says:

'I felt like I didn't really have to try very hard it just came naturally and that was just what I wanted to do. I never really thought about doing anything else.'

Interestingly, both women highlight that they were good at school academically, so that it wasn't a case of them being motivated to be makers because it came easily or other things were difficult, but that they felt it was already who they were. Toni recalled:

'I've always made things, so I was the little kid with glue and cardboard boxes. We didn't have much money when I was little and anything, Lego

bricks, bits of cloth, I just used to make things all the time. Always drawing, always building stuff, so I can't even think of a time when I didn't create things, I was always happier, give me a cardboard box and a packet of felt tips, I was happy.'

This sense of happiness being linked with being able to make comes through in many parts of the conversation and I will pick up on this again in the later chapter of 'The Benefits of Making', as it is also a re-occurring theme when women talk about their adult experience of making and how their need to make relates to their sense of well-being.

7.3. Adult Making Support

Fotini highlights, not so much any particular making practice her mother had as being influential on her, but a foundational attitude to living which had a 'making-thinking' at its core, saying that **'it was all a matter of how you can do something'** that links to her own history of making. She recalls:

'My mother she was not educated so she was always thinking about "What I have to do now with my hands" and we were going out in the land and pick up some vegetables, some wild horta [a type of vegetable] every Sunday and just watching around, looking at the flowers, it was a very nice experience, yes.'

Whilst Fotini also mentions other skills passed on to her, situating her history of making in this experience of being in the environment with her mother is poignant because it signifies a way of being, which links making to a kind of *paying attention to* and *taking delight in* your environment, something that Ingold (2013b) calls an 'education of attention' (p.10). The making, as Fotini tells it, becomes or is part of a wider aesthetic experience of being alive.

Most women's making histories recalled ways in which elders actively promoted general making activities, like when Becky says:

'... when we were little my mum always had us making things, all sorts of things',

linking her own making to witnessing her mum's making, saying:

'Yes, oh gosh, every type of mending you can imagine we had a bash at or watched mum do.'

This kind of apparently seamless picking up of practices through family culture is also evident when Bowman (1987) talks about her learning to sew: 'I don't really know how I learnt to sew in the first place, but I know my mother taught me, like learning to use a knife and a fork, I suppose.' (p.151)

The idea of likening the learning of a particular craft as a child as being similar to using a knife and a fork, points to a kind of mundanity when learning a skill that is embedded in the everyday being of the family. Attie also describes her history of making as originating in her family's culture as a 'just so' story, saying her mother encouraged her to make, before expanding:

'My family, from very small. I had making, everything around us my mother made. My grandfather was always making, my grandmother had a history of making. The family of my father was not so making in the first place but the grandparents were making things, yes.'

In Elinor et al. (1987) 'Women and Craft', family, especially grandmothers and great aunts, feature heavily in women's accounts of learning how to make in childhood. This also shows how the women's practice is not just informed by immediate family, but is embedded in the broader network of family and relations and sometimes including friends of the family or the wider community. All the women point towards having been in some way stimulated to make during childhood to some extent, whether within the family or at school. Some households appear to have had a more pronounced family culture of making than others, and there were also differences in the extent the women had been made to feel like their interest in making might become a viable way of making a living when they grew up. But based on this small sample of women involved here, I cannot say that those from families with an existing professionalised making practice were more likely to enter into professionalised making themselves.

Katy talks about developing her extensive childhood baking practice alongside her mother, but when it comes to talking about her making history, she says as a young child she was primarily motivated to make by watching kids' craft programmes on TV. Importantly, though, her mother enabled her to pursue this interest, by supplying her with all the materials needed:

'I'd make everything that they showed me how to make and it was encouraged by my mother because she would pander the exact material I needed.'

Toni also talks about the importance of being supplied with materials, whilst also

situating this in a broader family culture of art, books and music:

'...it was a very, very encouraging environment because the whole family are artistic, there's always plenty of books and plenty of music. We didn't have a great deal of money but I was never short of pens or paper or anything I wanted. I would get, what's the name of the stationers, Coleman's Stationery shop in our home town, this tiny little shop and it sold stationery and then it had art materials and I would always get vouchers for Christmas and birthday. Yes, I'd get like twenty quids worth of vouchers and I'd just go and buy watercolour paints and fine liners and I was happy with just being given materials.'

7.4. Early Experience of DIY and Scrap Materials

A number of the women also talked about their parents' or elders' DIY practices and how this had influenced them. Vicky recalls her Dad being good at DIY and being involved in helping him in anything from painting the house to doing the garden. She is ambivalent about calling him creative, differentiating his DIY making practice from being artistic,:

'I don't know if it's mean to say that he's not very creative, I mean he is some ways, he's not artistic I should say, but he's quite creative in the things he does.'

But she then goes on to highlight having seen him solve 'making' problems creatively:

'He quite likes finding funny little fixes for things and doing that kind of thing.'

For Vicky, her mum's job as an Interior Designer 'is more traditionally creative', which makes sense in the context of Vicky having been trained as a professional Designer, where part of the training is becoming able to make 'professionally' and to differentiate between amateur and professional making based on aesthetic value judgement (Orr, 2011).

'Other women also talked about how their childhood making practice was very actively entangled with their parents' material and professional practice. Dylan, for example, says 'I suppose I've always made stuff because my dad is a painter and he's always had stuff around. We lived next to the beach and I'd often find junk and stuff on the beach and make things from there and he was

always encouraging of that.'

Having ready access to materials appears to be an important factor in becoming motivated to make during childhood. Often this takes the form of recycled materials, where the children are shown how to re-appropriate materials, but it also gets mentioned how extra materials supplied by adults fuel the child's making practice.

Becky's DIY schooling was entirely orchestrated by her mum:

'Yes, we all learnt to decorate from being very young. My mum did all the DIY, she did all the cooking, the cleaning. So my dad had it easy really, as men tend to. I don't think a lot's changed in that. But yes, mum was always hands-on.'

Being the youngest of four sisters, Becky highlights how they were all introduced to making with a high level of risk tolerated by their mother - being allowed to handle all kind of tools from a young age, including a scythe to cut the lawn with. This sometimes resulted in physical injury, but from how Becky tells it, not in a restriction of activities for the children. The DIY is framed in terms of mending as well as making from new, with accounts of material re-used in the household or stored for future making **'We never threw a yoghurt pot away or an egg carton, nothing.'** The making organised by her mum was not just for immediate practical purposes, but also for the future entertainment and the education of the children:

'So every summer we had a new making project, whether it was growing crystals in jars or making a fort out of cardboard, there was always something. My mum bought us a chemistry set, she was very, very hands-on, she burnt a hole through the dining table with the said chemistry set. ... it wasn't exactly material things that mum would go out and buy, it was things like, you made recorder cases out of my dad's old ties. We made oven gloves out of bed sheets that had got holes in. You make stuff out of old towels, there was always a use for something that other people would throw away, ... practical ideas my mum was *the* person.'

Bill, who is Becky's older sister, also brings up this family philosophy when reflecting on her own making practice, saying:

'I've never been able, like I said, I've never been able to afford things, but now

as I'm older I can afford things but it goes against the grain. So I recycle a lot of things and I absolutely love recycling furniture, that is something that I really do love doing.'

She highlights that recycling is not just driven by necessity anymore, but it is experienced as an intrinsic part of the pleasure of making and connected to her *making* values. This connection to *making* values and recognising them as being different to mainstream culture outside of the home, also surfaces when Attie talks about her experiences:

'Yes, it gave the house an identity. There was furniture my mother made, there was, the clothes, all the clothes she made, rarely we bought things and later on my father used to say we were able to move from the city to the land and buy a very little house because my mother always made everything and we didn't spend money on that and that was it.'

Recycling and scrap culture features in many of the women's making accounts. Dylan refers to her Dad being a painter and explained:

'he's always had stuff around. We lived next to the beach and I'd often find junk and stuff on the beach and make things from there and he was always encouraging of that. We also lived quite near to a really big scrap store so you could -- Yes, go and find things. So, I think the history of making comes in relation just to like finding an object and being inspired by the object and thinking I could make something with it. Sometimes they were little tiny small things and sometimes they were really big things.'

There is something very powerful about Dylan recalling the process of finding something and being inspired to make by and with the object. It describes a kind of material agency, which is activated by her searching, looking, seeing, choosing, imagining and planning resulting in a future-oriented intentionality.

Early exposure to both DIY and scrap materials appears to be carried forward as a continued interest in and love for it. Becky, Bill, Fotini, Attie, Dylan and Katy talked about this and it is also visible in their contemporary practice. Katy also talked about how her lifelong engagement with DIY had actually given her the 'permission' to make during times when she did not have the confidence of 'claiming' to have a making practice in its own right. Whilst the underlying ethics of recycling are important in a DIY and scrap approach being carried forward, the most important aspect of the incorporation of these

modes and materials is the sense of satisfaction of having given something a new life as well as having something which had a unique identity.

7.5. Making Memories Situated in Space and Senses

Another thing that surfaces out of the different making histories recalled are memories of making spaces. Spaces and materials are recalled in great detail, with tactile and sensory memories bringing back to life past immersions in making and craft.

Erini talks about making a puppet theatre with her Granddad as her first memory of making - they were using potato crisps bags, so she started collecting them en masse:

'every time I ate potato chips I would keep the bag and then my grandfather died and I was left with so many potato chip bags and I was so sorry.'

She then places this making in the context of their making space, his workshop:

'it was all tools and paint and it was very tidy and that's where we always made things and he would make planes', '...inside was all perfect, it was all wood and he had all the tools, I don't know what they're called, and that's where we would make things.'

Eirini talks about how she vividly remembers the smell of the workshop, saying that after he had died:

'I was very sorry when I was coming back because the workshop was dead as well and then they started piling things and I remember, because the smell stayed always the same because it has the smell of like old nails and the hot iron and the wood and the old tins of paint, so the smell stayed always the same, it was this sort of iron, rusty iron smell that stayed the same until it was destroyed.'

Sensory memories of smells, textures and colours within childhood making spaces are also recalled by Katy, Kaz, Becky, Dylan and Toni, and connects to Pink (2015) highlighting the importance of sensory knowing in artistic practice. And when Fotini talks about her current practice she talks about the haptic experience of working with her materials:

'I like a lot the stone and I like a lot to touch the stone and break the stone, it's nice to collect the stones and to make them separate',

or talks about the importance of the light. Bill talking about the pleasure of watching the birds and listening to the radio reminds us that the sensory satisfaction of making is not only based on materials worked with, but that is situated within the wider making environment where materials, light, sounds, music, views etc. intermingle into a holistic aesthetic experience of making. The love of a 'good' making space comes through in past memories and current accounts.

Sometimes the spaces and materials recalled are not so much about specifically making together, but witnessing parents' making practice. Vicky recalls her mum's home office, from which she practised as an Interior Designer:

'I remember, like she had a drawing board because she worked from home as soon as she had me and my brother, so I remember her drawing, but hers is very technical drawing so it's all straight lines, but I used to enjoy looking at the way that she would draw things from above, like a plan, like a plant was a scribble because she just needed to draw something that looked like foliage and the way she used to draw outlines of people and things like that. And instead of rubbing out with a rubber she used razor blades. And she would scan it in, but the board was massive, she sat on a really high chair and the board was attached to the wall like this and me and my brother would leave notes for her sometimes, just silly notes, because we knew she could rub them off again, so we'd just leave notes on the paper, like silly things, like programmes we'd been watching or whatever. My mum kept a lot of samples and stuff in her office and I guess you root around when you're a kid don't you, you go through your parents' stuff. So, there was always like Perspex samples that looked a bit like necklaces or carpet samples and things like that.'

Although this space and parents' making practice is not recalled in relation to Vicky making anything herself, it shows how the different materials in use and specific practices observed, like the perspectives of the drawings, or use of razor to rub things out, were observed as ways of making, interesting enough to be recalled in great detail decades later. It also highlights how the children intermingled their making practice with their mother's professional practice, in order to communicate something about themselves. Almost by accident it also sheds some light on another woman's making practice, namely Vicky's mother, who Vicky mentions as having started working from home after she had had the children. It points to the blurring of the domestic and the professional, which

women often find themselves in, in order to 'service' different demands on their time. Examples of business being pursued in the home in order to care for children whilst also maintaining an income, can be found from ancient Mesopotamia (Wayland-Barber, 1994) to contemporary artisans selling on etsy and ebay (Luckman, 2013; White, 2015).

7.6. Autonomy in Making During Childhood

The willingness of adults to let children have autonomy over making, material and space has benefitted a number of the women. Dylan recalls that:

'Yes, my parents were always fine, so they let me paint on my walls and I had a whole wall when I was a child that I just collected rubbish basically and then I plastered it to the wall. I don't know why, I just liked all the different packaging and stuff but I think maybe lots of people would be like that's pretty gross and a health hazard, but they were just like, they didn't really say anything. So yes, so I think they were quite encouraging.'

Eirini tells of similar childhood experience of being allowed to not only command space, but also material not specifically earmarked for making:

'I was doing a lot of art projects and I remember that I really liked making landscape relief out of paper. So, I would steal the wooden slats.'

She recalls how she was taking wooden bed slats, from under her bed, to construct model landscapes on her parents' balcony, not only filling up the balcony but also leaving wider and wider gaps under her mattress:

'...I would use like paper towels and I would wet them and then put them on top and make a relief with like mountains and lakes and stuff like that and then paint it.'

Asked what her parents had to say about her activities, she says:

'Oh they were very cool, they were always cool, they were very proud. They would call people to see what I was making, they were like "Have you seen what our daughter --?" they were always very proud. They never told me not to do things.'

It also struck me how Eirini's obsession with creating model landscapes, seemed to link back to her grandfather's professional practice of being a civil engineer, although she

doesn't specifically point this out. She said he had been retired by the time she was making things with him, but mentioned:

'He was an engineer, he used to, he studied in Egypt and he was working in construction of like dams and things like that.'

Whether this entanglement is made conscious or not, making development in childhood appears to be richly informed by exposure to adult making practices witnessed. It might also be possible that the parent's willingness to let their child enact her making with such autonomy, may have been entangled with them remembering the Grandfather's practice and allowing their child to grieve through her making. But this is only hunch, as I have no empirical evidence for this.

The women's making histories are not necessarily full of specific craft skills passed on, but consistently point to an exposure to a range of making skills and a general making attitude. In fact, in some cases the women mentioned specifically rejecting a specific making medium they were exposed to because they felt it wasn't them. As Toni recalls:

'Yes, my grandmother is a painter and she's quite, her style is quite expressive and things like that. I did bits of painting, I remember getting an easel and some oil paints when I was about 10 or 11 and I did oil painting for a bit but I never really got on with it, I've never really liked painting, I like drawing, but I've always been very, very, I'm quite neat and tidy in the way that I work so I'm into graph paper ...'

Whilst Toni talks about this more as a 'trying the shoe to see if it fits' story, Becky is more explicit in how her rejection of sewing was connected to her relationship with her mother. Although she heavily references her mother in terms of witnessing and learning how to make all sorts of things as a child, this comes through more as a general attitude to making, whilst she mentions rejecting her mother's sewing practice most of her life. When she talks about it she ponders whether this might be because of the stigma of always being dressed in homemade clothes as a child, but then is not so sure, saying '**Maybe it was just to annoy my mum really**'. She goes on to say how she regrets this now, as she started to get into sewing since her mother passed away and having inherited all her sewing kit which has tools in that she has no idea what they are for. Reflecting on this Becky comments:

'I really wish I'd listened to my mum and I wish that I'd asked her to teach me how to sew now, because she would have really enjoyed that in later life and it would help me now because I love sewing now. That was a

missed opportunity.'

What is interesting is that whilst Becky highlights her rejection of her mother's making skills in relation to sewing, she later also mentions how her own education and choices were influenced by her mother's value judgments and rejections of particular forms of making. Her mother rejected forms of making for her daughters that are traditionally located in the female domain. For example, Becky recalls her mother not allowing her, or her sisters, to choose Home Economics at school, which she considered a lesser pursuit. She recalls:

'We weren't allowed to take Home Economics, absolutely not allowed, it was a wasted subject "You're not doing it."'

Instead Becky was encouraged to take engineering metalwork, which meant she ended up being the only girl in the whole secondary school to take the subject and which she ended up not enjoying. It may not be surprising that Becky's mother making practices as specifically female as less desirable pursuits for her daughter, as according to Becky, she placed great importance on being able to survive without a man.

It appears that the opportunity to reject certain ways of making that the women are exposed to presents as much of an important part in developing a making attitude, as being introduced to the making skills that they end up replicating in some way. Autonomy over materials and space is as important as having autonomy of choice of making practice, as it allows the children to start owning their making.

7.7. Discussion: Developing Making Literacy within Family Making Cultures

'The theoretical approach that I adopt treats meaning-making as work, as action, which is itself best explained in terms of the social structures and cultural systems in which children and adults act in communication.' (Kress, 1997,p.8)

The importance of being situated within a family making culture from childhood, comes out strongly in all, but one, of the women's accounts. Kress (1997) highlights that even before any formal education in childhood begins, children become 'thoroughly experienced makers of meaning, as experienced makers of signs in any medium to hand' (p8), that children make meaning with anything from Lego to blankets, from paper to twigs. The focus in formal education remains to this day on the use of lettered representation for sign making. He highlights that this type of literacy is privileged

because other forms of multimodal literacy are primarily perceived as expressions of the inner self rather than as forms of communication. Kress (1997) is adamant that this multimodal making *is* communication; it *is* sign making. As I am inclined to agree with this standpoint, I would argue that when the women talk about the materials they had; were given; or shown how to collect, what they are really talking about is an account of collating a vocabulary - they were acquiring 'making' literacy.

Pahl (2012) asserts the link between literacy, sign making and material practice when she talks about 'writing as material': 'Written forms can be understood to be visual artefacts with multiple visual properties involving more than just the graphic codes for the 'words' and 'letters' (p.212). Because the women were developing a 'making' literacy, in 'tooling up' with their materials, they were building a vocabulary whilst at the same time exploring how the materials might be used to make signs. When Vygotsky (Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner and Souberman, 1978) talks about the idea: 'that children's symbolic play can be understood as a very complex system of speech' (p.108), he points to indicatory gesture as assigning the function of sign to the play object, thus giving it meaning. I believe that in the *making* childhoods of the women, *gesture* is extended – the manipulation of material in order to make meaning, is extended gesture that reaches beyond the surface of the play object and makes it from within.

Ingold (2007) toys with the proposition that writing is a technology whereas drawing is not. He refers to Vygotsky's insight that whilst a child can draw a letter, it can only be said to write once it can read (Ingold, 2007, p.123). He concludes that writing *is* drawing and is neither technology nor invented, but rather a product of development and he insists that writing *is* writing even before or without the shift in the perception of how the meaning is made with the letter. When it is drawn it is still a sign, it is just how the sign is read that changes once the child can read, it is a shift in the modality of the sign, not of the sign making itself. Ingold (2007) also insists that the embodied motion of writing, before the writer shifts into the meaning-making mode of reading, is, as such, part of the developmental step towards this mode as well as being a meaning-making mode in its own right:

'For writers of the past a feeling or observation would be *described* in the movement of a gesture and inscribed in the trace it yields. What mattered was not the choice or semantic content of the words themselves – these could be wholly conventional, as in liturgical text – but the quality, tone and dynamic of the line itself.' (Ingold, 2007 ,p.128).

I would hence argue that, when Katy talks about replicating making that she saw on kids' television, she was not just *replicating* in a static sense, but *acquiring* material literacy, with the view to moving towards her own making literacy. She is learning how to use the media and modes of form-giving. There was then a possibility to shift into different modes of meaning-making by applying that knowledge to other media and modes of sign making, but even at the stage of replicating making – it was not meaning less (Kress 1997). Dylan's example of using found objects on the beach in order to instigate ways of making meaning is a less formal way, one that works with chance and risk to a greater extent and as such is more open-ended. But any manipulation of materials, in order to complete an internal forward gesture, should be viewed as form-giving which is meaning-making and as such communicative, even if it only communicates to/with the maker.

Barbara Bolt (2010) reminds us: 'material thinking is the logic of practice'. Bolt is critical of Paul Carters' (2004) focus on *talking* about one's creative work as *the moment* where the joining of hand, eyes and mind produces *material thinking*. She insists that it is first and foremost in the moment *of being in relation* to materials and *being engaged* in processes of practice, where material thinking truly resides (p.30). In my view both *talking about* and *doing* practice are central aspects of material thinking, though I tend to agree with Bolt (2010) about the *doing*, being more central:

'Words may allow us to articulate and communicate the realisations that happen through material thinking, but as a mode of thought, material thinking involves a particular responsiveness to or in conjunction with the intelligence of materials and processes of practice' (p.30).

Freund's (1990) study on maternal regulation of children's problem solving behaviour (in which she builds on Vygotsky, amongst others) showed that verbal maternal support during problem solving activities did have a marked positive effect on the development of their cognitive self-regulation during learning. This would suggest that both *talking about* and *doing* practice, are likely to have supported the development of the women's *making* aptitudes as children.

How much *talking about* experience the women had in childhood is difficult to ascertain with any certainty in retrospect, but when they talk about being encouraged to make by adults during childhood, it appears likely that *being able to talk* about their processes formed an integral part of the development of their material practice. But this *talking about* could have come into being in the form of co-making as much as actually having

conversations about ideas and materials. As Pahl (2002) points out – the importance lies with the adult making space for the child’s need to make meaning, using any representational resources available. I believe that the reason that the women chose to recall their materials in such detail, points to them identifying the collecting, handling, coveting and manipulation of these materials as the start of their ‘material thinking’, (as framed by Bolt (2010)), in a space where their meaning-making was supported by adults.

That children benefit from having ready access to materials and making space to make is not particularly surprising. Researchers interested in child development, have shown over and over again how different environments shape us as we grow up, but they nevertheless give an important backstory of the kind of conditions that women’s making practice developed in. Nutbrown (2006) highlights that early schemas, ie forms of thought, in childhood seem to provide the basis for later learning. She points to Athey (1990) who ‘maintains that children will notice elements from their surroundings, depending upon their interest at the time, and that they have their own intrinsic motivation which must be facilitated by materials and support from adults’ (p.11). She further outlines how early education research has shown over and over again, that children need a variety of opportunities to be stimulated, both materially and sensorially, in order to develop their sense making and learning capacities (2006, p.12). To aid his discussion of types and styles of Design thinking, Lawson (1983) refers to the Gestalt psychologist Bartlett’s study of thinking (1958) and remembering (1932), in which he developed the idea of the ‘schema’ as an internalised mental image, representing the external world in our heads: ‘The schema represents an active organization of past experiences which is used to structure and interpret future events’ (Lawson,1983, p.97). In case of the schema formed by the women in their childhood, I would consider their making practice not only being an essential part of developing ‘forms of thought’, because that in my opinion dis-embodies the making by putting making primarily in the service of building the intellect. Manning (2016) uses the term ‘agencement’, which she argues is the concept best capable of carrying agency (p134). She locates agency within motion and unfolding: ‘Agencement: the directed intensity of a compositional movement that alters the field of experience’ (p.134). I believe this to be a good way of conceptualising the women’s childhood making: Women’s field of experience changed through making and it was volitional.

Taking also into account Pahl (2012), Ingold (2007), Kress (1997) and Bolt (2010), my conclusion is that, because the women’s schemas evolved *with* making, their schemas were also forms of *material* and *gestural* thought, which is then utilised for sign and meaning-

making in its own right. Pahl (2012) highlights that children's literacies and forms of inscription can only 'be understood *within* a situated and embedded understanding of these forms' (p.211) (my emphasis). As I view 'making' in similar terms to Pahl's extended concept of writing, I believe that insisting on a situated and embedded understanding of making is essential, because putting 'making' only into the service of the developing 'forms of thought', misses the point, as it doesn't sufficiently take account of processes of embodiment essential which are part of material practice. Thus, I would argue that the schemas resulting from the women's material practice as children are a development of *forms of making*, which envelope *forms of thought*. But these forms are not static, but are an experience of how the movement and 'intra-activity' of materials, thought, space, the body, yourself and others, enables you to make. I propose that, the fact that the women experienced and embodied this in childhood, is the very ground from which the women's adult making grows.

Chapter 8

THE SPACES OF MAKING

8.1. Introduction

To have space in which to make is important. Whether this is physical space, mental space or temporal space – space or being able to make space is a pre-requisite to being able to make. Especially for women, claiming spaces to make, can be challenging because the space women have traditionally inhabited domestically are often spaces created in order to make for others - whether that's the kitchen, nursery or bedroom (Wayland Barber, 1994; Parker and Pollock, 1981; Massey, 2005). Virginia Wolf's seminal 1928 essay 'A room of one's own', proposed that in order for women to create, they are in need of financial autonomy as well as spatial autonomy 'the space and time required for intellectual freedom' (Snaith, 2015, p.xviii). In terms of space for making, this would have to include the intellectual and physical space as well as having access to matter with which to make.

In this chapter I have thematically ordered my findings in relation to space into two main parts, which are subdivided into initial sections and include initial analysis and discussion. I then pick up on some of the insights gained further in the discussion at the end:

Making Spaces: - Curated Making Space - Space Intra-acting with Making - Ordering and Storing Future Making - Making Spaces 'Call to Action' - Making Space Intra-acting with the Makers Mind

Making Space in Time: - Things Impacting on Making Time - Competing Signals - Making Making Happen

Discussion: The Demarcation of Space is the Demarcation of Time

Space in Design Pedagogy - Making Time is more important than Making Space - Silences around Making Time - Empowered Space in Time

(In Appendix: Vignettes of Different Making Spaces)

I have written up a number of ethnographic vignettes on the different making spaces based on my observations. These and further images of making the making spaces can be found in the Appendix, to support some of findings and my analysis of them.

For my interpretation and analysis, I draw on Sarah Pink (2012), Sheila Rowbotham (1973a, 1973b), Elizabeth Wayland Barber (1994), Catherine Malabou (2016) and Christina Schües (2011) amongst others, whilst Doreen Massey's 'For Space' (2005) formed the core of my conceptualisations.

8.2. Making Spaces

Making spaces are part of the process of making. They hold ideas, materials and temporal calls to 'making'. All the women remarked in one way or another on the importance of having physical space. Attie commented:

'I was so lucky to have a work room to be able to do things for myself. I had that from my mother, everyone needs a work room.'

During fieldwork, memories of elders' making spaces and practices were recalled and discussed in much detail. Seven out of the 11 women who participated had a space dedicated to make in, and if they didn't, the idea of longing for a dedicated space, or difficulties in making, due to lack of space, came up frequently. At the time of my fieldwork, Becky, Bill, Katy, Fotini and Attie had dedicated making spaces within their domestic set-ups. In Bill's case, this extended across the whole of the domestic setting. Toni and Vicky had professionalised making spaces – studio spaces situated externally from their home and situated within a community of other creative practitioners. Kaz, whose lack of space had been very obvious, has since also found a space within an external shared creative studio. Eirini, commanded making spaces on an ad-hoc basis, using the family living room and another part of her house, when it wasn't rented out (which it mostly is). Lucy's Dance practice meant adopting to, and utilising, a range of different spaces. Dedicated domestic spaces in particular, were lovingly curated in terms of materials and tools, and a sense of the importance of these spaces in the women's lives evident in both the care taken and how they talked about them.

The longing for, or the finding of, an ideal space and space in time, surfaces in different ways. Often this is time oriented, ie 'if I had more time', sometimes space oriented 'if only I had a space', or it is both. But both aspects are ultimately also temporal already, in the sense that they are future oriented. When space has been made, there is a sense of absolute love and appreciation that emerges. Like Fotini describing her making in her mosaic room:

'But the good thing is we have this special room at home, like a, I can work

there and we have put everything together.'

Both space aesthetics and time aesthetics are important - the sensory experience and appreciation is holistic. Fotini, describing her making space and time further:

'It's a nice place then to be and doing it, with a lot of light. The light is very important.... my favourite way is just hearing my nice classic music and put some stones together and then look if I, whenever I do something then I want to have a look at it from a distance and it's very nice to do that.'

Pink (2012) reminds us that '... sense can be understood as interconnected, and at the level of perception inseparable' (p.4), highlighting the importance of attending to:

'the multisensory and embodied ways in which environments are experienced and the unspoken, the tacit and ways of knowing and communicating in everyday life and activist practice that are not verbalized' (2012, p4).

Fotini is not only verbalising her sensory aesthetic experience of light and sound, her bodily experience of the doing, the spatial experience of stepping back and reflecting on what has been made, the visual experience of reflective viewing, she is also evaluating it and judging it to be important.

8.2.1. Curated Making Space

The creation of the making spaces is a deliberate act of demarcating both space and time, as well as designing the aesthetic experience of space and time. Though the curation of the materials and tools are the driving factor, the curatedness of the spaces is not incidental, so that things (tools, materials) are to hand, and the light, the views, the smell, the sounds, all become active parts of the making practice. Bill's set up of her workbench against a big window that looks out onto colourful wind chimes and a birdfeeder, listening to the radio and having a mini kitchen, are part of her furnishing her making time in a holistic way. All senses are catered for.

In the domestic sphere making space is often also contested space, whether that is through children needing space or a partner having designs on your space. Becky mentions that her partner keeps asking her to reduce the amount of things she keeps for her making, but she ends up accumulating more, rather than reducing it. Her space functions not just for current making, but is also the incubator of future making:

'I haven't done beading in like eight years and I've got millions of beads, but I

won't get rid of it because I know at some point I will go back to it.'

She gives an example of her material resources *reminding* her to make:

'... I found two kits that I'd forgotten I'd bought and I can't wait to start them, but I've got a list sort of a mile long of stuff that I can't wait to start. Yes, so I'm not going to get bored this winter.'

Here is the temporal aspect again, the future-orientation of making stored physically within the making space as well as a refusal to give up space. Commanding space and material has a particular kind of pleasure attached to it that is akin to play. An almost childlike enjoyment of the material aesthetics of her things surfaces when Becky says:

'...because I like organisation, I have labels on boxes but sometimes I just label it 'cool stuff' or 'more really cool stuff.' (laughter)



Fig. 14

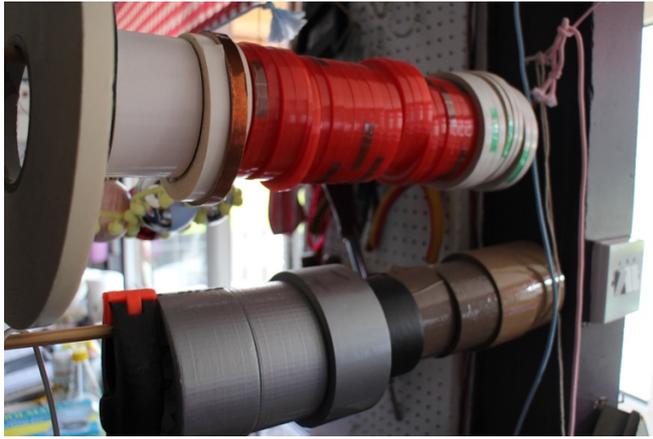


Fig. 15

8.2.2. Space Intra-acting with Making

Ideally, successful making spaces feed the making by providing inspiration, comfort and ready-to-hand materials, but sometimes the reality of what you think *you need* and what you are actually *making do with*, are somewhat light years apart. Eirini stated quite vehemently:

‘I think what’s important is to have your space ... it’s easier to get back to working when you can identify with a working space.’

When I responded saying: ‘But you don’t have a space!?’ she elaborated:

'... I do watercolours on the table, that's where I do it. I was cutting my stuff, I don't care. The thing is you have to be at peace with the fact that, because there is, you know, there's this thing where we're saying 'Oh the day I'm going to have a studio it's going to be great' and actually, you know what, you can work on your table. Yes, it would be great to have a studio and I constructed this to be the studio and now it's my income because I rent it. And yes, it would be great but sometimes you need to work where you are, you know, you need to just, it's great to have a desk and it's great to have, but like today I was cutting the fabrics and I was doing it half on the floor and half on the table because there were Legos on the table and I couldn't be bothered. So, I was like 'Okay I'll just sit on the floor' and then the floor was cold, so I did the long cuts on the floor and then I did the short cuts on the table. But I finished in one morning, I cut all the pieces so it wasn't that hard. Now they're all wrapped up. What was the question again?'

Eirini's description of her making practice during just one particular morning shows in quite a nuanced way how different aspects of the space available impact on her body and her making. She highlights that her 'real' making space is now fulfilling another role because it provides an income by being rented out. She needs this in order to have more freedom to make. This freedom is time. Renting out her making space provides her with an income, which gives her time she might otherwise have to use generating income rather than making her work. It appears that whenever compromises have to be reached in relation of making – freeing time is always the deciding factor - it overrides being able to command the ideal space.

Time spent setting up the making space appears to make making time more readily accessible later on - but both setting up and maintaining these spaces appears to have its own temporal dynamic. This may appear to distract from making. Katy describes how getting her space right *for* her making, appears to take time *away from* her making:

'So I think when you look at the space in which I do the Duchamp work in, I've spent longer doing up the space which you'd consider DIY and making the environment right for the work than I have actually making work. Every three or four weeks "Oh I need more room in here, I need more space for the work, I'll have to put another shelf up there." So, the two do clash that way as well.'

Although Katy says curating her making space clashes with her making time, based on

my observations with her and other women, I would argue that their space making is an essential part of their making practice. Not only do they talk with a lot of affection and pride about how they have made their spaces best suited to support their particular making practices, their space making also means that their material resources are ready to hand and ready to motivate and inspire them - it helps them think of making. Becky, who at the time of my observations, commanded the largest bedroom in the house as her 'craft room', talks about the satisfaction that comes from curating and ordering her materials and tools:

'I love my craft room and I love, sometimes, in between craft projects or I'm feeling uninspired or I'm just procrastinating about starting something, I'll go and reorganise my craft room and I find that reenergising and I come across all this really, really awesome, cool stuff that I've forgotten about.'

Becky highlights procrastination and feeling un-inspired as inhibitors of her making, which her very engagement with her space and her materials and tools, help her overcome.

8.2.3. Ordering and Storing Future Making

When there is dedicated space, the ordering and curating of it becomes part of the making, because it essentially re-locates some of the intellectual and emotional effort required to make, into a physical space, which means it frees up inner space. Toni outlines her struggle to stay on top of her very varied and wide-ranging making practice:

'But yes, there's so many different threads to it and it's all connected but I've, I'm still waiting for the day, I'm sure it will happen at some point where it will all just go "Slot" and I'll go "Ahaha"' – 'But at the moment it's all so overlapping and I see bits and linkages.'

Talking about the impact that can have on her:

'I try and keep it all in my head and it makes you very tired.'

She tries to ease that intellectual and emotional burden by organising her thoughts, ideas and plans with boards full of coloured post-it notes in her studio: **'I keep the post-it note boards and if something occurs, ...'**. This means she can externalise and record parts of her making that she might not need at that present moment, but that may or may not become an essential part of it. She essentially *parks* part of her making externally, to keep her head clear for tasks at hand. So, the studio space *is* her making materialised in that sense, allowing her to flow between different modes of making required at different

points in time:

‘... I’m a great combination, or I’m an awful combination of wanting to be hyper, hyper, hyper organised and the fact that I work really well in chaos and it’s constantly that, of me struggling to be organised and then chaos.’

The women all show that they have explicit knowledge of how their making benefits from how they organise it within space and time. What I have observed in all the women’s dedicated making spaces is evidence that the whole space acts as a sort of mood board. But activities are also planned and modelled - different artefacts and items are clustered together based on emerging ideas or making projects in process. There are reminder notes or, in Toni’s case, whole boards of mapped out thinking. Julier (2014) highlights, ‘Whereas drawings, plans and models relate directly to the product under development, the mood board is entirely conceptual’ (p.116). I would argue that the women’s making spaces are conceptual *and* physical spaces at the same time.

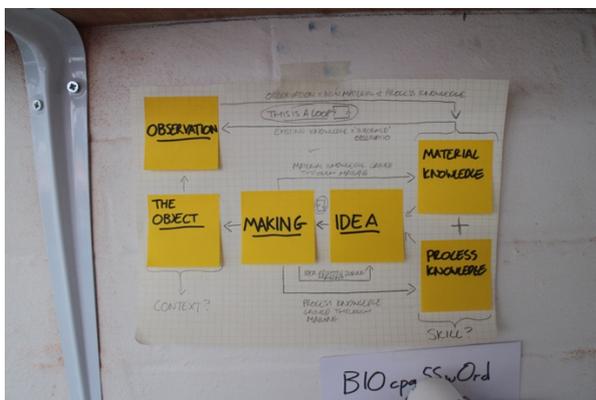


Fig.16



Fig.17

8.2.5. Making Spaces ‘Call to Action’

Making spaces can accommodate both order and chaos, and are part of the process of making in two ways: Firstly, because they provide the physical space to make and ensure the maker has their resources ready to hand during the making process. Secondly because during their curation, ordering and being in them, they support the makers to ‘mind-make’ in a future oriented way. Dedicated making spaces also issue temporal ‘calls to action’, which makes it easier for the makers to extract themselves from other calls upon their time.

When I last saw Fotini, I had Doreen Massey’s ‘For Space’ (2005) with me. She asked about it and we talked about my analysis of the making spaces I had witnessed. I explained: ‘She (Doreen Massey) says that space is not just static and that it is connected closely to time. After I worked with all the other women, I was thinking – the space is not just space – it is space in time.’ Fotini nodded and said: ‘Of course - the space is saying: This is the time!’ (to make). Massey (2005) critiques the idea of space being imagined as ‘conquering time’, saying that it points to space being perceived as a somehow:

‘lesser dimension than time: one with less gravitas and magnificence, it is the material/phenomenological rather than the abstract; it is being rather than becoming and so forth; and it is feminine rather than masculine ...’ (2005,p.29).

I would argue that, when Fotini and myself were imagining space as being a *pointer to* and a *demarkation of* time, we did conceive of it as *lesser* than time – rather the opposite – we connected space to *making time*, both in the abstract and literal sense. Pink (2012) highlights that ‘places are not bounded zones that we live or engage in practice *in* but

they are actually produced through movement' (p.25). Referring to Ingold's (2000) concept of entanglement and of the constantly changing constellation of things within an environment, she reminds us that 'these are not movements that we necessarily always observe with the eye or feel underfoot' (Pink, 2012, p.25).

8.2.6. Making Space Intra-acting with the Maker's Mind

The material and phenomenological aspects of space, actually supports abstract *and* concrete movement: The *imagining* of making and the *doing* of making. Neither the abstract nor the concrete happen at a static point in time, they happen in the motion of space and time together. Whilst Becky talks about her space inspiring her making and prompting her to make, Eirini who is without a dedicated making space has to adapt her process constantly because the space she is making in is not supportive of her making. When I saw her recently she wore a badge that said: 'Despite everything – she persisted.' In many ways this, to me, summed up how Eirini makes: - her space (amongst other things) does not offer volition to her making, but is like an obstacle course, both physically and mentally, because she has to keep moving her making, whilst at the same time also pushing against the temporal call of domestic labour.

Making space is not just related to time, because of the temporal call to making that Fotini and myself talked about. As Massey (2005) reminds us, space is not static because it is not fixed in time, even if it may often appear to us in that way. The ideal making space is kind of humming 'energy storage' for making. It is not a static space, even when it is not in use – it carries intentionality, which is connected to the maker's mind whilst at the same time freeing the maker's mind, because it incubates disparate ideas, materials, and making not yet started or finished. And as the maker's mind can re-configure their making intentionality, while away from their space, the space itself is not fixed, even when un-attended, because it hums with the potentiality of an endless amount of configurations of future making. It is part of the maker's mind. Space is neither petrification nor a lack of temporality - it doesn't hold time still – the lively world is both temporal and spatial (Massey 2005). Making thrives in space lively with material and conceptual possibilities.

8.3. Making Space in Time

The temporal space that making requires has been more difficult to surface than the physical space previously outlined. It is mainly when a lack of time is brought up as a barrier to making that its importance becomes clearly visible. It may be obvious that

making is entirely dependent on time, but temporality in making is not fixed to one single thing, so hides itself amongst all the other aspects of making. Traditionally, women's labour in the family and community has been on the one hand a vital commodity for the functioning of the fabric of life, whilst on the other hand being de-valued within the capitalist economic systems (Rowbotham 1973a,1973b; Weeks, 2011; Forster, 2016). Women now often still fulfil these family and community focused roles, whilst also working for pay externally. This, as Malabou (2016) points out, means that they are dually exploited by the system. Childcare and domestic duties are, however, considered to be one of the keystones to have shaped women's labour for thousands of years as well as women's development of making technologies such as weaving (Wayland Barber, 1994). During my fieldwork, women did not blame childcare and domestic duties with keeping them from making, but mentioned them as something they might also *want* to do and that they themselves *alloweð* it to distract them from their making.

8.3.1. Things Impacting on Making Time

Attie brings up how women's making is often both defined, confined and configured by their domestic roles. Commenting on her own life, she says:

'Well because for women the making is often to the housekeeping and the children's work but, yes, but I personally had, well a more manly life in the way that, okay I had to cook and I had to do the household but I also had my work and now there is just no, not much household, there is a lot of making, there is room for making, yes, so it's not, well it's also different in which age you are.'

She highlights that, despite having had more of a, as she put it, 'manly life', she had still had a future-oriented desire to have more time for her making, saying that:

'I always thought of "Well when I had my ... (pension) then I will be really making, then I can work undisturbed."'

So, despite the fact that she hasn't had children and hadn't been keeping a traditional family household, she had still felt that her making had been compromised before she retired from her teaching position.

Domestic and care demands on women's time is visible in the accounts. When I asked Fotini what stopped her from making she explained:

'Again, me stops me because I'm putting many things together like if I want to have time with the kids and read with the kids and clean up the house and cook for the house, then it's always something behind.'

What strikes me is that she doesn't give the children or the household as the primary reason as to what stops her. She highlights her own desire to fulfil those demands, which *she* prioritises over her making. There is also another level of demarcation of time that Fotini highlights, which is when she talks about working on one of her commissions. She comments on how it appears to be easier to find time to make, when she is making for someone else:

'You know, it's very interesting, if I have people they ask me to do something then I find the time to do it because, you know, it's different when you have an order for something and you know that in two months you have to finish something and even if you are lazy and you just say "Okay I have this" and I might finish somehow.'

This also indicates that external making labour has a different way of making space for itself.

Toni described how even having a dedicated making space within the domestic setting was not enough to 'call' her to work in the way she needed because other calls to action within the domestic space were too dominant:

**'...But the big problem with that was, even though I was working it would still be "Well the postman's coming around" and "Can you just do --?" and the distractions, it got really, really annoying getting interrupted. It was beautiful, I had loads of room and it was all mine but I found it really'
'Yes, even having this beautiful big space at home it was like nobody thought I was at work so my family would constantly be interrupting me or my friends would be constantly coming round. So, I sort of put my foot down and said "I'm going to rent a studio. I know I can't really afford it but."'**

Speaking of renting a space externally, she said:

'I wanted a space to go to.'

I would argue that this does not only describe a physical space to go to but also importantly a *space in time* to go to. And this also entails having space to think. She describes how her making space holds parts of her making-thinking not yet resolved, on

post-it notes, in books, in work in progress etc. But on top of those materialities, it provides making-thinking space, because she doesn't have to spend energy drowning out other demands on her time.

8.3.2. Competing Signals

Asking, 'How does thinking function?' Schües (2011) proposes that:

'In thinking I withdraw from the world, and am by myself; that is, I *have* the feeling of *liveliness* of myself (and liveliness can also be part of our experiences). However, the inability to think about "something" turns a human into a "sleepwalker"' (p.72).

When the women 'withdraw' into their making spaces, they have space and time to think, and this also has political implications. As Schües reminds us:

'A feminist approach always concerns the revaluations of power relations within society, as, for example, the question of the relevance of time when discussing power relations or asymmetrical hierarchies between men and women' (2011, p.6).

Toni's account shows how *being at home*, signals in some way being available. This signalling of availability may come from others, but may also come from oneself internally. Toni highlights externally experienced pressure, when she recalls:

'I think I kind of needed to put the break in from family. It's like if you're working from home people don't think you're working. "Oh you're at home all day" and it's like "No, I am working."

But she also acknowledges how being in the domestic space was also signalling availability to herself:

'I mean I blame my family but also in my own head having that stuff upstairs, it's great but then you also get distracted "Oh look the washing needs doing." I can't start work until I've done the pots, or the garden needs digging and I found myself making excuses because I'm quite easily distracted.'

Toni made the decision to take her making outside of the domestic sphere to signal to herself and others that she was 'at work'. Being 'at work' carries a different signal both internally and externally. It eliminates the need to spend energy on demarcating space in

time in order for making to become priority. Just being in the domestic space appears to have a way of pushing other duties that one might have before any making 'duties' or intermingling with other distractions.

8.3.3. Making Making Happen

In order to spend a meaningful amount of time making, sacrifices often have to be made in financial terms or in the type of economic labour you engage in. Toni explains that in order to prioritise her making, she took a job cleaning a pub very early each morning before she goes to her studio to 'work'. She explains:

'I had to sort of make a decision last year about whether I go and get a proper job or whether I commit myself to the art life and make a thing of it, and I sort of went "Well I didn't waste all that time going to Art School if I'm not going to do it" so sort of put myself in a position where I'd only need to work a few hours a week and then the rest of the time is making.'

To demarcate and prioritise making time takes discipline and sacrifice, and it is very common for the time spent on 'economic labour' to eliminate making time. Eirini recalls earning money doing administrative work for another artist and when I ask her how that felt, she answers:

'It was like I was not an artist anymore. I had to like realise that I needed to practice again and it took a while.' '...I was not working at all anymore.'

This period of time was also after her first child had been born, which meant there were a lot of other demands put on her time. Similarly to Fotini, though, Eirini points to *herself* as being the cause of not making any more within that context and also uses similar terms:

'I had like a tiny desk in (my son's) bedroom and I think I got distracted also by a lot of other things, I let myself be distracted.'

When I ask her what generally stops her from making, she tells me:

'Routine I think, everyday life. Preparing food, travelling, taking care of the kids. I made a promise to myself that my mornings would be spent for work and I would ignore calls for coffee, walks, paying bills, doing the dishes, cooking, before it's one o'clock and that from one to two was enough to cook.'

She told me recently that she realised that while she is making, she feels invincible. She had said:

'When I am doing my work I feel like I am the strongest woman in the world - I can do anything.'

This is very similar to what Fotini said to me about her making having given her a sense of power. She had said:

'Now I think I can do a lot of things, I have no problem.'

I would argue that the demarcation of time to make is a vital space where the women can experience themselves as powerful and this sense of power also partially stored in their making spaces, as well as having rippling effects into other aspects of their lives. Commanding temporal, spatial and material autonomy are essential to successful making.

8.4. Discussion: The Demarcation of Space is also the Demarcation of Time

What happens in a space is not incidental. Space has its own agency and its own call to action. The demarcation of space is also the demarcation of time. Making time. This is not to say that time to make cannot be found without a dedicated making space, but that a dedicated making space appears to have a way of 'storing' some of the intellectual, emotional and material energy it takes to make, whilst also presenting a 'temporal' call to action.

8.4.1. Making Time is more Important than Making Space

The clearest insight I have gained from the thematic analysis, which I had never fully conceptualised despite the professional or educational making spaces I have inhabited for over two decades is that: the demarcation of space is also the demarcation of time. Making time.

Whilst I agree in principle with Massey (2005) that the spatial should not be deprioritised to the temporal or become a conflation of the two, I find this difficult to follow through in practice. In my thematic analysis I cannot get away from the idea that space is time. And, furthermore, that time is more important to making than space.

When Becky talks about the period where she was working two jobs and looking after the family, it was the lack of time which stopped her from making. When Eirini rents out

her studio as an Airbnb, the money that provides means she has time to make. When I asked the women ‘What stops you from making?’ the majority of them said that a lack of time stops them, not a lack of space.

I believe that partly to blame for this incongruity within my thoughts is that, although I can recognise in my research that space is important in its physical materiality, what also comes though strongly in my observations is that the women’s dedicated spaces clearly facilitate them *making time* for making. Fotini described how creating a physical making space helped her to make space in time:

‘It’s a bit difficult because mosaic needs time, you need to sit down and start doing and of course using your mind, your fantasy, thinking how you would like to do it. So it’s not very easy when the kids are growing and they are asking things and they want things. But the good thing is we have this special room at home, like a, I can work there and we have put everything together.’

I would argue that this is an example where the demarcation of physical space as workspace has also helped her to demarcate time, possibly because it signals her ‘un-availability’ for family labour, to others as well as to herself.

Toni described how even having a dedicated making spaces within the domestic setting was not enough to ‘call’ her to work in the way she needed because other calls to action within the domestic space where calling loudly.

8.4.2. Silences around Making Time

It is interesting that during the participant observation with the women, not one brought up the idea that a struggle to coordinate domestic and care work between them and their partners impacted on their making time. Yet *I know*, that complaints about not being able to make time because of a lack of equality in domestic and care work, often dominate private conversations with my female friends who are makers. I did not push this during the interviews, because I felt I needed to let it surface by itself. But even the impact of domestic and care labour on making time, only surfaced tentatively in terms of it being conceptualised as ‘I allowed myself to be distracted’ or affirming they wanted to prioritise the care for children and family. On one hand, I think this is because the women actually *want to care* - they want to look after and nurture their families and give their labour over to this, even if it means they have to deprioritise their making. Love and care is a complicated terrain and difficult to untangle from systemic oppression within patriarchy

(Gilligan, 2016) and there are pertinent silences in my fieldwork data relating to gender inequality and power. The women chose not to raise issues of power and questions as to *why* the domestic spaces are calling them to action so vehemently and how this might be connected to their gendered roles and being.

8.4.3. Empowered Space in Time

Of all the women, Toni and Eirini speak most clearly about how they conceptualise the prioritisation of their making 'work' in conscious opposition to domestic calls to action. When Toni explains why she felt that it was the right thing to do, she refers to the years she had invested into her Art School training and not wanting it to go to waste. Eirini is also a trained artist, which means she may find it easier to conceptualise her making as 'work' which is worthy of prioritisation over domestic work. The tension between domestic spaces and making or economic labour has been much discussed in relation to female labour. Massey's (1994) research showed that the spatial separation of home and workplace was one of the deciding factors in the emancipation of the female Lancashire millworkers in the nineteenth century, who went on to contribute significantly to the suffragette movement. Being able to leave the domestic sphere and becoming part of a work-based community, meant that women could combine their efforts to negotiate their position in society.

These days the internet enables women to pursue a range of making activities from their domestic settings and as a flexible, frequently home-based workplace production economy, Etsy and indie craft work models resonate with wider debates about engaging in self-actualising cultural work within the creative economy, and these engagements are enabled by digital technology (White, 2015). Such work practices might be particularly attractive to women, as they allow for income generating work to be conducted alongside unpaid, domestic responsibilities, but they can also lead to a 'presence bleed' whereby the worlds of paid work, domestic labour and leisure blur, normally at the expense of the latter (Luckman, 2013, p.256). Schües (2011) highlights that:

'Particularly in Western countries, most people say they need more time and that they lack time: many employees complain about the tempo at work; women especially feel that given their different roles as mothers, employees, partners, housekeepers, and caretakers, they lack time for themselves. The fight to balance among the different roles is a temporal problem.' (p.10)

Thus, making *space in time* for making purely for one's own benefit is ultimately a political act. And making time for economic activities within the domestic realm is not the same as making space in time for autonomous making. I argue that in order for making to be experienced as emancipatory, its primary function cannot be economic benefit.

Chapter 9

THE BENEFITS OF MAKING

Reasons to Make

9.1. Introduction

Towards the end of our conversations, I asked the women 'who benefits from your making', because although this may have already emerged, in part, during previous conversations, I wanted to understand how they themselves conceptualised this and how these benefits might relate to their motivations for making.

In this chapter I have thematically ordered my findings in relation to 'reasons to make' into three main parts and picking up on particular insights in the discussions as the chapter progresses:

Who Benefits? - Benefitting Yourself - Near Benefaction - Far Benefaction

Permission to Make - Conferred Value

Resisting Benefaction - Making in Capitalist Space and Time

Discussion: Freedom to Make - The Valuing of Making – Reasons to Make

A profound sense of happiness that is linked with being able to make, emerged in many parts of the fieldwork, during co-making, conversations and informal interviews. It shone through, both during the recalling of childhood making as well as in the women's descriptions of their adult making.

Outside of the economic benefits of commercial Design practice, most of the attention *as to why* engagement in making practices is beneficial is primarily assessed within two areas. One focus is on the benefits of making practices to women's well-being and mental health, the other (and often connected one), is the benefit of participating in politically and socially engaged making activities such as craftivism or maker communities. I conclude this chapter with the proposition that there is a vital core to female making practice that is not sufficiently conceptualised in these contemporary discussions on the subject - one which should be considered equally beneficial and no less political. That is that, the space and time, which women demarcate for their making is an enactment of

temporal resistance to patriarchal and neo-liberal capitalist value structures, ring-fencing spaces of autonomy.

I am using the following theory in order to make sense of these observations, drawing on Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) and Paul Trowler (2012), to discuss values within communities of practice, whilst calling on Raoul Vaneigem (1967/2006) and Elizabeth Grosz (2010), to inform my critique of the conceptualisations of amateur making by Glenn Adamson (2007) and Stephen Knott (2015).

9.2. Who Benefits?

As part of my participant observations, I conducted informal interviews, which were conversational in nature. One of the questions I asked the women during those conversations was: 'Who benefits from your making?' Although the benefits of their making also surfaced in other parts of our encounters, it was through this question that they explicitly conceptualised it for me. I was also hoping to shine some light on their *making* motivations - what motivates them to make and what are the values underpinning their motivation? Other aspects of the research showed how their motivation was linked to being inspired by materials and concepts that engaged them. Here, I am primarily surfacing how their motivation is framed by their conceptualisation of the benefits of making as they perceive it.

The question itself was not neutral on my part to the extent that one of the things that had motivated me to do research in this area had been my perception from an early age that *women's making, made life happen*. In the light of this deeply felt personal insight and despite gaining an intellectual understanding of how systemic exclusion through Patriarchy functions, it can still be difficult to apprehend how female making could be so invisible and undervalued at an external societal level. Thus, by asking this question I harboured to a certain extent the hopeful intention of making visible all the ways in which women's making benefitted the world. What women told me, however, gave a far more nuanced and interesting insight into how *they* framed the benefits of their making than my somewhat partisan feminist biases had anticipated.

9.2.1. Benefitting Yourself

When I asked the women who benefitted from their making, the most common answer was that they themselves were the primary beneficiaries. Becky, Bill and Katy most explicitly linked it to their personal well-being and mental health:

Me: Who benefits from your making?

Becky: 'Me. Absolutely. Me. I suppose people who I give stuff to, but 99% of it is me.'

Whilst answering a previous question, she had also already commented on this, but in more depth, describing her making as almost a friend to her:

'And for a lot of years my craft kept me sane, or relatively sane, because I had a very tumultuous period and my craftwork is where I found my refuge and so I'm very grateful to my crafts. It's almost an entity to me. It's almost a friend. Yes, yes, it's almost a friend that I can turn to when I'm feeling really down and I know it will make me feel better, without having to actually interact with somebody, which is not something I always enjoy because people suck.'

Other women also named making as being very important for them to cope with life.

Bill's answer was quick and adamant:

'I'd go crazy if I didn't have something to do. I've got, I don't know, three or four things on the go at the moment and whichever mood I'm in I'll work on that, you know. Yes, I'm a bit of a flitter bug.'

I mentioned that she had previously talked about how satisfying it was for her to sell things, that people like her stuff and want to have it. She briefly expanded on the potential benefit, but then immediately brought it back to herself:

'I suppose other people that buy the things but, yes, it's me. I'd go crazy.'

Katy answered:

'Obviously I clearly do, I massively benefit from it in so many ways and I can talk about that. ... But for me it's very good for my mental health, I'm not

very good at stopping work, ... it's the thing that I think calms me and I think it's the thing that allows me to exist in this fucked up crazy world as well and cope with it a bit better.'

Fotini points towards how her making practice has given her confidence in a more general sense:

'It helps me to feel better and if you feel that you are good in something then you, it's a nice feeling if you can do it. It helps me to think that when I was 18 years old I thought I cannot do anything. Now I think I can do a lot of things, I have no problem.'

Kaz and Dylan mention other people who they might share things with, but side-line them – highlighting how feedback from others might be sought, but is ultimately kept separate from the value they themselves ascribe to their making practice.

Kaz:

'Me. I think only me. I don't really think anyone else is that bothered, but that doesn't bother me, that's fine, because I don't know what everyone likes. Like it's nice when I show my mates my work and they like it, that's nice, but I can't do it for them because, I don't know.'

Dylan:

'I think the people who benefit from my making is just me really, I mean I sometimes share it with other people but, like I said, people are just like, it's just something someone's made, but for me it's really important. So, I think I'm probably the only person that really benefits from it.'

Attie also names herself first: **'Now in that respect, first of all myself ...'** but then also goes on to talk about how her making benefits in a broader context, whilst Toni highlights the mental health benefits her making has and further on explains how she understands that this is connected to states of flow. Toni:

'Oh now there's a question. Me. With the sewing, yes, it's definitely me because I find that just incredibly calming and it's one of those flow moments, you lose yourself and three hours have gone, ...'

Attie reflected on only being able to sleep when she had done something in the day she was satisfied with and the importance of feeling:

“I have created something” and you can look at it and rest.’

9.2.2. Near Benefaction

When the women considered how their making might also benefit others, they often mentioned their partners. Becky, Katy and Vicky identified how their practice impacted positively on their partner. Becky and Katy mention this particularly in relation to the idea that, because their making makes themselves happier it in turn makes things better for their partners too. Becky said:

‘...I suppose to a degree Sully benefits from me being healthy. Because it is good for me. So I suppose it has a knock-on effect that if I’m happy then Sully’s happy, so yes.’

Katy outlines how her making, as it involves travel, benefits her partner because he gets to see different places, but she ultimately concludes that:

‘... I think it’s about being with me and having me in a better mental health because I’m doing these things, I’m busy and always doing something. So, I think he benefits as well.’

Vicky, who was one of the only two women who hadn’t named themselves as primary benefactors of their making practice, did identify as her partner benefitting from it, albeit more hesitantly:

‘Maybe my boyfriend benefits from it a little bit because he’s quite creative but he doesn’t have a creative job so his outlet is more kind of, he started making clothes spontaneously.’

She explains that they have started doing creative work together, which gave them a shared outlet.

Becky, who has fostered and childminded for over two decades also mentions how the children in her care have benefitted from her interest in making:

‘The kids enjoy making things obviously, whoever the kids are, because there’s not so much scope for kids to make things these days.’

Fotini also mentions her children at the same time as talking about herself:

'I like to create things. I like to do something ... you know, I want to do something for my kids, I want to do something for me.'

This reminds us how entangled the self and any making that is pursued is with others who are cared for and about. When I did the fieldwork with Bill, she talked a lot about all the work that had gone into the themed room she had designed for her visiting grandkids. Making for yourself is entangled in the social fabric of life and making for others is an essential part of this, as long as it can be performed on the individual woman's terms.

9.2.3. Far Benefaction

Only three of the women were very explicit about how their making benefitted the wider world. Vicky didn't mention herself as benefitting from her making, but instead, she pointed firstly to *how* her making benefitted her colleagues. She explained that her making was useful to the co-operative studio she is part of, because her making fed directly into commercial work they were involved in. She explains

'The studio definitely, because I think I spend a lot of time researching processes and things.'

She then goes on to describe how her creative partner Chris might ask her for some quick turn-around solutions for a commercial Design brief and because she has been experimenting with her own practice, she can utilise that experience in order to help the studio turn something around not only quickly, but also with more originality. She also mentions that other people often ask her for advice on creative projects, because they know she researches and experiments a lot. Whilst she frames this within the practical and commercial context of the Design studio and teaching, I think it's worth considering that the people in the studio are also her friends as well as her creative peers. Thus, her answer to 'Who benefits?' intersects with both the wider world and people close to her, at the same time.

The idea that creative peers benefit from her making also comes up with Toni, who highlights how her interests, knowledge and skills in particular areas have inspired others in the creative community she is situated in, to explore new ways of approaching their own practice through collaborative projects.

Eirini's answer was also quite complex - she starts by saying:

'Oh, the world. Well I think that when you are an artist you have a responsibility to get your work out there'

but then ties this back to herself immediately by saying:

'The first responsibility is to yourself because all artists are self-centred and want, I think, people to see their work.'

So, in that context her answer of the 'the world' is brought back in line with the idea of this benefitting herself because she wants her work to be seen. But she also highlights how this is connected to a broader responsibility to her audience and the community she lives in:

'So, to get it out there is, your first responsibility to yourself but then also, especially if you're in a small city like where we live, you have a responsibility to get work in the public space because you need to communicate with people.'

Attie, who had been an Art and Technology teacher all her working life, also alludes to the idea that her making contributes to culture in a broader context. Although she starts with herself benefitting, she then broadens it out:

'Now in that respect, first of all myself and, yes, I think culture in general.'

Similarly to Eirini, she then also goes on to talk about an 'audience' of sorts - places and people who have benefitted from her making:

'... I come in school and I see a painting I've made, or when I come home and I see something I've made or people have something hanging on the wall or you see a child that's wearing a hat that you made, that's satisfying, yes.'

Here, her audience is others, as well as herself, and she also brings it back to how witnessing other people enjoying her making output is in itself beneficial to her because it gives her a feeling of satisfaction. Bill makes a similar point in another part of our conversation when she talks about going past a pub that had bought some of her restored furniture, and her looking in and getting a feeling of satisfaction that it was still in use.

Lucy focused on talking about a funded Arts Council project she was working on at the time, so afterwards I wondered if it was fully comparable to the other women's responses. Outlining 'who benefits' is a central part of most funding applications these days so in

order to receive the funding Lucy would have had to state very clearly *who* was going to benefit. She starts by talking about her project benefitting academics working with her on the project, as well as the participating community groups and the audiences. Interestingly, in terms of how the wider world might benefit from her making during that project, she points to what sounds like an almost un-intended consequence:

‘... it’s going to be an interesting piece because it’s not come from a political place, but obviously in the current climate that we live in and it’s like migration crisis, oh my God, it’s going to be political without it even meaning to.’

The idea that something that started as a personal project, which she then framed in a broader context in order to get funding, would be/become something political appears to be a new insight for her. It is not entirely clear how comfortable she is with this insight, but the fact that *the personal is political* is an important insight to come to realise and a central tenet of most feminist practice and theory.

9.3. Permission to Make

What surfaces during the research was that a number of the women had experienced a paralysis in their making practice at some point in time, which in one case lasted for years. This happened when the benefit of their making was framed within value systems external to them - systems they were in but felt excluded from at the same time. This came out of discussions with Kaz, Lucy, Katy and Dylan. The women showed a reflective awareness of how certain types of making contexts had meant that they lost power over their making. This loss of power was experienced as a loss of the feeling that their making was meaningful. Feeling that their making was meaningless led to an avoidance of making and a sense of un-happiness. Kaz said **‘it was like I’d shut it off’** and **‘... it just felt like “It’s over”’**.

This only appeared with women who had been part of professionalised making in the context of educationally formalised or professionalised making. Some entirely abandoned their making for long periods of time when their making was not recognised or discounted within the system. I am conceptualising this as ‘permission to make’, in the sense that the women affected, were at that point relying on external reasons to make - the value they themselves assigned to their making was bound up with the system valuing it. The women who went through periods of ‘needing permission’ to make, experienced a profound loss of motivation to make at all. Recovering from this was described as an

internal struggle, during which they ‘divorced’ external value systems from their making practice. This freed them from ‘needing permission’ to make. The women whose making had *always* happened outside of these value systems, had no accounts of undergoing such crisis.

The systems in question are also what Lave and Wenger (1991) have conceptualised as ‘Communities of practice’. These communities of practice are important support systems for their members and are widely regarded as systems that allow a practice to determine its value system and trajectory. In order to be a member of this community one has to be enculturated into it and then becomes part of the production and reproduction of that system (Trowler, 2012; Becher, 1989; McFarlane, 2004, Shreeve, 2009). A successful member of the system will be valued by it and also become part of a gatekeeper to it (Trowler, 2012) but just as a community of practice can bestow value, it is just as likely to withhold it.

9.3.1. Conferred Value

When value is withheld or withdrawn it can affect how the viability of making is perceived. Dylan recalls at one point being so trapped in the idea that something had to be *for* something that she was quite down when one of her funding applications for a project was unsuccessful, because in her mind it meant it would not be happening:

‘I was telling my dad about an idea I had for an academic project that was to do with play and making things and it didn’t get funded and I told my dad and he was like “Well why don’t you just do it anyway?” and I was like “Well it won’t be recognised as having any value unless it’s being funded. So in the academic system, even though it could potentially then be helpful to children, which I hoped that it would be, without it having been recognised by a research council and worthy of funding” and he would talk about how ridiculous that was to him. He would just say “Well you’ve got the idea, there must be a way of” “... And I think that’s been quite nice, like when I’ve struggled with things in academia, to have someone say “Actually that’s a load of rubbish, you could just do it.”’

It’s not that Dylan didn’t realise that she could just do it, but she had internalised the constructs of her community of practice as to how something is assigned value. Feeling like *making* outside of these, ultimately economic, value systems, is not of value, stifles the impulse to make.

Never having been encultured in a community of practice in relation to their making as such, with women like Fotini, Bill and Becky, the idea of needing ‘permission to make’ does not feature at all as a barrier to their making. The only things stopping their making are restrictions of money, time, space or health. Dylan, Katy and Kaz, however, talked quite explicitly about how their education and work had at some point made them feel as if only *making* in particular contexts was ‘permissible’. Only by working through this barrier through self-reflection, soul-searching and a certain amount of inner rebellion were they able to reject those embodied concepts of validity and reclaim their making practice. Kaz reflected on the journey she had been on, since reclaiming her making practice:

‘I actually thought I would just get a job in animation, you know, at one of the studios and do you know now I wouldn’t want that. I’d rather do my own thing. Not that, God forbid, not that if anyone rang me up and said “Do you want to do six months?” Of course, I do because it would be nice to learn, of course it would, but I just think, I do my own things now, I’ve just got to the point where I’ve spent a good 10 years doing shit jobs because I didn’t think I could do anything else.’

She also mentions how she has the desire to share her insight with her other female friends who have ‘lost’ their making:

‘We’re always sending each other the art stuff because she’s like “I really want to get back into it” and, I said, “You should, if I’ve got back into it you can get back into it.”

She has reframed her making in terms of: **‘ “This is what I do.” rather than trying to do what I think people would want me to do’** and that now, when people counsel her against certain *making* plans, she feels strong enough to think to herself **‘that’s just their fears’**. So, when Kaz talks about her making, as it is now, it is much more similar to how Becky or Fotini talk about theirs. There is a conscious and sometimes wilful removal of their making from any external value systems.

In the fieldwork the group of women, such as Eirini, Vicky and Lucy, who declared their making as beneficial to the wider world, are more actively engaged with external value systems. They are active contributors to them and this confers value onto their making which goes beyond themselves and is visible to others within those communities of practice. These value systems are well established in the wider context of the socio-

economic practices as well as capitalist systems. Being encultured into such systems, can on the one hand confer value onto the making, whilst on the other hand withhold it. The women who experienced a withholding of value through this system, experienced it both as an internal, self-generated act as well as an external act. They had to actively de-culture themselves in order to experience the benefit and value of their making as belonging to themselves, and that being a good enough reason to make. It's like when I asked Kaz what she now says when somebody asks her what she does/is:

'I'd say "artist" but it did take me a long time to be all right saying that.'

9.4. Resisting Benefaction

Throughout my encounters with the different women, there was a noticeable refusal by the women to view their making as being primarily conceived for the benefit of external economic factors. Vaneigem (1967/2006) proposed that:

'In an industrial society which confuses work and productivity, the necessity of producing has always been an enemy of the desire to create.' (p.52).

But these women were not confusing their making with productivity, instead they showed many signs of consciously rejecting the potential of necessity of production, in order to safeguard their desire to make. This surfaced throughout the fieldwork. Becky was the most explicit about rejecting productivity, she commented:

'It's not about needing to get something finished, it's about enjoying making it and whether I give it away, throw it away or sell it, it doesn't matter, it doesn't make any difference to me, I enjoy the process of making.'

She also later related this to the idea of the investment of time in contrast to monetary investment or return:

'... the money that I invest in the craft that I'm doing is kind of irrelevant to the end result. I can make a bag that I absolutely love that costs, I don't know, twenty quid, but if I bought it in a shop, something similar, it might cost £3.99, but that doesn't matter because I've had the enjoyment of making it.'

When I point out that in that sense she is paying for the pleasure of making the bag, Becky confirms this, quite defiantly - **'For the pleasure of making something. ... Yes, that I could buy in a shop that's cheaper and quick.'**

I protest that a cheap bag bought in a shop would not be as nice as the one she has just made, but she is determined to make her point:

Becky: 'Well it might be but it doesn't matter to me. I've made the quiet books that took 50 hours of sewing to make, 50 hours, which in a monetary value, if you paid yourself £7 an hour to make you couldn't sell them, but I enjoyed the process of making it.'

Mel: 'And what has happened to them?'

Becky: 'I give them away as presents. But that's fine, even if they wreck them it doesn't matter because I've really enjoyed making them.'

Mel: 'Yes, so once it's out of your realm it doesn't...'

Becky: 'Yes, it doesn't really matter. So, if I make something for somebody, if they chuck it in the bin I wouldn't be offended or upset about it. I might want the material back to reuse but, yes, it's the process of making that I enjoy.'

It seems to be a point of pride and principle to Becky that her making is not about monetary economics in terms of her making being financially economical in relation to the time she has spent on making. A quiet defiance in terms of time economics, generally echoed around the women's accounts – it does not matter how much time is spent on making, because it's being in the process is what they enjoy and desire. They realise that this means that their making time does not fit into a traditional monetary economy - they point out how this time is theirs to spend outside of those measurements, and show a certain pleasure in knowing that it subverts conventional ways of valuing time in a financial economy.

Other women were similarly ambivalent about their making being 'beneficial' in a social or economic sphere. Katy talked about her refusal to academise her making, because she wanted it to remain in her domain and under her control. She also described how she kept making drafts of particular artefacts, partially because she had no desire to finish her body of work - saying that she could happily make it last for the rest of her life. Kaz

highlighted how only when she decided that she would only make what would make *her* happy, she experienced a kind of emancipation from the pressures she had felt on her making practice up to then. She also talks about putting in ‘ridiculous hours’ into her practice, saying **‘there are no clock-points’**. Toni took a cleaning job, so that her making could remain autonomous from any economic demands being made on it and she could put the hours into her very time-intensive black-work embroidery as well as progressing her coding skills for her digitised pieces. The women’s accounts of resisting economic purposes for making, resisting the need to finish and or to re-produce making, also showed up in their actual making as the modes of making. Desire to also make for others (which they did), was juxtaposed with their desire to not compromise their modes of making too much, even for those close to them.

They generally highlighted that ‘finishing was not important’, sometimes delaying the conclusion of any artefactual outcomes so that they could remain process bound for longer. They showed, in their making and in their conceptualisation of it, that they value the iterative, experimental and explorative modes of making, which they identify as the place of most joy. Repetitive processes based on reproduction are judged primarily negatively. Becky explains: **‘... making multiples of one thing doesn't interest me, I like everything to be different’**. She makes clear that she understands that if her making was to make any sense economically, she would have to alter her modes of making:

‘If I was to sell them it would make sense to make five gingerbread houses all in one go because then you can cut out a job lot of fencing or roofing or whatever, and it would save an awful lot of time.’

But she is also explicit and adamant about *why* she is making and *who for*:

‘My crafts is my interest for me, it’s not a commercial thing, even though I have made things and sold them that’s not the reason why I make things and if it was to become that I think I would get bored very quickly. I’m not very good at making the same thing again and again and I have tried, but I’m not very good at that.’

She mentions that even making repeat items for her sisters is problematic:

‘I will, because I’m making for my sisters but it’s not because I’m going to enjoy the process.’

Bill also talks repeatedly about getting bored with re-producing particular items. With

her smaller craft items, she enjoys thinking of new/different things to make:

‘There’s no shortage of ideas it’s just what I fancy do it and once I’ve done it and got it out of my system that’s great and I’ll move on to the next thing.’

When I ask her about not making the same things again, she says:

‘No because I’ve been there, done that, it’s kind of scratched that itch.’

It’s not that the women don’t want to share their making practices, skills, labour and fruit, with others. Their accounts, as well as my observations and wider experience of them, clearly shows them using their making to benefit others. The point is that they refuse their making to be *defined by* anything other than their own desire to make.

9.4.1. Making in Capitalist Space and Time

The kind of making some of these women pursue is often called amateur making or craft.

Critiquing amateur craft, Adamson (2007) disputes the idea that this kind of making has anything to do with the rejection of capitalist value structures, explaining that from a strict Marxist perspective conceiving it as such is the ‘very embodiment of false consciousness’ (p.140). He argues that, rather than being an extraction from capitalism:

‘...the effect of such activity is exactly the reverse. Precisely because they are made so lovingly, homemade crafts betray the degree to which their makers are integrated into the larger structures of capitalist ideology, in which commodity forms are the primary carriers of meaning. The experience of amateurism may feel like autonomy, but in fact nothing could be more pre-determined.’

(Adamson, 2007, p.140)

According to this critique, it would appear that the women, far from rejecting capitalist value structures, are in fact not only deeply embedded in them but are also re-producing them with their consumption of materials and time. Knott (2015) appears to deal a similar such death knell to notions that making might harbour an anti-capitalist stance, when he states that:

‘Amateur craft is inherently dependent on routines of everyday life, the structures symbolized by the “office stool” ... - the division of labour, entrepreneurship, the adulation of productivity, and the accumulation of capital’ (p.xii)

and that as such amateur craft ‘does not represent simple, individual opposition against “the machine”, as so often presumed’ (xii). I personally dislike the term amateur on the grounds that, to me, it speaks more loudly of current ontological value constructs (there is a reason why there is no amateur brain surgery), than of its original meaning of doing something for love and not gain, which *would* be accurate for the women I worked with. More importantly, though, I also beg to differ on both their assessments of *making* being inexorably bound into the nature of capitalism. I concede that they have relevance insofar as materials acquired and time ‘bought free’ for making are still subsumed within the dominant system of capitalism and that, in Marxists’ terms, the pursuit of making speaks of a desire to not be alienated from one’s own labour. What I find at fault here, is that the very framing of making from within the capitalist system can only result in us conceptualising it within its ontology. To a man with a hammer everything looks like a nail. I reject Adamson’s (2007) and Knott’s (2015) assessment of making, because I believe that, if anything, the female makers’ resistance to benefaction is both pre- and post-capitalist.

Design Anthropology’s expanded conception of human making (Smith, 2015; Gunn and Donovan, 2012; Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012) can offer us a zooming out of contemporary ontological constructs, because through its interests in Anthropology and Archaeology, it can cast our eyes beyond human making dispositions defined by Western contemporary thought. But it is Grosz (2010) who touches the heart of my rejection of Adamson’s and Knott’s previously outlined diagnosis the most, when she asks:

‘Is feminist theory best served through its traditional focus on women’s attainment of freedom from patriarchal, racist, colonialist and heteronormative constraints? Or by exploring what the female – or feminist – subject is and is capable of making and doing? (p141).’

She acknowledges that *freedom from* has important political and activist relevance, but critiques the ideas that freedom should be tied to an ultimately negative concept of liberty, because this means that ‘... it remains tied to the options or alternatives provided by the present and its prevailing and admittedly limiting forces’ (Grosz, p.141). She further argues that *freedom from* is insufficient for providing ‘any positive action in the future’. Calling on a Bergsonian, pre-Socratic philosophy of life, where freedom is conceived as the *very*, and *inalienable*, condition of life, she positions *freedom to* as the conceptual stance which offers future directed possibilities - a freedom that is attained rather than bestowed and one which does not wait passively for its moment, but functions

through activity (2010, p.141). I believe that the women I spent my time with act from such a space in time created for and by themselves, not from a place bestowed to them within patriarchal capitalism. I reject Adamson's diagnosis because it doesn't account for the intrinsically political act the women engage in when they extract 'space in time' from capitalist time. Rather than seeing it as 'space in time' embedded in capitalist and patriarchal time, I see it as 'space in time' that is being and has been kept secret from it-subverted from it. I also believe that this 'space in time' precedes capitalist time, because it speaks of making as a fundamental human attribute and desire. The women do not make because of capitalism, but in spite of it. What an engagement in Design Anthropology and the archaeological records can show us, is that human making is an archaic expression of our *freedom to*, rather than our *freedom from*.

9.5. Discussion: Freedom to Make

My thematic analysis in this chapter surfaced three ways in which the idea of benefaction appeared in the women's making. The first two of these themes were somewhat expected: that they themselves benefit from their making in spirit, mind and body and that others near to them benefit. The order in which this surfaced, was not how I had anticipated before I started this research. Having read extensively on how traditionally female labour resides in the process, because the majority of it is for the immediate consumption within the family and community (De Beauvoir, 1949/2011; Rowbotham, 1973/a, 1973/b; Parker and Pollock, 1981), I had somewhat expected that the women would readily tell me about all the different ways in which their making labour benefitted their families and social circles. Most of the women involved are or have been involved in childcare, community work or teaching in some way, and I know that they use their making labour to enhance and enrich the lives of others in lots of different ways. But that is not what *they* wanted to prioritise in relation to benefaction. They did mention how their making benefits others close to them, but often this was related to the ideas that 'If I am happy, it's also good for my family', framing it as a secondary result of the making benefitting themselves. At times, I reminded some of them during conversation of things they had told me in the past about making for and with others, but even when they acknowledged this, they didn't tend to dwell on it. At first I thought that maybe this was because the women were reluctant to assign external value to their making out of a kind of female lack of confidence, where any claim to having impact on your wider environment is plagued with doubt and insecurity. But this was incongruent as most of the women came across as confident people and those ones who are also friends I know to be confident people.

9.5.1. The Valuing of Making

The issue was further obscured by the fact that it seemed as though women who had had a formal education within Art & Design, were, on the one hand, more likely to assign value to their making beyond themselves or their immediate social circles, whilst at the same time women who had had a formal education showed signs of having had real trouble assigning *any* value to their making at some point during their lives. And the ones who had not had formalised Art & Design education were pretty much insistent on it being of value primarily to themselves, denying or downplaying any suggestions that it might also benefit others. But there was also no ‘crisis’ of making that surfaced.

Having a formal education within the creative field has an impact on how ‘the value of making’ is perceived. This is to some extent an obvious point to make, as the whole act of Art & Design education is based on the premise of becoming encultured into its value system. At first sight it may appear contradictory that it is women who have received this formal education who are divided into two different groups in terms of how they see the value of their making. The women who explicitly referred to the outside world as benefitting from their making, as well as the women who described how ‘not having permission’ to make from the outside world had paralysed their making practices for years, sometimes decades, have had formalised Art & Design education. I conceptualised why formalised Art & Design education might have this effect as ‘permission to make’, informed by the fieldwork with women who did not have this formal education. What emerged with those women was that, where making is entirely divorced from the value systems of formalised Art & Design education, issues around ‘permission to make’ appeared entirely absent. Fotini could be classed as an exception to the rule in that group, as she has a degree in Classical History and Art. What is worth noting here, though, is that she completed this degree primarily from home and was, as such, not encultured into a community of practice.

9.5.2. Reasons to Make

Beneficial reasons for ‘making’ being framed as primarily therapeutic, deeply unsettle me. I consider them harbouring an implied judgement of pathology, which I object to. Whilst the women’s own accounts clearly speak of the benefits of making to their personal sense of well-being and as supportive to their mental health, I believe it would be a mistake to frame the benefits of making they experience, as one, which is curative or sanative, because one would have to come from a position where making acts as a kind of socially acceptable sticking plaster to their own personal fragilities.

‘There is no such thing as mental illness. It is merely a convenient label for groupings and isolating cases where identification has not occurred properly. Those whom power can neither govern nor kill, it taxes with madness.’
(Vaneigem, 1967/2006, p.137)

Whilst I do not believe that ‘there is no such thing as mental illness’, I am sympathetic to his sentiment. Contemporary society is full of sticking plaster prescriptions by the media, government, schools and work - we are sent on staff-training for our well-being, our kids get taught mindfulness in school during exam time in order to counteract the rise in childhood depression (in primary school!), government schemes shame us into eating healthier and to reduce our self-medication with alcohol, etc. I consider the vast majority of these schemes as downright misanthropic. And here is why: These schemes are a symbol of the absolute avoidance within society of having to confront in action, that which is making us depressed, stressed, unhealthy and addicted.

There is much good work out there that aims to give people space and access to meaning-making and form-giving activities, but we need to be beware to not become part of narratives where the conditions that make us ill are framed as ‘just so’ and where activities that we design to soften the blows, normalise the fact that something is fundamentally very wrong. From craft for the elderly, to Design thinking for the mentally ill (Devlin, 2010; Social Value Lab, 2011; Yair, 2010; ‘Design thinking in soul care’, 2018; Wolfe, 2018), the applications of forms of making for better living are much discussed and promoted. In a report on Craft and well-being, the Craft Council highlights the UK Government’s agenda of measuring the nation’s well-being and points to a range of examples of how making can benefit a wide range of people, for example:

‘... participants who are generally given little freedom in life (young people with learning difficulties, for example) experience new autonomy from being encouraged to experiment with boundaries, and especially from being given responsibility for sharp, hot or otherwise dangerous materials.’ (Yair, 2010, p.5)

Whilst the report hints at the problematics of politicising ‘happiness’ linked to the Government’s data collection, it also implies that Craft could contribute to the improvement of this happiness data.

A great amount of academic literature in relation to making and well-being comes from a health and well-being background, such as Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt (2013), Reynolds (2010), Cameron, Crane, Ings and Taylor (2013), Stuckey & Nobel (2010), Van Lith, Schoefield and Fenner (2012), Titus and Sinacore (2013), for example, which explains why the standpoint is primarily one of 'proving' the therapeutic benefits of creative making.

Whilst I take no issue with the validity of research which explores the therapeutic benefits of making, and appreciate the humanistic intentions of making *making* accessible to those in need of its benefits, I propose that analysis of deeper socio-political implications of *why* it is beneficial is needed. As Guffey (2014) reminds us: 'The politics of human creativity are often messy. The very idea of making, of improving, or of recycling requires an imaginative leap of faith ...' (264), I would argue that we need to pay attention to both the politics and the leaps of faith in making practice in order to truly comprehend its benefits.

It is perhaps not surprising that it is primarily feminist literature in relation to craft, such as Grace and Gandolfo (2014), Kelly (2015), Bain (2016), Bratich and Brush (2011), Hackney (2013), to name a few, which takes a political stance and questions underlying political implications of making for mental health and well-being. I have previously proposed to move towards a 'feminist design ontology' (Levick-Parkin, 2017), because I believe that the plasticity of feminist critique is such that it has the capacity to ask deeper questions about all our making practices, including questioning the very ontology we are situated within. I also believe that this is what is necessary when we look at research findings that tell us that making is experienced as beneficial to mental health and well-being.

We need to address the Why? more meaningfully.

I propose that the space and time that the women demarcate for their making is an enactment of a temporal resistance to patriarchal and neo-liberal capitalist value structures, they ring-fence spaces of autonomy which, I believe, have the potential to inform ways in which we can model other ways of living with making in times to come.

Chapter 10

IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGN PEDAGOGY

10.1. Introduction

In *Implications for Design Pedagogy*, my objective is to discuss how my research findings might impact on how practice and education in Design is conceptualised, and problematise its situatedness within the broader context of contemporary Western design ontology. I will go on to outline what this might mean in relation to both future education in relation to making practices, whether within formal Design education or beyond it and how it might inform ways in which we might make in the decades to come.

Sims and Shreeve (2012) highlight that whilst Art and Design pedagogy stems from artists' or atelier studio practice, it became more formalised in the UK in the nineteenth century when government schools of Art and Design were set up in order to support the increase of manufacturing output. The way in which Western Design ontology has produced and re-produced patriarchal and neo-liberal capitalist value structures has been much critiqued (Buckley, 1986; Souleles, 2013; Escobar, 2013). Who designs, who produces and who consumes (Manzini, 2015), are urgent questions for anyone involved in Design education because through Design pedagogy we become part of the future reproduction and production of the system (Fry, 2010; Orr, 2014; Levick-Parkin, 2017). In the four decades since Papanek (1971) critiqued the expert-driven and consumption-oriented nature of Western Design, the majority of people are still excluded from form-giving and meaning-making in ways that are counted as meaningful in the wider public realm. But the call for a making active and visible of the human capacity to make and equipping a wider range of people to be producers in their own lives, rather than just consumers or users, is issued by ever more scholars, particularly from within Design Anthropology (Milev, 2013; Ingold, 2013a; Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012).

Creative subjects have become notoriously undervalued in many contemporary school systems (Robinson, 2011), and whilst meaning-making and form-giving, can be pursued in very wide variety of pursuits (Sennet, 2008; Hackney, 2006), this is ultimately curtailed by our pre-dominant enculturing into consumers rather than as producers in our own lives (Milev, 2013; Ingold, 2013a; Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012). Contemporary Western Design's close entwining with capitalist modes of production of values and consumption, means that it can be difficult to envisage ways of untangling the practice,

but these are futures we need to strive to imagine even if this appears to us, as Designers and Design Educators, as an impossible task. We need to escape our own ontological entrapment and there are some aspects of our disciplines which should make it easier for us to contribute to new models in the valuation of non-market work.

10.2. Being Free to Make

As discussed in 'The Spaces of Making', some of the women conceptualised their making in terms of 'this is my work'. When Toni and Eirini call their making 'their work', they are claiming value for their making which is normally earmarked for capitalist productive work, and with that the ethical and moral values ascribed to it. That they should do so is not that surprising as they are both trained Fine Artists and the identity of being an artist is traditionally not bound to being economically viable through your work, and this notion is also traditionally cultivated in the Art School. Even within wider capitalist society, the romanticised notion of the 'starving artist' supports the idea that in order for an artist to work ie to make Art and be an artist, they do not have to be economically productive. They are measured by other systems, such as peers, exhibitions, galleries, etc. which although, of course, also connected to the economic sphere, do not directly judge based on economic worth but indirectly via aesthetics (Orr, 2010; Orr, Yorke and Blair, 2014; Niedderer, 2013; Drew, 2004). The first question is: Are you an artist that makes 'good' work? Then: Are you an artist who sells work? (And makes money.) The economic value judgement is there, but one step removed. Although a slight exception to the rule, it still fits neatly within the narrow constructs of what can be counted as 'work' within the capitalist system, exactly because it is an exception, but also because capitalism has successfully commodified much of Art and culture-making, even if most who produce it don't necessarily benefit greatly economically on an individual level.

Saying they were at 'work', Eirini and Toni were able to signal to both themselves and others that they *could* prioritise their making over other labour demands made on them. But what of the women who are not artists? As previously highlighted, their making space provided a signal that they could make time but they had to claim a certain amount of autonomy before they could even make that space. Part of that had to be a refusal to do other work. And the refusal of work is a significant act, which, within a capitalist construct that values work above everything else, is mundanely radical. It is a radical mundanity which Knott (2015) soberly disavows - although describing 'amateur time' as 'the possibility for temporary control of one's own labour alienation' (p.98), he pinpoints

one of its defining features as being its constraints and limitations in terms of utopianism, and as such its lacking of any meaningful will or future-directive power. Vaneigem (1967/2006), however, proposed that 'lived space-time is the space-time of transformation, whereas the space-time of roles is that of adaption' (p.220). I would argue that the space in time that the women take for their making is one where they have freed themselves of roles - it's a freedom that is attained, not bestowed, and it functions through activity (Grosz, 2010). As such, to conceive it as 'compliant', 'weak' and lacking discursive power, as Knott (2015, p.98) describes 'amateur time', is to view it from within an ontology of patriarchal capitalist value structures. I refuse the ontology.

As discussed in the previous chapter, I also refuse to point to making as a remedy, which 'treats' or counteracts the cause of illness. I propose that it is simply that, the opportunity for a human to be engaged in making is such an essential part of their human condition that if your ability or desire to make is stifled or curtailed, you become unwell. So, the benefits of then engaging in making, are not a cure, but a claiming of what is our fundamental right in the first place. The capitalist system takes our capacity to make and self-produce, and instead nurtures in us the endless capacity to consume. And in order to endlessly consume, we have to work. This takes up our time and space. And within work as Weeks (2011) highlights, even:

'Dreams of individual accomplishment and desires to contribute to the common good become firmly attached to waged work, where they can be hijacked to rather different ends: to produce neither individual riches nor social wealth, but privately appropriated surplus value.' (p.8)

Making needs space and time, and the surplus value it produces in wider societal terms, will only be truly valued if the work/wage binary is radically re-thought in terms of how it is valued and how it derives its agency and power.

10.2.1. Women are already Specialists in Non-market Work

Capitalism, Mason (2015) proposes: '... will be abolished by creating something more dynamic that exists, at first, almost unseen within the old system, but which breaks through, reshaping the economy around new values, behaviours and norms' (p.xiv). He is, in this context, primarily talking about the impact of information technology on societal and economic structures, proposing that it is already loosening the relationship between wages and work. I would argue that for women, the relationship between wages and work has never been a particularly stable one. Rowbotham (1973b) pointed out that

one of the reasons why capitalism has remained to a large degree suspicious of women, is that it has never viewed them as being reliably committed to waged work. I believe that we can still see this suspicion reflected in gender pay-gap and career progression discrepancies to this day. This is because women's labour often remained and still often continues to remain in the process - in the production of their families and communities (Rowbotham, 1973a; Parker and Pollock, 1981; Buckley, 1986). In relation to care for others in particular, this is also often a production they prioritise, if they can, if they must. I do not have space here to draw on critiques of the causes of gendered labour within patriarchy, only to say that I am fully aware of their importance.

My main argument here is that women have *always* retained knowledge of work outside of the capitalist economic constructs, which although this resulted in painful exclusion for centuries (Rowbotham, 1973b; Parker and Pollock, 1981; Buckley, 1986), has also harboured knowledge of *'freedom to'* (Grosz, 2010). As such, women are often already specialists in constructing alternative work/wage binaries and producing within value constructs not aligned to capitalist labour constructs.

Frayne (2015) who conducted extensive research with people who had reduced work-hours or given up work, found that 'they had not done so according to some kind of crude anti-work morality, but according to a strongly felt desire to do *more*.' (Frayne, 2015, p.141) For some, it had included more of, what society currently considers idling time, for others it has meant being involved further in self-production and community oriented production (Frayne, 2015, p.141). Scholars of post-capitalism, such as Mason (2015), Weeks (2011), Frayne (2015) and Bregman (2016), make the case that self-production will be an essential component of a society which successfully comes to terms with the automisation of a large proportion of what is now wage labour. They argue that in order to thrive, we have to break the link between wages and production, through implementing basic income for all citizens so that from their self-production, society can continue to be produced. I propose that making dispositions are the ground from which this can be nurtured, by giving time, space and opportunity to make.

10.2.2. Re-evaluating the Value of Making

This is of particular interest for two reasons: first, because it has implications for how we might educate children in order to become resilient and self-motivated individuals, who contribute to cultural and community production, outside of the work/wage binary. Although research (Frayne, 2015; Bregman, 2016) has shown that the implementation of basic income can encourage both cultural and self-production, I would argue that in

order for this to become a new norm, and for it to be morally and ethically valued on the same terms as waged work, educational strategies need to be radically re-considered for this shift to occur. At present, the majority of schooling and higher education is entirely geared towards questions of employability (Collini, 2012; McGettigan, 2013), which in the UK has sharpened dramatically over the past decade. Subjects which are not directly linked to waged work and economic growth have been systematically excluded from funding, evaluation and development (Collini, 2012; McGettigan, 2013). This has happened across a broad swathe of disciplines, including Art & Design.

It is somewhat ironic that Art and Design has been included in this devaluation, because as part of the creative industries, the disciplines do contribute not only to the cultural production of the country, but are also high level-economic drivers for growth (Design Commission, 2011; Design Council, 2015; Kampfner, 2018). Western design practice is traditionally closely entwined with capitalism (Milev, 2011; Escobar, 2013; Fry, 2015,) and in Britain the origins of publicly funded Art & Design education are closely linked with the desire to diversify manufacturing during the industrial revolution (Sims and Shreeve 2012; Souleles, 2013). As such, Design education, in particular, has its roots firmly in capitalist production and consumption, whether its successes within the system are ideologically presently valued or not. Thus, my aim here is not to critique the fallacy of the devaluation of the subject in the present economic strategy (in the UK), but account for what I believe is needed in order to educate for the future.

I believe that all education should be cut loose from explicit links with economic growth, whilst a new ethical moral valuing of education and work is formulated. Design education, in particular, needs to re-frame its primary purpose into one where students are not encultured into communities of practice where their participation in a Design industry that perpetuates socially and environmentally unsustainable economic growth, is the foremost defining factor of the value of their work.

10.3. Future making Education

Art & Design pedagogy is well placed to develop work ethics, where the value of it is not primarily framed directly by monetary economics (Danvers, 2003; Friedman, 2010; NESTA, 2008). Research has shown that creative graduates show high levels of acceptance of sacrificial labour, in that they privilege the meaning and intent of their work as primary and will put time into their work which on paper often renders it economically un-viable (NESTA, 2008, William and Haukka 2008). Presently it is likely that pedagogies from the creative arts are better at fostering alternative ethics and making

dispositions to the wage/work approach, rather than Design's inherently industry focused curriculum. There are many Design educators, researchers and practitioners who have been calling for and working towards an expanded conception of Design for a long time (Papanek, 1971; Manzini, 2015; Milev, 2013; Kjærsgaard and Otto, 2012) and if supported adequately from within the system this could flourish, benefitting society more broadly. Being an HE educator, the question for me is also whether HE is actually best placed to support this. On its current trajectory of the overriding focus on employability I believe we are educating for a present that might become the past quite rapidly. The transmission of how your making work gains value within communities of practice is very effective (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Trowler, 2012), but my findings suggest that this is double-edged at times when the women felt that their making was not valued within that system. The women who had never been involved in formalised creative education, did not appear to suffer from this alienation from their making. Women are under-represented in all spheres of professional Design (Mindiola, 2010; Siddal, 2014; Burgoyne, 2010), even though they have made up the majority of graduate for decades (Maness, 2015; HESA, 2013). Although demanding equal representation and participation is always of utmost importance to have a place of power from which to act, I have previously questioned *what* it is we are demanding equal participation *in* (Levick-Parkin, 2017).

I believe that my research findings indicate that it is the capacity for self-production that creates the most resilient forms of making dispositions - more resilient than those conceived within a general capacity for production. Thus, it seems imperative to nurture ethics and capacities for self-production as these will be the ground from which new social and cultural production is best placed to spring from. This self-production will need a safe-guarded area of protection, both ethically and morally but importantly – financially. In relation to this I believe that Design discourse would benefit from engaging in post-capitalist theory and activism further, whilst foregrounding a critical feminist epistemology when asking questions of 'Who designs?' and 'What for?' and problematises how these play out within a wide range of power constructs.

10.3.1. Making Ontologies Visible

In a previously published article, I proposed moving towards a "Feminist Design Ontology" in order to make the historicity of our contemporary Design *being* visible, because, following Fry, Dilnot and Stewart (2015). I judged reflections within the discipline of our own constructedness as lacking and which circumscribes our potential to

address issues of gender and oppression (Levick-Parkin, 2017). In relation to personal development within education and beyond, Kontopodis (2018) points to it being performative rather than scientific, it is 'a directed and organized everyday semiotic-material practice in educational institutions. It does not *represent* reality but is a way of *creating* it.' (p.16). I believe it is of vital importance to recognise the Design disciplines' reality *as created*, rather than as a natural phenomenon of *how it is*. I have previously proposed that Design educators are similarly engaged in creating realities (Levick-Parkin, 2017), but that our declaring and the laying open of this constructedness is circumscribed by a lack of reflection on Design's deeper socio-political history and how it simultaneously futures and de-futures (Fry 2015) and all the social, environmental and political consequences this entails. Kontopodis (2018) proposes making all societal and political mediations and translations that we as educators engage in visible, would facilitate the challenging of power relations between those in charge and those at the receiving end. As I have previously argued, the challenge for us as Design educators is to become aware of our own constructedness in the first place and evaluate the implicit value judgements embodied that determine how and what systems we produce and re-produce:

'In order to be able to fully explore issues of gender in design, a difficult archaeology of how we are ontologically designed is necessary to think "of futures yet unthought" (Grosz 1999) and to try to "dis-embody" embodied value systems of patriarchal and neoliberal capitalisms' (Levick-Parkin, 2017, p.17)

I would argue that a feminist approach to Design Anthropology can offer a precious opportunity to expand the social imaginary by re-envisioning the design process itself, giving spaces from which to act and think outside of our existing ontological understanding of making. As Gunn, Otto and Smith (2013) highlight, - not only is culture an ingrained and situated part of Design practice, but 'we are in fact designing cultures of the future' (p.13), it follows that anyone working within Design education has a role to play in making visible the worlds we might possibly be futuring and as well as the historicity that drives our impetus to do so.

10.3.2. The Ethics of Utopianism

In terms of my own teaching, some of these insights have already started to inform my practice. Together with a team of like-minded people we are designing spaces in which together with the students, we can ask questions of utopian and dystopian design futuring, aiming to lay bare the underlying constructedness of our ethics and value positionalities which drive all making. In the context of Design's propensity of de-

futuring us all, because it produces systems and artefacts which may lead to the planet becoming un-inhabitable, Fry (2010) proposes that a new normative reign of sustainment is needed where the primary decision on whether something should come into existence is made, based on whether it is ecologically sustainable. He argues that only this can bring about an ontological (re)designing of our conduct both within society and within our relationship with the planet, that is, sustainable. He points to our communal lack of reflection on our Anthropocentrism, and states that ‘... without knowledge of anthropocentrism, taking responsibility for being so is impossible’ (2010, p.170). I propose that a Design Anthropology, which harnesses the plasticity inherent in feminist epistemology, can give us some ways of making visible our relationship with the world around us and ‘challenge the status quo by facilitating other types of encounters, conversations, and imaginaries, and giving voice to people, things, and animals otherwise marginalized...’ (Smith et al., 2016, p.13) and make visible the intra-activity between all matter which is inherent in all our actions and thoughts.

10.3.3. New Paradigms of Private and Public Making

I regard the full equal participation of women in public life and the full equal participation of men in private life as essential to move towards a future that is more liveable for all. I have previously voiced my concerns over un-differentiated calls of inclusion in public life for women, as I deem it necessary to ask the question ‘Asking for inclusion in what?’ The majority of public life is still currently constructed in ways which only value certain types of contributions and demand the sacrificing of other aspects of life, which are not seen as productive and therefore not valued. Foster (2016) points out that women’s decisions not to pursue full participation in public life, is often based on their realistic reading of the codes and message they receive at a societal level, telling them what is achievable and at what cost in their individual contexts, yet when they ‘fail’ to fully participate it is presented to them as individual failure not as the systemic inequality it really is:

‘...it is individual failure, not a structure designed to keep business homogenous, that keeps the gender pay-gap in place and forces an earnings cut to women who have the audacity to have children’ (Foster, 2016, p.20).

Thus, what is needed is not full participation in public life as it is presented to us at the present, but a fundamental re-evaluation and construction of how public life is defined and how its ethical and moral valuing is conceived within wider societal self-understanding. Whilst this could be regarded as utopian, it is only *my* utopian and may well be dystopian for the next person. What is important is that we acknowledge that

ideas over what futures we would like to be brought into being, are ultimately ethical positions that are constructed within ideological frameworks (Weeks, 2011). Human 'progress' into any direction is not a natural phenomenon of things that 'have to be'.

Education has a responsibility in making this visible and in equipping people with an understanding of these value judgements, so that a potentially flawed status quo is not reproduced mindlessly and unquestioningly. A re-evaluation of Design Pedagogy's relationship with industry focused work/wage binaries will be essential to this. If the human propensity to make is to become sustainable, both socially and environmentally, a decisive cutting of Design's umbilical cord to capitalism's insatiable and unsustainable growth mind set and consumption is needed to support this shift, and it needs to happen soon. Capitalism is dependent on human making, human making is not dependent on it.

Chapter 11

CONCLUSION

11.1. Introduction

In order to explore *how women make*, I built my research around the following research questions:

- **How do women make within particular material and physical contexts?**
- **How do women conceptualise their making within their social contexts?**

Based on my research findings and analysis, in relation to Design Pedagogy, I also considered:

How might insights gained from the women's making practice impact future educational contexts?

My analysis situated these questions and the data made during the research in the wider context of feminist theory concerned with the material and temporal, and how female labour is valued in the societal context. I called on Design Anthropology and post-capitalist theory in order to zoom out of contemporary constructs of Design ontology and propose how future Design education might be re-constructed.

11.2. Data and Analysis

My fieldwork was introduced through vignettes focusing on three of the 11 women's making practices encountered. I showed how those three women had particular insights and practices in relation to their making. I thematically analysed these in order to show how personal knowledge that resides in the making practices of the different women informs both a deeper and expanded understanding of human making practice. Its main contribution is in building on, and adding to, previous feminist literature which makes visible female making practice, so as to shine light on the knowledge active within it with the aim to counterbalance centuries of silence around women's contribution to cultural and material production and re-production.

After discussing some of the unique approaches and stances towards the three women's particular making practices, in the three chapters that followed I highlighted, how even in this small sample commonalities surfaced, which I structured around making *origins*,

spaces and *benefits*. In the 'Origins of Making' the commonalities that emerged showed that women had opportunities during childhood to develop a making disposition, by being exposed and participating in their elders' making practice and having access to making materials and tools. In my analysis, I concluded that in order to develop adult making capabilities, making experience in childhood is important as it develops a kind of 'making literacy', which I contextualised with literature in relation to childhood learning, literacy and material feminism. I concluded that the women's making literacy does not reside in any particular craft but creates making dispositions that are agile and can continue to be drawn upon in a wide range of contexts within adult life. Whilst these findings are not in themselves surprising, if we take into account all the knowledge that exists on human learning in childhood, I judge it to be a vital part of this thesis as it shows the ground from which these particular women were able to grow their making.

In their modes of making as adults they showed similarities in approaches to improvisation, exploration and risk-taking, which were congruent with learning goals framed as central within Art & Design pedagogy. They valued process over artefact and were not necessarily bound to any particular material practice. Their underlying making disposition makes them feel competent to tackle new skills, guided by their material and conceptual future-directed desires to make, whilst aiming for open-endedness and process, rather than artefact focused making. This part of the research can be found in the Appendix, as it supports other findings but I did not judge as essential to support the primary tenet and conclusion of my overall analysis.

In 'The Spaces of Making', I analysed how making spaces become part of women's making practice in a supportive way if they are able to command the space in the first place. I found that dedicated making spaces are extremely effective in storing/incubating making practice in terms of both materials and tools, as well as conceptual planning and thinking. The primary insight gained from the analysis of data in that chapter is that the demarcation of making space provides also a demarcation of making time. I conceptualised that making spaces issue a kind of *call to making* to the maker, but found that if there is no access to dedicated space, making still goes on, though it requires extra energy and discipline. I also found that if there is no access to time, making stops. I have argued that the making space in time is a political act, because it involves a ring fencing of time outside of capitalist time, as well as resisting other calls to action from within their domestic and social contexts. Its primary contribution is a critique of the narrow confines in which amateur making is conceptualised within certain theories on human making

practices, as well as contributing to feminist literature, that locates making within the political realm.

In the 'Benefits of Making', I showed that the women privileged the conceptualisation of making as being beneficial to their mental and physical well-being. The majority of them did not choose to foreground how their making benefitted others, whether that was in their family or community or the wider world. This is despite the fieldwork showing that their making *is* used to support others and is also used in external economic contexts. As previously discussed I chose to focus on their act of conceptual refusal of benefaction in order to surface potential meanings and implications in a broader socio-political context. Women who had been through a making crisis, described an intellectual and emotional struggle to divorce their making from externally ascribed value. I concluded that this happened because they had embodied 'permissions to make' based on being encultured into particular making practices through formalised education systems. My contribution to the literature here is the surfacing of the refusal of benefaction, which allowed me to conceptualise female making practice as a radical act without it having to be explicitly framed as an activist practice.

In 'Implications for Practice' I outlined what I consider the relevance and implications of my research findings and analysis might be in terms of contemporary Design education and ontology. Considering that my findings suggest that the most resilient forms of female making are situated within value constructs of self-realisation and outside of work/wage binaries, I judge the implication for future Design pedagogy to be the need to strengthen practices which do not derive their primary value from participation in capitalist industry aligned communities of practice. Whilst in post-capitalist society market and non-market work may overlap, the valuing of making in the private and public needs to be radically re-constructed. In order for us to adjust to new realities of the concept of public/private labour, in a world where technology and automisation make previous work/wage binaries un-workable, women's knowledge of the values driving non-market work can offer important insights into how this might come into being in a positive future directed way, to the benefit of a wider community of makers. Art and Design's valuing of sacrificial labour in order to make, needs to be critically activated by a feminist epistemology that foregrounds questions of ethics and power, whilst Design Anthropology grounded in the valuing of all human making capacity can provide us with new ways of imagining the material.

11.2.1. Limitations

Whilst this is a small study, in both sample and location, and as such its scope could be considered as ultimately limited, I call strongly upon the feminist tenet that ‘the personal is political’ and believe that, as such, women’s making-knowledge surfaced in this research is of importance and should be viewed as a solid foundation from which other knowledge can be built. There are, however, limitations within this study, which may partly have sprung from its limitations in space and time, whilst on the other hand offering points of reflection for my own limitations and biases.

This research does not cover the recent rise of maker communities and activism in the UK and further afield. There are many examples of these types of organised making spaces which have sprung up over the recent decade, from more community-oriented spaces such as “Access Space” (2018) in Sheffield to more formalised commercial settings such as the “Makerversity” (2018) in London and abroad. Toni, one of my participants, has actually been working at one of these organisations for a number of years, facilitating a range of making activities for a wide range of people from the local community. We talked about why these places might be more inclusive places to engage people in making and whether they might be better situated than formalised educational organisations to nurture making practices in a democratised way.

I consider these spaces as important places from which future making capacity within the population can be nurtured and facilitated, but have not managed to include this in my analysis or discussion. The women who participated in my research did not foreground community making, although some are engaged in it, but chose the research space to make visible their individual practices and values governing them. I thus concentrated my thematic analysis on these aspects.

In terms of my Design Anthropological approach, I had to come to terms with the fact that some of my initial goals in terms of methods were over ambitious. Many of the methods that ended up serving the emerging of themes are quite traditional methods such as interviews and conversations, whilst one of the things that makes Design Anthropology so exciting is that it gives space for knowledge making through a wide range of material expression. I did not let go of the aim to make the research more material lightly, but had intended it to be something that I would do as a second round of data making. In the end my initial data making with the women was that rich that I realised that I simply could not fit anything more into the limited scope of this project. Though my thematic structuring and analysis has been informed by a holistic approach to co-making and participant observation, my aim in the future will be to work further with

knowledge that springs from the material practice itself and does not primarily rely on language to communicate its reflections and questions.

11.3. Final Thoughts

The deepest conviction I am left with through this journey is that Design is a question of ethics and that the ethics informing the women's making have relevance beyond themselves and their individual making practices. The space and time that the women command to make, is time for self-production. That is for most of them its primary purpose. And with that, they are anarchic. That the benefit of their self-production extends beyond themselves is evident all around them, yet they refuse to give any of it power over their making. This refusal even extends to their family and community, which is probably the most radical aspect of their practice in feminist terms. A deep knowledge of *freedom to*, resides both within female making practices and within the Art & Design discipline, but in order to utilise its full potential for our communities in years to come, it needs to be imbued with value not currently conceivable in contemporary Design ontology. In order to make it conceivable, discourses over making, Design and education, have to be expanded beyond contemporary Design ontology, supported by the breaking of the work/wage dichotomy and its narrowly defined ethical and moral evaluation of both what constitutes public life and what counts as work.

Donovan (1985) alerts us to the idea that 'freedom is sustained by critical knowledge of one's self, one's community and the world' (p.xi) and my research shows how this freedom can be found in female making and how even from within this specific context has implications for much broader considerations of how we live. Grosz (2005) calls for the developing of concepts of time which is 'directed to a future that is unattainable and unknowable in the present' (p.1.) and I have here proposed that knowledge residing in female making practice may have more to tell us about the future, while we are also critically engaging in its past. As Donovan (1985) warned:

'Women will remain trapped in age-old patterns of enslavement and they will lose hard-won freedoms unless they learn and transmit their history'. (p.xi)

As Grosz (2010) reminds us 'Freedom is not a transcendent quality inherent in subjects but immanent in the relations that living has with the material world, including other forms of life' (p.148), which means that each freedom has to be a dialogical process informed by the construction of our own ethics in relation to the world around us.

Yet, I also believe in the more un-ruly elements of a *freedom to*, and as Vaneigem (1967/2006) reminds us '... subversion is the basic expression of creativity. Daydreaming subverts the world' (p.264). I have concluded that in their making, women are taking space to day dream - they are taking space to think - 'to feel lively within themselves' (Schües 2011), but more than that - they are taking the *freedom to* make, with all its material and sensory possibilities of making the new.

My claim to knowledge is, as such, not based on 'how women make' as generalised accounts of female making practice, but on how, by paying attention to the 'minor gestures' (Manning 2016) within female making practice, we can uncover whole new worlds of ways of being which can become realistic alternatives to the futures commonly presented to us. It is akin to a call to action - to give attention to female making going on around us, what it has to teach us about who we are and where we could be going. This thesis is my materialised desire to fulfil this call to action.

'Frameworks of everyday living are also of the event. And so, like all events, they can be modulated by minor gestures. They can be opened up to their potential in ways that intervene in capitalist time. They can become forms of resistance. They can do so, for instance, by altering rhythms, reducing our alignment to the homogeneity of capitalist speed. Altering the speed at which the everyday tends to function creates openings for neurodiverse forms of perception. It also makes time for modes of encounters otherwise elided. This call for the coursing of minor gestures within frames of everyday life involves crafting techniques that create the condition not for slowness exactly, but for the opening of the everyday to degrees and shades of experience that resist formation long enough to allow us to see the potential of worlds in the making.'

Erin Manning (2016, p.15)

'The real demand of all insurrectionary movements is the transformation of the world and reinvention of life. This is not a demand formulated by theorists: rather, it is the basis of poetic creation. Revolution is made everyday despite, and in opposition to, the specialists of revolution. This revolution is nameless, like everything springing from lived experience. Its explosive coherence is being forged constantly in the everyday clandestinity of acts and dreams.'

Raoul Vaneigem (1967/2006, p. 111)

Wordcount: 54 984

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APPENDIX

A.1. Introduction

The Appendix contains a range of material to support the reading of the thesis.

I am presenting the supporting relevant material in the order in which they appear within the thesis.

Materials include material relating to participation, images supporting certain chapters, images from the fieldwork with the different women and sample transcripts. I am also including evidence of other themes emerged during data analysis

Overview:

A.2 Material Relating to Recruitment and Participation

A.3 Supporting Material Chapter 4 Kaz

A.4 Supporting Material Chapter 5 Bill

A. 5 Supporting Material Chapter 6 Lucy

A.6 Supporting Material Weaving Chapters

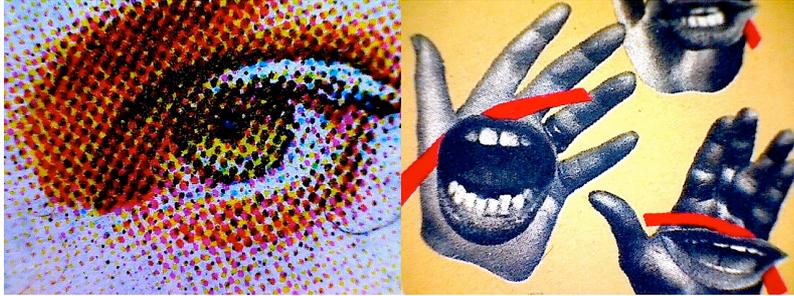
A.7 A Selection of Images from the Fieldwork

A.2. Ethics Documents

A.2.1. Participant Information Sheet

The University Of Sheffield

Female Participants Wanted!



HOW WOMEN MAKE

Are you a female maker? Do you like applying your creativity and thoughts to all kinds of projects? You might be artistic or into DIY, your thing might be cooking or coding, or maybe you have a craft that you pursue. Would you be willing to share your creative making practice and what it means to the rest of your life with others?

My name is Mel and I am a doctoral researcher at Sheffield University who is interested in all kinds of female making practices. I am currently working on a research project that is looking at how and why women make things.

I am looking for a small number of female participants and if you are a female maker this could be you!

Would you be happy for me to spend time with you while you are making whatever it is you make, would be happy for me to join into your making practice for a little while, would welcome me documenting the process and open to having conversations about it all?

This research is part of my doctorate and my aim is to build a body of work that bears witness and makes visible the many different ways in which women 'make'. The documenting would include me taking photos, drawing, recording, making

notes and a range of other methods that might be suitable for documenting your particular kind of practice. This research is based on co-design and participatory principles, which means that you would be an active participant in the research and be able to influence the research process as it unfolds.

The outcomes of the research will become part of my doctorate and potentially a range of publications in relation to the project. You would be able to withdraw from the research at any point until the write up period and will get a chance to review and comment on any data collected in relation to your participation.

If you are someone who makes things and think you might be interested in sharing your making practice with me, other female makers and a wider audience, please get in touch for an informal chat.

Please contact Melanie Levick-Parkin m.levick-parkin@shu.ac.uk Mob.: 07724099355

A.2.3. Ethics Approval Letter



Downloaded: 20/02/2016
Approved: 16/02/2016

Melanie Levick-Parkin
Registration number: 130113539
School of Education
Programme: Educational Doctorate

Dear Melanie

PROJECT TITLE: How Women Make - Investigating process, motivation and agency in Female Making Practice through Design Anthropology
APPLICATION: Reference Number 007382

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 16/02/2016 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 007382 (dated 14/01/2016).
- Participant information sheet 1014760 version 1 (14/01/2016).
- Participant consent form 1014761 version 1 (14/01/2016).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

Professor Daniel Goodley
Ethics Administrator
School of Education

A.2.4. Feedback Comment from Participants

Kaz:

'I felt like I was reading about someone else and I was really intrigued about what we were saying! Especially because it was so long ago and I was concentrating on the picture more than what I was talking about, you've got such a lovely way of writing. I wish we would have spoken about the text on the day though I didn't even think about it, I think because I'm so used to just getting on with things in my own head I don't always communicate things because as long as they sit right with me, then its all good! I love how you speak about the sun coming through the windows and you think of light coming through a church window. If you need a picture of the angel finished let me know because I have one. I love reading the references you have white etc and how it links in with what I was doing, it's so top to see my process from another point of view. I'm really touched and grateful that I got to be a part of it. I'm so much happier now doing what I do, getting in the studio and being with and around real life people has helped! It's been a long while since I've done any mosaics. Embroidery has stolen my heart, more choice of colours so my eye has been turned, glitter threads as well, cheaper and lighter to work with so jobs a good un! Still have love for the mosaics obviously, they have been good to me and I'll always love how something beautiful can be made from something that is broken.

If you need anything else let me know, I did change my website round a bit last week so if you want more upto date pics they are on there. Thank you so much Mel, good luck with everything, you deserve it!

All my love Kaz xx'

Lucy:

'Taking part in Mel's 'How Women Make' project whilst developing my solo work and practice was a great experience. Before beginning my project I was very excited and looked forward to all the different components of the research and development such as meeting people in the community, having talks with academics about their research and developing the solo work through time in the studio. I quickly realized how isolating creating solo work can be. There were collaborators involved and many people I could discuss the project with but Mel provided a platform where I could discuss the project in an open and flexible way. Because Mel is not 'dance trained' or invested in the project's development in a creative way it meant the conversations we had could bounce between us without the constraints of my knowledge of the project because Mel could ask questions that I had not thought were relevant to the work but in answering them would open up new questions. Because we met early into the project I was able to use our scheduled meetings and Mel's observations of me as check points; a way for me to check in with her was a way of checking in with myself and my progress. Mel's relationship to me and the project was on its own level – she wasn't as involved as my mentor or sound artist obviously but then was

more involved (knew more about the work, and more importantly the process) than anyone else who I would speak to outside of the studio – therefore this relationship existed in between these two states and was very useful.'

Katy:

'Thanks for sending - it's good to see you're close to finishing ;)

I'm happy for you to use all of this as it is and as you need.

Thanks for asking me to take part - it's been fascinating, I'm looking forward to reading the finished work!

Fotini:

'I am so proud of you!!! Bravo..'

Vicky:

'I participated in Melanie's PhD study as I feel not enough is written about the many different ways that women make in the creative industries. Speaking to Mel about my practice and showing her around my studio has been really useful to me as a practitioner as it has made me analyse my reasons for making, through talking, and how I personally benefit from things that I make. It also made me realise that it's something I'd like to know more about.'

Jill (Transcriber):

'Hi Mel,

What a lovely thought, thank you – although I haven't much to add really! It's fair to say that I don't remember everything I've typed ... I remember being struck by how diverse the idea of 'making' is and includes the fabulously creative things as well as things I think of as 'run of the mill' - the cooking, sewing, DIY and so on. I loved the idea of Duchamp Tourism – what a fab thing to do – to travel around your interest!! I identified with the thread that children disrupt the making too though, and also that maybe a physical space in which to make could become an issue! It was interesting to hear people's perspective as well about the example and encouragement (or not!) they got when they were younger from family and educators etc. I've two boys (which obviously doesn't fit the female

component), one approaching his final year and one just starting uni so it made me think about their influences.

Anyway, I'll stop rambling, as you see I don't have anything very constructive to say – maybe now I'm approaching being an 'empty nester' I'll be inspired to try something creative – certainly transcription couldn't be called that, albeit thought-provoking sometimes – I have been known to get cross, laugh or cry depending on the subject matter!!

Thanks again and take care – hope all goes well!

Jill'

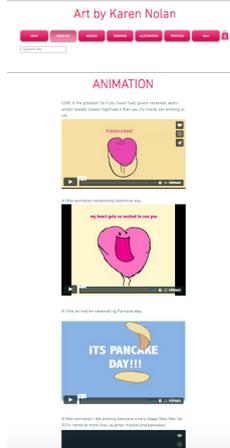
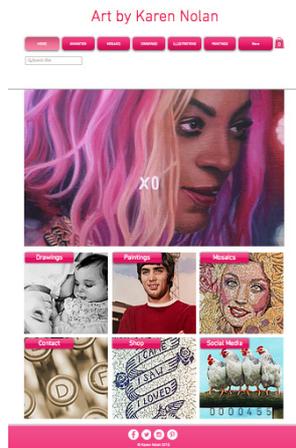
Natasha (Proof reader):

'It's been a fascinating read and I was particularly interested in the elements around 'Space' especially as I have just got my own piece of work space away from the home.'

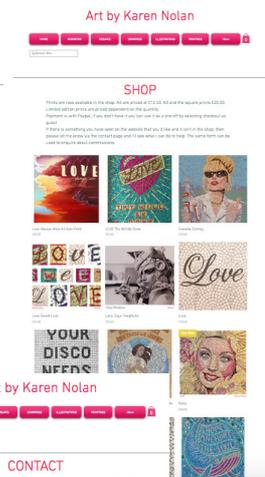
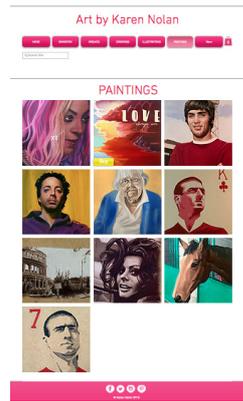
A.3. Supporting Material CHAPTER 4 Kaz

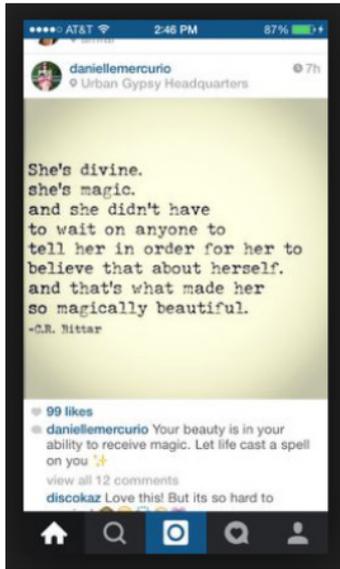
A.3.1. Thematically ordered images from the fieldwork with Kaz

These images support my participant vignettes and discussion: 'Making with Heart and Hand' (p.66)



Kaz's Website and Instagram





Recognition & Reward

A **REWARD** for a job well done is what this card represents. It's a time of **RECOGNITION** for a completed project, hard work, skill, expertise, and craftsmanship. These abilities are **NOW** being honored, but don't forget to also pay homage to yourself. Pat yourself on the back- you **DESERVE** it!

This card also comes forth to represent a family or group of people coming together - all of whom are aiming and striving toward a common goal.

ACCEPT the help that is being offered. More possibilities are in the works, so be sure to lay a **SOLID FOUNDATION** from your past **ACHIEVEMENTS**, and this will help you be **READY** for your next **OPPORTUNITY**.

In addition, this card is a reminder to **take care of your physical body**; after all, it is what carries your soul around in this material world.

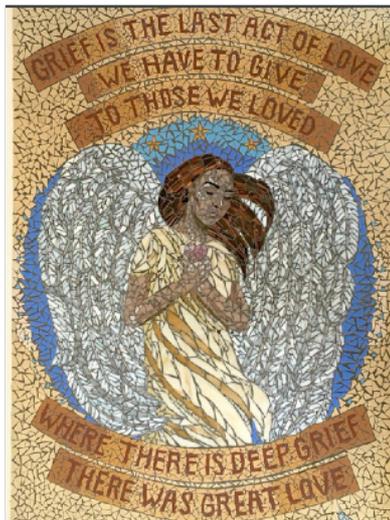
Another channeled message being received from the Angel oracles for you.

You would **BENEFIT** from spending some **ALONE** time, listening to your inner voice. Meditation is **ESSENTIAL**, as the path into **ENLIGHTENMENT** is an inner journey. Be silent and experience the **JOY** that comes from seeking the **TRUTH** of your own **HEART**.

Namaste Beautiful Soul

Thank YOU for dropping by Enchanting Babbie's Wonderland of

Mind
Body
Heart & SOUL
ADVENTURES



artbykarenolan Follow

artbykarenolan The Last Act of Love Glass and porcelain mosaic 84cmx58cm For the exhibition "In All its Glory" at Chester Cathedral September 20th till October 27th

To anyone who has ever loved and lost, this is for you 🙏

Limited edition A3 prints will available later on www.artbykarenolan.co.uk *mates rates apply so message me #angels #mosaics

paulhoughtonmosaics @artbykarenolan that's fantastic

artbykarenolan @pauh272 thanks Paul, took way longer than expected but its done now!

paulhoughtonmosaics @artbykarenolan 🙏

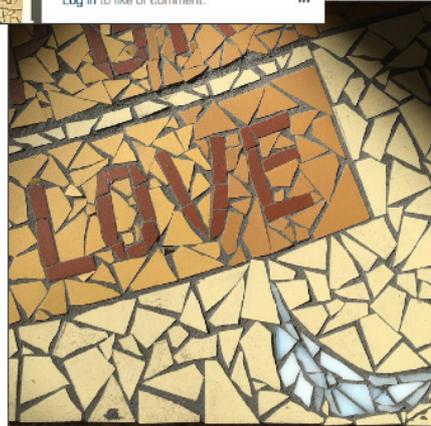
65 likes
SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Log in to like or comment. ...

Karen Nolan (@discokaz)

Angel 🍷

9:37am 09/13/2016 5 ❤️ 20



artbykarenolan Follow

aletadoranmosaics It looks beautiful!

artbykarenolan @aleta.mosaics thank you! It took about four hours to grout, had a lot of vodka last night!

aletadoranmosaics @artbykarenolan I hate grouting! Well done for the vodka - I was so tired that just one glass of wine rendered me incapable of anything other than sleep!

artbykarenolan @aleta.mosaics its going to be a great exhibition! Xx

34 likes
SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

Log in to like or comment. ...

Love, hearts and hope.

212 Followers 836 Following
www.artbykarennolan...
Republik of Mancunia /
You give a little Love and
it all comes back to you :)



Someday, all the love you've
given away,
will find its way back to you,
and it will finally stay."



Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
♥♥♥
2:11pm 10/26/2016 1 ♥ 38



Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
Morning! 🌞🍷🍷
7:12am 06/14/2017 3 ♥ 36



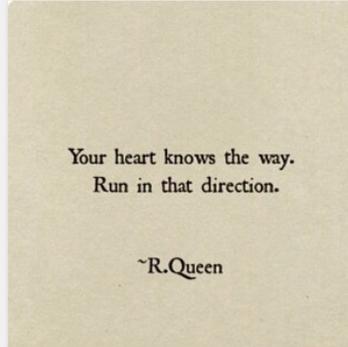
Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
More Amour ♥♥♥
9:58am 11/08/2016 1 ♥ 27

discokaz)

4 ♥ 24



Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
I dream in neon ♥
6:31am 11/02/2016 1 ♥ 36

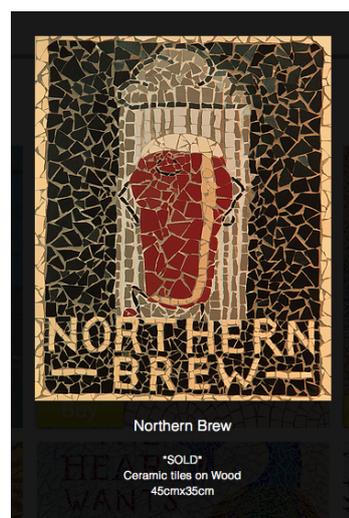
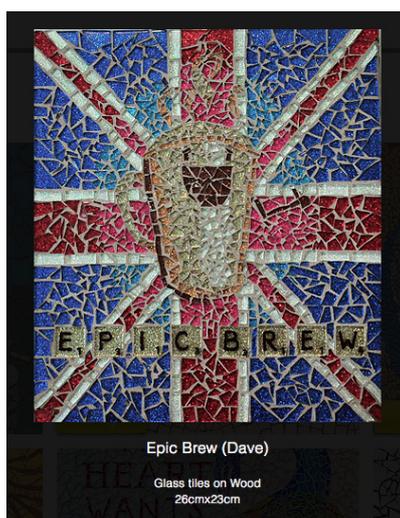
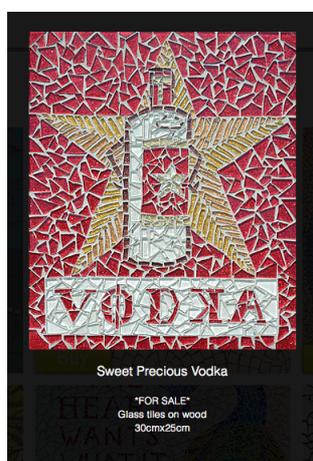
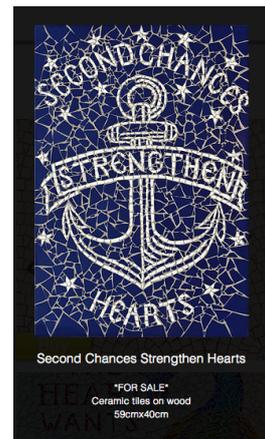
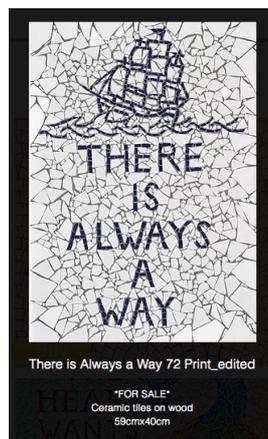


Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
♥
11:27am 10/28/2016 7 ♥ 61

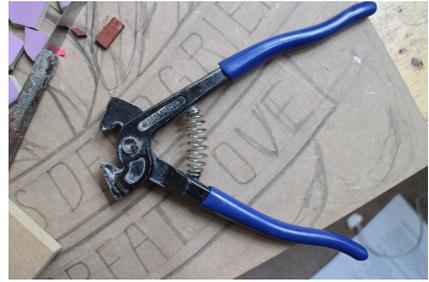


Karen Nolan (@discokaz)
👉
8:13am 10/23/2016 4 ♥ 36

Drink, football and being 'northern'.



Kaz Making



Kaz and Mel co-making



A.3.2. Transcript Kaz

* Yes, that's running, hello. Right, I'm just going to loosely, I've got kind of, it's just really informal but --

F Yes.

* And I think some of it we kind of talked about when I met you around Katy's, but it would be good to kind of go --

F Go over it again like.

* Yes.

F That's fine.

* I mean we didn't, I wasn't asking questions then in the same way I suppose but I'm probably interested in the same things. The first one is really what is your history of making?

F I think from, I can remember really, as a child I was always artistic and I think it just led me to everything, like my earliest memory was at school. We actually did portraits when we were about 5 or 6 with the old school crayons and I just used to love the colour, it was the colour.

* Was that in primary school?

F Primary school, so every time we got the crayons out I'd spend ages on it and then at the end of the day they pinned them all on the wall and I just was like 'Oh my God, mine's really colourful.' I don't know, it just attracted me to that, it just was natural. There was never a need to make it was just --

* Something that you were doing.

F Yes.

* Do you think there were particular people at that point in time to encourage you?

F At school?

* Yes, at that age.

F Well I do remember in primary school, the last year of primary school we had a teacher, so I was about 11, and she would do all the artwork for the school, when we'd have assemblies, so it was really great being in her class because she was very art-based. At the time you don't think that everyone else isn't, it just felt like 'Oh this is really good and you can do this and this is okay.' I think I was always okay with all the other academic subjects so it was never a case of one or the other, but that changed. When I went to secondary school, the art teacher there, she just hated me and oh it was awful and I just didn't want to do it anymore.

* She just spoiled it.

F Like I enjoyed doing it but she was just a bitch, I've no idea what her problem was, just anything I did, just trying to knock me down.

* What was she like with other people?

F Yes, she was known as a bitch.

* Yes okay.

F But it was like, I couldn't be bothered fighting and, you know, it was always a snide comment and I think throughout the five years I was straight A and I think I got one B in the last year and she just loved it. When we'd have art class and every year you'd have exams in every subject and in the art class she'd read everyone's out, which I never thought was necessary, but she did and she's be like 'Oh right Karen, 96%, da-da-da. Rachel, oh Rachel, amazing, Rachel well done, 88%.' So then everyone would look at me and go 'Didn't you get that?' and so then she'd be like 'Is there a problem?' and I'm like 'No, there's no problem.'

* Wow.

F She just, she always wanted to goad me.

* Do you think, yes I don't know --

F I could not tell you --

* I mean some teachers are really quite neurotic aren't they? I mean Dylan decided against taking art at his school and starting his GCSE because he said 'The art teacher just hates me.' and she was she was, at first I was going 'Look, but it would be really good to do art for you because you like all that stuff.' and he was like 'No really.' Then we went to the open day and she was just a bitch.

F Yes, I don't get it.

* And she was actively discouraging him from doing it. She was going 'This is really hard, it's really difficult, only really committed people can do this. You have to do a lot of studying.' Now I get that idea that you try to make it out not the soft subject that --

F Yes I get that, it's not just, yes, but then I nearly didn't, I said to my mum 'I don't want to do it for GCSE.' like I really couldn't be bothered with another two years, and I think the head intervened. Then I said 'Well can I go with the other teacher?', there was another male guy, but then she wanted me because she knew I'd give her a good score.

* Yes that's not --

F But it wasn't fun, I don't know what her problem is.

* I don't know, I think often --

F But she never did any art, you know, looking back. When I went to art class a couple of years ago with this lad, oh my God, he's brilliant, he spent three years in Italy, he's the one I've been doing that Rembrandt painting with.

* Yes.

F So the stuff he tells you, I said to him 'What a shame that people aren't learning this at school.' because there's so much more to learn --

* Oh God, yes.

F Rather than just 'Get on with it.' Because at school it was just a case of 'See that, I want you to draw it.' and you'd just draw it but there was no explanation about values.

* I know, I mean all the stuff that we saw, that's why, I mean the stuff that they had out it was just all copying and it was just about 'Make that look like this.'

F Yes.

* And if you think about what I used to love about Katy's lectures when I was at Stockport, it's that thing of the context, you know why that was painted like that, why that, the technique and --

F Yes and I just, yes, I didn't really even realise this. Then when we did our A Levels, we had a great art department there, they were brilliant and we would learn life drawing, but again it was just a case of get on with it rather than --

* So not really --

F No teaching.

* Yes.

F It was just, but again I was quite happy to get on with it because I really enjoyed it, but you kind of think we could have learned so much more. It's almost, looking back it was a shame because it was like, we could have done so much more. Then after A Levels, I did the Art Foundation. Now I went to Salford before Stockport --

* Oh yes.

F And it was hell, it was just horrible.

* Because obviously Salford is much closer to you here isn't it?

F Well we weren't, to be honest, Stockport was never really mentioned, at Xaverian it was a case of Manchester Met or Salford. So I remember doing the Manchester Met thing and I think I just got put on the waiting list so if anyone dropped out, but I remember saying to my mum 'I can't see anyone dropping out.' Then I went to Salford and got in and that was fine. Then it was just the biggest load of shit --

- * How old were you then?
- F So after Xaverian, so I was 19, so I went to --
- * So you did you're A Levels.
- F Yes, so I did my A Levels, got a B in my A Levels, I really loved doing my A Levels, oh the A Levels were brilliant because they made you think a lot more and a lot of it was, you know, artist paintings, recreate it but recreate it so it's you. So I remember doing a Paula Rego one, she did The Artist in Her Studio and there was so much going on in the background. So, I can't remember what she had in the background, she had something with three things on it and I did a Toucan for the Guinness bird and at the time it was when United were on to win the treble, so each week in the last bit of May we won a trophy I painted it on and the headmaster was like 'I'm buying it.' He says 'I'm buying it because it's got the treble.' and I was like 'It's not for sale.'
- (laughter)
- F But it was great and that was more celebrating your personality, you know, doing what --
- * Yes, being able to bring yourself into it.
- F Yes, bring yourself into it, if they've done it this way, so that was really fun. Then I just, I can't even explain Salford, it was a lot of talking and I couldn't understand. It was like they might as well have been speaking Russian, I didn't ever understand what they were after, it seemed to be more concept than actually doing and it was just way above my head and everything you did was 'No that's not what we're after.' and I remember thinking 'But this is all I can give you because I don't understand what you're saying.' So it was miserable and I remember thinking 'Oh God, I'm just going to have to leave and get a job now.' I remember thinking 'That's it, that's the art career gone.' Then I went back to see my old A Level teacher, you know you go back after a couple of months and pick up all your work --
- * Yes.
- F And he said 'And how is it?' I said 'I hate it. I think that's me done now.' like not thinking there was any other options.
- * Yes.
- F And he was like 'Oh my God, don't you dare. I'm going to ring my mate at Stockport.' which was Charlie, and there was three of us that left and we were thinking 'There's no way they're going take on three of us. We all three went down and I always say this to Katy, it was like going around Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, it was like, everything was like 'Wow. Oh my God, wow, this is amazing, wow, wow, wow, just brilliant.' Then Charlie was like 'Yes, so whenever you want to start.' and oh, didn't we have such joy going back to Salford and saying 'No thanks, we're going to Stockport.' and they didn't like that but I thought 'Well you didn't really care --

- * When we were here.
- F Yes 'You didn't.' So then I joined Stockport and when I joined Stockport I didn't really know what to do so I went in Fine Art and I loved it.
- * Were you on a foundation there as well?
- F Yes, yes.
- * Right okay.
- F So I transferred to Stockport, went in Fine Art and then they were doing all of a sudden then UCAS. I said to Duncan, I'm really not sure because this year has not been a waste but I've not really experienced what I want to experience and he went 'That's fine, just come back next year.' and I said 'I can't do a one year course twice. I said that's embarrassing.' He said 'This is your future, it takes as long as it takes.' I was like 'Okay.' and it was dead good. I remember, you know in the first few weeks where you get to try everything? But I already knew over the summer, that was it, I already knew over the summer I was going to do animation and I'd found Southampton University, so when I went back I said to Duncan 'This is what I'm thinking.' and he said 'Right, so we'll put you up in VisCom.' and it was brilliant and you could still do life drawing, which I loved, because at that time for animation they said 'We'll only let you in if you've got strong life drawing skills.
- * Right okay.
- F They weren't, obviously no-one had any animation to show them but they weren't bothered about that. So I got in straightaway on my portfolio and then I went there and it was brilliant.
- * Because that's quite a move, did you know anybody who went down there?
- F No.
- * Was it just you?
- F Just me. It didn't bother me because I'd always been quite independent in doing things and what it was, yes I did want to leave Manchester, I wanted to try somewhere and there was Bournemouth, but Bournemouth --, Southampton was just brilliant, I remember the guy just sold it to me and then I just thought it would be good move away and not be like if it's crap have to run to home. But it was crap, the being, the city isn't my cup of tea in the sense that coming from Manchester I just thought it would be like Manchester and it wasn't and obviously a lot of people that went had come from smaller places --
- * Right, yes, yes.
- F So they were like 'This is amazing.' and I'm like 'This is crap.' But then saying that that worked to my advantage because the first year, well what helped was the

course was Monday to Friday nine to five and I thought that was brilliant because a lot of courses aren't that intense hour-wise, so the first year I just put my head down and I learned everything. Everything I needed to know I learnt in the first year because the second and third year was just applying it.

* Right, yes. Did they teach you?

F Yes, I had a great teacher.

* So it wasn't just a case of found out for yourself.

F No, that was not the case. The only thing we didn't really know, but I don't mind because you can learn it all now, there wasn't much on the computer side of it, but at the time as well, I know it's all changed since then, I know it's a very computer-based course now, but I think the first year was the best because you needed to learn how it would work and why, again why you're doing what you're doing. What are you trying to tell the audience? So it was all that.

* So did you get the history of animation as well? Did you look at that stuff?

F Yes, we had brilliant lecturers, because it was part of the course. The course was called Animation and Illustration and you were one or the other, but they would do the lectures together so we learnt a lot about the golden age of illustration and it was a brilliant course. The teacher was great, I loved him, and he had a lot of time for me because I did stop-motion but in the third year they got this new guy in and I think he's running it now and he didn't like me, he didn't like stop-motion, he didn't really see it as anything worth, I think he thought oh probably it's cute, this is where it's at.

* When really stop-motion obviously can do all sorts of stuff.

F Well it's still going. We've still got Wallace and Gromit and Tim Burton's stuff, so that made me laugh when he was saying 'Yes, it's pretty much over.' literally saying that. My last year wasn't great because I broke my arm.

* How did you break your arm?

F Playing football, yes, because I used to play football on the girls team, it was great. So everything kind of fell apart.

* That is bad. What is it a bad break as well?

F Well it wasn't too bad because it was my left arm, but I couldn't animate, like I'd been knocking things over. So I had this film which I'd been writing for ages and it just didn't happen. Everything that could have gone wrong went wrong and it's one of them things, when you look back on and you just think 'It wasn't meant to be, for whatever reason, it just wasn't meant to be.' Me, in a parallel universe I would have gone off and worked somewhere else, you know things like that? It just wasn't

meant to be and it was a shame because I loved it. My teacher had told me about a three month course in Bristol, you know where Aardman is --

* Oh yes, yes.

F And he said apply for it and if you get on it you're one of the top so many in the country. So I wanted to do stop-motion but all I had for stop-motion was my final film which was rubbish, but obviously I sent in all my life drawing again and again they said 'Oh your life drawing is really strong so we'll put you on the drawn course.' but I didn't want to do the drawn but I thought 'Well what else can I do? I've not got any plans.' I didn't have a Plan B, it was all animation. So I did three months at Bristol, that was a good course, I learnt a lot, but because I wasn't into it, and then came home and I just started waitressing on, which was all I'd done through uni, like doing waitressing and bar work and then just thinking 'Oh that's it now.' I felt like I'd ruined my chance.

* What was it you thought you were going to do with it?

F I actually thought I would just get a job in animation, you know, at one of the studios and do you know now I wouldn't want that. I'd rather do my own thing. Not that, God forbid, not that if anyone rang me up and said 'Do you want to do six months?' Of course I do because it would be nice to learn, of course it would, but I just think, I do my own things now, I've just got to the point where I've spent a good ten years doing shit jobs because I didn't think I could do anything else.

* But when you graduated, and obviously you did, you were very, very, you did really well within the educational system didn't you?

F Yes.

* I mean how many places did you go and see to try and get something?

F Well I didn't have a show reel, I only had that so I never did it. Then it was just a case of not having the time because I needed to work --

* Yes, to earn money.

F So it very quietly just got put away. I felt like, oh I felt like I'd blown my chance, that's all I felt.' I felt like 'Oh God, I had such a golden opportunity and I've blown it.' And I'd not but I think in my head because I didn't know any other way of getting back into it, because I even did a bit of the Stockport, like Katy got me in the illustration so I did a bit of teaching basic animation --

* Right okay.

F And that was really good, I really enjoyed that.

* What year was that?

F So I left uni in 2004, it could be anywhere between 2005 and 2007.

- * Right, so about ten year ago, something like that.
- F Yes, it was really good, I enjoyed it. You see what it was, me and my mate used to work, she was my mate from Stockport College actually, we met at Stockport College. She'd gone to Xaverian but was obviously the year younger than me, because then you know I stayed on and did the extra year, Bernie, and we're still mates now, she's in Scotland and we're always sending each other the art stuff because she's like 'I really want to get back into it.' and I said 'You should, if I've got back into it you can get back into it.' We used to laugh because she'd always get me jobs, so when I was at Stockport she got me a bar job in Dukes 92 in town, so I did that when I came back from uni. Then she'd had enough and then we both ended up in a call centre together, then we had enough of that, and then I went and worked at Boots, because I remember thinking, I saw a job for a trainee dispenser and I remember thinking 'Well that would be nice, to learn something new.' Completely instead of thinking 'Get back into the art.' it was like I'd shut it off.
- * Yes, so you kind of --
- F I just thought 'Well what else can I do?' When it wasn't much really, it was just all the crappy jobs that I'd just done growing up which you do because you don't mind, because when you're growing up you're just doing it as a means to an end, it's not something you want to be doing. Then I remember going to Australia for a year in 2010, because I'd had enough of Boots and I was looking after my grandparents because they were quite ill, so I was looking after them and then when they passed I'd kind of --
- * How long did you do that for?
- F About a year.
- * How long after you'd graduated?
- F Oh it was a good while after I graduated. So I graduated in 2004 and in 2008 I started looking after them, I think it was about August, I went part-time at Boots because they were really bad and I remember saying to mum 'I'll do it because I can do it, it's not a career for me.' I know my mum couldn't leave her job and my brothers were in decent jobs in their career and I said 'I'm not, so I'll do it.' So I went part-time and I'd look after them and go to work. Then when my Gran died in 2009 in September they were like 'Well we can't give you any hours back, we've cut the budget.' and I remember thinking 'Oh I don't want to be here anyway.' It was a means to an end, it did me fine while I was looking after them. ... I was like 'Right, I'm going to Australia for a year.' because I had mates out there. Then it was like, you know, if you go before you're 30 you can get a year's visa, so I thought 'Yes, I'll do that.
- * I didn't know that.
- F Yes, before you're 30 and if you want to do a two-year visa you've got to do three months manual, you know, where you work on the farms. But I just thought 'No I'll

just do a year.' I didn't even do a year because we had a car crash, I broke my ribs, so I ran out of money quite quick and then I remember coming home and thinking 'Oh my God, I'm back to square one.'

* How old were you then?

F So I come back when I was 30.

* So that's quite a lot of pressure isn't it? So you've looked after your grandparents, that's finished.

F Yes.

* Then you've done all this stuff but, and had you considered doing art stuff again at this point in time?

F No, well it as funny because when I was in Australia, my best mate moved to Australia as well and she had a little girl and then she was trying to, she was like 'Have you thought about your art?' Oh I do remember thinking actually in 2008, I remember looking after my grandparents and I don't know, but I always remember it popping in my head thinking 'This is it, it's just never going to happen now, I might as well just forget about it.' I think I must have tried something, I can't remember what, but I just do remember thinking 'Just leave the art now it's gone.' Not being dramatic but it just felt like 'It's over.'

* But was that something in the sense of that you felt that it had to happen within a professional framework in order for you, do you mean like making money out of it?

F Yes I think so.

* Or were you still doing stuff for yourself?

F I think, doing stuff for myself, but I think I just always felt out the loop, like not knowing anyone in the industry and, you know --

* So like it didn't really count.

F Yes, just like it wasn't going to happen. So then when I was in Australia my mate was like 'Well why don't you do me a little drawing of --?' her little girl and I remember resentfully doing this drawing thinking 'There you go, leave me alone now.' Then when I got back from Australia I was just like 'Oh my God, what the hell am I going to do next?' because I'd had enough of, I thought 'I'm going to end up back at bar work.' and I did. I applied for Wetherspoons on Deansgate and they sent me a letter going 'No' and I was like, 'Oh my God', I said to my brother 'I'm going to end up in McDonald's.' and he said 'No, they'll say no to you.' I said 'Don't.' He said 'They will.' and I just remember going further and further away.

* Why did you get a no, do you know?

F No, because I'd worked at, when I was in Bristol I worked at Lloyds which is owned by Wetherspoons, so I remember thinking 'Oh I should get a job no problem because it's the same system.' and they were just like 'No' and I thought 'Oh my God.' But I volunteer within an organisation in Chorlton, called Chorlton Good Neighbours with the elderly and just by luck they needed some help in the office and they were like 'You know we can pay you, it's only part-time.' but I was like 'Right, I'll take it. I'll take it.' Then one day I got a text from one of my old bosses from Dukes 92 and she goes 'My husband wants to give you a job.' and I was like 'Okay doing what?' and he was setting up an App business and they needed someone artistic. So I was like 'Okay, this sounds interesting.' So it was in Salford, I went down, and basically it was we were being funded to do all these Apps...

...

F . But I enjoyed that, I really enjoyed it because as hard work as it was, I met some people who, and I was really intimidated by them at first because they would talk about what they can do and what they know and I was thinking 'Oh my God, I don't know any of this.' but I remember thinking 'But it's okay, I can draw and I can do ideas so it's not a bad thing.' There was this one girl and she was like 'Yes, I animate.' so I was like 'No way, I do animation.' and I said 'What do you animate with?' and she was telling all the things, so I remember saying to her one day 'Do you ever want to swap some tips? Like I'll show you some traditional animation and you can show me how you do it.' And then she showed me her animation and I was like 'That's not animation, that's not good, it's really bad.'

* Were they like paper clip animation?

F Worse.

* And then I remember thinking not to take what everyone said as so gospel and it made me start thinking then. I couldn't understand why we were in such an industry where you can just show people your work and people can see for themselves, why there was such a need to talk about what we could do. I just found that really interesting. But then I remember thinking 'Oh hang on, I'm probably not as out of the loop as I think I am.' Then these guys I was working with, they were so good, they were like 'You need to do concept art, you'd be really good at that, you know, where you do ideas.' and they were just really supportive. So then when we all got made redundant I didn't, I think a load of them struggle jobs, I knew I wouldn't get a studio job, I'd applied to some and they were just like 'We need people with experience.' which is fair enough, I get that. Then it was a case of 'Right, I'm just going to have to do it on my own now. I'm just going to dredge everything up from the last few years and do it and that's what I've been doing ever since then.

* Since when is that?

F So that was in 2012. I got made redundant in the May but I had my endometriosis operation in the August and I wasn't well enough until like January the next year.

* Oh my God.

F Yes, because they said it takes three months for your recover. First of all they went 'You only need two weeks off work.' and then they said 'Come back in three months and you'll be fine.' I went back after three months and I was hysterical, I said 'What have you done to me?' and he was like 'Don't worry, we did take a hell of a lot of stuff out from you. Come back in another three months and that should be fine.' And then I was, I was all right then, I felt better. I started all this in 2003 and just was like 'I don't really know what else to do so I'm just going to go for it with this.' and I'm not looking back now, I'm just quite happy.

* And do you think there is also that thing about not feeling like you need to do it for somebody else?

F Yes.

* Even though you are, you end up, you do a lot of things from what you've talked about before, you do a lot of things for other people --

F Yes.

* But as far as the art thing is concerned you don't necessarily need someone to say 'Sit down at this desk and do this thing.'

F Yes. I really enjoyed it as well because I thought, rather than seeing everything as a disadvantage I thought I'm actually in a good position where by doing my own work I can say to people 'This is what I do.' rather than trying to do what I think people would want me to do. Like the website, I spent all last year, well I probably spent 18 months doing my website, I started getting it together with the drawings and then with the colours and then really thinking 'Well what am I wanting it to show?' Because my mate just does commissions so hers are all random but I said I wanted it more to show me rather than what I can do, because that's what, I like doing the drawings and the paintings but especially drawings. Because I'd been drawing the most I'd ended up going down hyperrealism and it's like, and then I was like, well I might as well just take a photo. It didn't, anybody, well not anybody can do it but I kind of thought I'd like to do work that they would know it was mine. So then it was taking on that challenge then and trying to, what can I do that I'll be happy with?

* Yes, so what specific --

F Yes.

* Yes.

F Because I do get people saying to me 'You should do this. You should do this.' and I just go 'Thanks.' because I think that's their, like I had friends as well, like when I said I was going to be doing it 'Oh no, you shouldn't do that, you should do this.' but that's just their fears.

* Yes and also what other people think you can make money out of or, because how do you fund yourself now?

- F Well I'm in a lot of debt, I'm practically living hand-to-mouth and my mum has helped me out loads, just like with rent and stuff. So I wouldn't say 'Oh I'm making loads.' because everything I make I'm putting back in. But that's my choice, I'm happy to do that and my mates know that. We were supposed to be going out at the weekend and I'm like 'Guys, I've just had to spend a load on tiles.' and they just know it, but that's the choice that I'm happy to make. Then I'm working with these girls at the minute who want me to do t-shirts for them and that came about because they saw my website and they know someone I know. So little things then start picking up, so it's been a case of that really and then just like knowing where I want to go with it. Like I'd like to go to one of them Makers Markets, you know, and sell a load of prints, that's what I'm aiming to do next.
- * So like a print fair or ---
- F Yes.
- * Do you have to pay to be in them or do you just have to apply?
- F Yes I think so, I'm not sure of the price. Yes, that's next on my list, to just print out a load of prints. So it's still --
- * Because I'm sure, I don't know how often they're on.
- F There's a few. Well there's Altrincham Market all the time, so you can apply for Altrincham Market and then there's the Maker's Market which is once a month in Didsbury, The Northern Quarter, and they did one in Chorlton the other week, so there's loads.
- * Right, because you've had quite a lot of people, where you've done things for people specifically haven't you?
- F Yes.
- * Like commission, almost commission kind of work.
- F Yes.
- * And that I suppose you pick up through people seeing specific bits of your work.
- F Yes and it's interesting, I just get as well, they're all so different, like I always thought I'd just get mostly drawings but I don't. There's a guy, you know when I showed you who I did houses that his sons grew up in and I thought that was lovely and there was never anything about my work that probably screamed 'I can do this.'
- * You can do that, but people obviously saw enough and --
- F Yes and then these girls that I'm working with, it's all illustration work and I've not done illustration work in years. So I've done so much more of that and that's been a blessing because I've had to relearn a load of old Photoshop techniques, so it's like I'm getting stuff back in other ways, which is really nice.

* But you don't seem to be, you don't seem to have any fear in the sense of just having a go at something or having to relearn something or having to learn something in order to make something. You seem to have quite a 'Right, this is what I want to make so I'm going to learn how I'm going to do that.'

F Yes, I think because --

* Have you had that always or is that something that's come as you've got older.

F No, that's something that's come, because I thought 'Oh God, all them years that I just thought I wasn't in the loop' or stuff like that, it's like 'Well sod that, just make your own loop.' So I feel I'm quite lucky that I can at least spend some time, I don't know what's going to come next year, I might end up just thinking 'That's it now, I'll do a proper job.' you know, nine-to-five. I probably won't but, so I kind of go with, while I'm being something I'll go with it, I'll run with it to see where it lasts. Because I still want to get back into my animation, that's what I want to do --

* Yes, what you really want to do.

F That's absolutely --

* But stop-frame or computer-based?

F Stop-motion. Stop-motion, I love it.

* Yes.

F But even though I've got a program which is computer-based so it's drawn, but I kind of think that's a good way of easing myself back into it. So I'll give myself time with that but I have to then balance 'What can I give myself time to then be productive?' So this is almost like my work and then a hobby would be my painting. So then I go back to this or the drawings and then the animation can be a hobby until it becomes what I want to do with it. But it's definitely my animation, I think everything's leading up to that. I think confidence-wise, I think my confidence was shot after uni --

* But that's ironic isn't it?

F Yes. I do though, I think because I had it all planned out and then when it just didn't happen --

* So that trajectory, I mean I remember you saying, I wrote something down when we talked last time, obviously it wasn't an official thing, but you said something about 'It all got buried under an avalanche of life.'

F Yes, that's how it felt.

* And I thought that was quite --

- F Because I feel like I don't know what I could have done to, you know when something goes wrong you think 'Now what I should have done was this.' but I felt like --
- * You couldn't see any --
- F No, I mean I shouldn't have played football and broke my arm but -
- * Yes, but I suppose an arm heals doesn't it?
- F Yes, but it was a big cost. Because we had as well, we had at the end of the year, which was lovely but I hated it, you know where everyone can come and watch your films and they'd have like a student show.
- * Yes.
- F So we had ours, it was a beautiful place on the waterside, it was Southampton's version of home on the waterfront, a really nice art theatre, like the equivalent of what The Cornerhouse was, because it was only small. I remember just, you had to stand up and speak a bit and I was just like 'Okay yes, this is my film and it's just a bit of fun so I hope you enjoy it.' and I sat down and the whole way through the film I cried because I was just so like 'Oh my God, it wasn't meant to be this monstrosity.' It just felt like everything I'd put in, how had it just not worked?
- * Why did you feel it hadn't worked?
- F Because it wasn't how I wanted it to look in my head. Now I know no-one knows how it was meant to look, so that's always a good thing, but it just --
- * So what was the feedback you got on it?
- F Well everyone thought it was funny because I had a good storyline but it looked so crude because it was so rushed. So it looked almost a stop-motion South Park but that wasn't my intention. I wanted it nice and graceful and flowing and it was just this rough and ready and, oh, I just remember thinking 'No, I need to do it again.' and actually I was considering just redoing my third year but the teacher who was lovely to me and was dead positive was going to teach in Valencia for a year so we were just left with the young guy who saw no value in stop-motion. So it just felt like --
- * No point.
- F No. Well I just remember, 'I can't be bothered always fighting.' it felt like I was at school again with the female art teacher.
- * Yes.
- F And it's like, you shouldn't have to be fighting at a school level when that's their job.
- * No.

F That's how I saw it.

* Yes.

F So it's almost like a case now, I feel like 'Well what have I got to lose?'

* Yes and you're doing it on your own terms which is very different.

F Yes. I'd like to do more collaborations, like I realised that working with these girls, it's been brilliant, it's almost like, and it was so funny because --

* Do you think if you'd worked with other people after, do you think that would have been easier? If you'd found a group of people?

F Possibly, but then if they weren't a great bunch it might have put me off more, you don't know do you? But I've been working with these girls and it's just been brilliant and they just give me free range on ideas and it has just been great and I just thought 'Oh God, I'm doing work that I wouldn't do off the back of my own head.' But because they've put it in front of me it's made my mind go elsewhere and I've really enjoyed that, like really good stuff.

* Which obviously makes sense. What about their studio, can't you get some space there?

F Well they've only just started, they've not even launched yet.

* Oh right, okay.

F No, they were going to launch in August. Again, a similar story, two of them got made redundant but I think for us art lot it's quite common, it's not like, it's no biggy.

* I mean it's really difficult for anybody to build up any security really isn't it?

F Yes.

* So also as a woman if you do want a family, if you're thinking about any of that stuff.

F This is it, well even just my own place would be nice, but then I just thought, I'm just going to go with what I can control at the minute and then just see, because as well the whole family thing depends on this whole endometriosis thing, because they said that last time about family so --

* Yes.

F So it's funny.

* But also, I mean there's different ways of having a family isn't there?

F Yes, yes.

* It's kind of, but just the idea of building a future, I think often --

F Yes it's very, and I think that's what my mum worries about because she's a bit, she would rather I had a nine-to-five job just for financial security.

* Yes.

F But I say to her 'But mum if you hate it.' I had it at Boots and I hated it and I just think now life is too short.

* And if it's not you.

F It's not me and I'm just tired of doing it. I said 'I'll give it a go, I'll see how it goes.' and that's all I can do for the time being, because I said other than that I'm not really qualified for anything else. I don't want to go back to dispensing, I don't really like working with the public, so my choices are quite limited.

(laughter)

F Because I'm not very skilled in anything so it would be minimum wage jobs really and I said 'I'm hardly going to be building a future based on that.'

* Based on that, no, and be absolutely miserable.

F Well it's just a case of getting by, I'd probably financially get by a bit more than I was now, this is like, I know this is a massive risk but I'm glad I took it. I don't know where it's going to go but I don't regret, I won't regret this. I regret more the fact that I took so long to get back into it, yes, that's how I feel. But then my mum has never been happy at her job but she stayed in it for that financial security.

* Yes.

F So you've got to weigh it up haven't you, what's going to work for you.

* Well I'm getting quite into this.

F You see, it's a bit therapeutic isn't it?

* It is quite therapeutic.

F It's therapeutic when you can just do it, it's not therapeutic when all your tiles are wrong and you need to --

* Yes, if you've got a particular goal then it's more difficult.

F Yes. But even like the last lot of mosaics I did were just two colours, I really simplified it. I wanted just nice, almost poster style work rather than anything too intricate. But then I thought I'll have to probably go a bit more intricate for this.

* Yes, in order to get the details.

F Yes.

- * Especially the face and all that kind of --
- F Yes.
- * Do you, I mean obviously we talked about materials, you were saying earlier actually it's painting, if anything painting is your thing that you really just do for yourself --
- F I can do it for myself and not --
- * Even though you want to get back into your animation it sounds like the painting thing is a personal practice almost even --?
- F Yes. When I first went to Chris's class I did a, no I did a painting first with another artist, Gary. I found a painting course because I wanted to learn oils, because that's oil, I did that of my gran but I never felt like I understood how to use oils, I felt like I completely winged it and it didn't feel like, I wanted to learn how to be able to know what I was doing. So I went and did a course and the guy was great and he'd like come second in the National Portrait Gallery and he'd spent three years in Florence and he was very accomplished. So I did one of his but his techniques were a bit over my head and one of the girls said 'Oh why don't you go upstairs to Chris' class because Chris is a bit, he's not as intense teaching-wise.' So I went and did Chris' class and the first time I did a class I thought 'Right I'll do a drawing.' and it was the first time I'd drawn from life and I was just like really happy. I remember thinking 'I'm not going to learn anymore with drawing and I want to learn, I don't want to stay at a level.' So then we went onto charcoal and that was great and then we went on to painting and it was just brilliant. Because do you know what I liked? I liked the fact that I knew nothing, so I think, because there's so much to learn, I like that, I always like the idea of opening a door and there's so much.
- * Right.
- F So then, like the little studies, that were in the outhouse, the weird black and white ones, so now I'm up to the stage where I'm going to be doing it in colour, because I can get likenesses but I can't always get colour so it's a nice challenge for me rather than for anyone else. I feel a lot more freer painting --
- * Because to me they look kind of quite finished but for you you're saying they're study pieces for yourself.
- F Yes, yes and I think with painting, well like with drawing, I was always quite harsh on myself, like it has to look like this, it has to look exactly like this and I've never been able to, I don't know where that's come from but I've never been able to get out of that. Whereas with painting I'll let myself be rubbish and I'll let myself just, and it's okay, it doesn't matter. It's like 'Okay, but have I learnt a bit? Well yes. Well there you go, that was the reason for doing it.' So yes and with the animation it's still a lot of the software side that I need to learn and then with the stop-motion obviously I've got to be building my own sets and everything.
- * Do you have access to Lynda.com?

- F Yes, I've got an email for that with a 33 days trial and then it's I've never had the 30 days to even just --
- * Yes, to just concentrate on that, yes.
- F It's just that, it's just trying to --
- * When to --
- F Yes, but be able to do it and make the most out of it and not, you know, let it count down and be like 'Oh well I've missed that now.'
- * Who do you think benefits from your making?
- F Me. I think only me. I don't really think anyone else is that bothered, but that doesn't bother me, that's fine, because I don't know what everyone likes. Like it's nice when I show my mates my work and they like it, that's nice, but I can't do it for them because, I don't know.
- * Yes.
- F I feel like almost I'm trying to make up to myself all them years where I didn't do anything just because I thought I'd blown a chance and wasn't in it. Now it's like, so I feel like, like I'll work ridiculous hours, I'll work until probably about ten o'clock on this and I've been at it since nine. There's not clock point.
- * Yes.
- F Things like that. But I do forget I'm doing it, so it's not a bad thing, but then I do think it would be nice to have a point where it's like 'No, just stop, I don't need to make up for it all at once.'
- * So in a way, it's funny isn't it, because that pressure is kind of the pressure that came from within you because there's nobody else really who put any pressure on you to succeed in this way.
- F I think I did want it so badly though at uni and so I think I just didn't know how to handle, just not knowing and then coming back to Manchester and almost panicking that I don't really know anyone in the loop. Because in the past, even when I didn't like Salford it was my teacher that bailed us out, so you could just go to someone and they'd be like 'It's okay, you can do this.'
- * Yes, so not being connected to anything.
- F Yes and there was none of that and I think because my old teacher had left it was a bit 'Right, we're on our own now.'
- * Yes. I'm surprised to some extent, even though you did come back to Stockport that there wasn't, because that always was quite a community obviously.

F Yes.

* But I suppose by that time there had been a lot of upheaval at Stockport as well.

F There was a lot of change after I left.

* Yes, lots of , actually quite a few people died as well, or left, or --

F Yes, because I always laugh about it with Katy because when it went so bad at the end and I say 'But do you know for me Katy that was such a golden period.' it was like almost a bubble around it. It felt like, when I was at Stockport it just felt like life was opening up because I knew where I was going to go, I knew what I wanted to do, I had the best time doing our exhibitions and it just felt amazing. I just remember feeling dead excited about life and it was so funny because even me and my mate Bernie were texting each other every day and she went 'Is it wrong to say the best time of life was at Stockport? Has it been that bad since?' I'm like, no, it's just appreciating we had a great time.

* No it was good time, I had a great time.

F A great time.

* Yes. It was a particular place and a particular time, you know.

F It was and the people. It's the people that make everything isn't it?

* Yes, of course.

F So yes, I always felt really lucky that I got there.

* So my last question actually is what stops you from making, but to some extent --

F Nothing.

* To some extent you've already answered that.

F It was me.

* So really nothing now because things have stopped you in the past or circumstances.

F Well just me, yes.

* Do you know any other people who you studied with or anybody, what they want on to do or --?

F I don't know anyone else that did art from school. Well that's a lie, because when I went and worked at that App place there was a lad I was at school with and he was into all 3D model making, so he's done well, so I was happy for him. From Stockport College there's only Bernie, but Bernie didn't end up going into it, I think she's like a PA now.

- * Right.
- F And then when I was at uni, I'm not in touch with anyone at that art class apart from one girl who now works at the NME, so I don't even think anyone major. But I think a lot of people, what I found a uni, a lot of people did just used to piss around and I don't really think had much intention of doing animation.
- * Of really doing something with it.
- F Yes, I think they just thought 'Oh that will be fun to do at uni.' and, I remember the last year, no-one was just turning in, turning up or doing much and just --
- * So, yes, so they could be in all kinds of --
- F Yes, they could be doing anything really.
- * Yes, I suppose it's that thing of --
- F A little less.
- * Right.
- F Yes, just a little nip.
- * I think I tried that bit before.
- F Let me try it, it must be a hard one that. Oh yes, you've got the ... there's always a tension. Sometimes you have to angle it.
- * Thank you. I think I've, I mean we talked about particular materials that you favour and that idea that it changes for you over time.
- F Yes, it just depends what I'm going to be doing.
- * Yes. I kind of, I just, I'm quite impressed just by that singular kind of, singularity --
- F Attitude.
- * Yes, that you've managed to wrench away from all that kind of really, you know, I think that's really great.
- F I just think 'Well what else can I do?' and if it was any other subject I think other people would, I think art isn't as held as much in esteem as other things.
- * Do you think if you'd been a designer that would have been different or --?
- F I don't know, because you remember when, I remember being at Stockport and design seemed to be the biggest thing and I remember thinking 'Oh God, computers, I'm no good with computers.' So I kind of was then like 'Well I don't need to be good with computers.' I think that was what I would tell myself at a time, 'I can't do this

because I need that.' and then I just got to a point of 'Well what have I got? Let's start with that.'

* Yes.

F And it's like, that really works for me because I've got all these other things now that have worked out really good and just doing things and --

* And it is difficult to make a living out of art or being in any kind of --

F I think it's just that first starting point. I feel like I'll get there. I don't know when, I'm hoping it's not in another ten years.

* But I was reading a lot, just because, for this other assignment that I've done previously I was reading about how the majority of people who considered themselves practising artists, they all have other jobs to fund that, and they don't necessarily mind it but they want a particular kind of job but there has to be a pay-off in the sense of they offer enough security, it doesn't take up too much of your time, which is obviously in the current economic climate as well becoming more and more difficult.

F Yes.

* But if you met somebody out there and they said 'What do you do?' What would you say?

F I'd say 'artist' but it did take me a long time to be all right saying that.

* To say 'I am an artist.'

F And now, but do you know what I think helps? I always felt better the minute I'd got a website.

* Right okay, really? That's funny isn't it?

F Yes, I almost felt like, because it used to be just when people would ask and I'd show them the pictures on my phone and everyone kept saying a website and it was like 'I'm doing website.' but it took so long to do and then the minute it was done it was such a relief, in effect, because people could then make their own minds up and see it there.

* So it was independent of you.

F Yes, I didn't need to be there doing it and it's like, that's got me the job with these other girls and it was like 'Right that was --'

* How did they come across the website?

F Because they did know someone, a friend of a friend, I was at a hen do and they knew the other girl. So they were telling, these three girls, they were buyers for

companies and they just said 'Do you know what? We could do our own and do it better.' They wanted to do their own website but they would sell other people's artwork, the jewellery and then they would do their own fashion, so they'd start off like that and then they would grow into their own. And they were saying they wanted artist so then this girl showed them my website and they were like 'Oh my God, yes.' So the original thing they wanted was my mosaics, they wanted to sell my prints so I was like 'That's great.'

* Right.

F And I'd met up with them a couple of times and they were like 'Do you fancy doing some illustration work?' and I was like 'Yes' but then I'm thinking 'I don't actually have any illustration work on my website.' But once this website is launched of theirs, I can put that work on my website, so it's already started taking on its own. So that worked out really well, I was really happy with that.

* Right I'm going to stop that. Thank you so much for talking about all this stuff.

F You're very welcome Mel.

* I will, when I write it up, what I'll do is, because it will take me a long time to transcribe this --

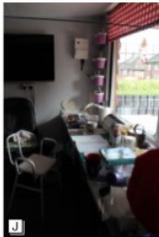
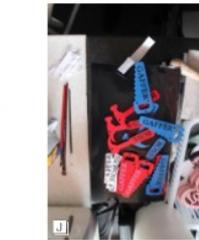
(end of recording)

A.4. Supporting Material CHAPTER 5 Bill

A.4.1. Collated images from the fieldwork and Bill's archives























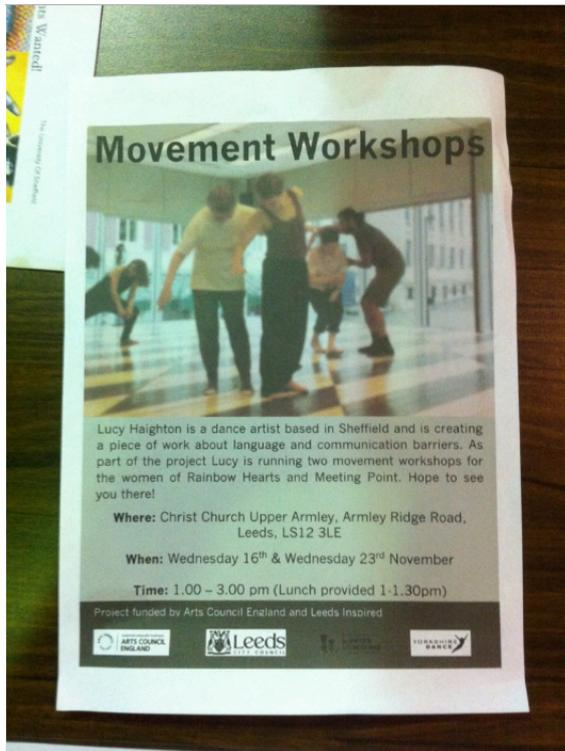






A.5 Supporting Material CHAPTER 6 Lucy

A.5.1. Images Lucy



A.5.2. Transcript Lucy

Lucy 1

- * Right, okay. So we're here with Lucy and Mel and this for how women make. So I'm just going to put this further to your end because it doesn't matter so much if I can't be heard, even though I'm sure it's probably recording all right.
- F Okay.
- * So the first question is kind of the bit that we've been trying to avoid in our conversation so we could record it.
- F It's not been the right time.
- * Which is what is your history of making and who has encouraged you to make in your life? So we can keep that separate but my guess is those two things will come together as well.
- F Yes.
- * So if you want to talk about that a little bit.
- F Can you just say it again?
- * Yes. What's your history of making, so how did you start making and, you know, that's from childhood in the sense of how do you remember that idea of applying yourself creatively to something? it might not be in relation to dance, it might be other things as well.
- F Okay, well I always remember that I really, as a child, valued presentation. I remember when I was in Year 5 in primary school and, I was always academically quite low so I was in the lowest maths group or something and we had to do this big kind of, I don't know what it was. We basically did a big poster that presented, I think it was all the prime numbers or something like that and we did them in bubbles like this, and I remember I was so embarrassed by the presentation of it that when I got home I did my own version and it was on our living room wall --
- * Oh really?
- F For like six months, because I was so frustrated at school, at the other people in my group, because we were grouped together because we weren't very academically bright but they didn't care either. But I did care and I was so frustrated so I went home and spent like a whole weekend doing it myself. Then I went back into school on the Monday and it was like 'Right, next topic.' or whatever and it was like 'Oh'. So I had it up at home for about six months. So presentation was always a big thing for me and actually dancing, because we have spoken briefly about this, is I went to a private dance school and --
- * Hello? Just talk a little bit.

Lucy 1 & 1a

- F Hello? Yes, I went to a private dance school.
- * Oh God your voice is really quiet, I wonder what that is? Sorry, normally it goes kind of --
- F Does it go more up and down?
- * Yes, but I don't know if --?
- F Do you want to stop it and listen to what we've recorded?
- * Yes, sorry. Just because that would be a real --
- F No that's fine.
- (end of recording)

Lucy 1a

- * Okay right, take two. You were talking about your dance school weren't you?
- F Yes, because I went to a private dance school where there were lots of students who were very good at ballet and things like that and I wasn't, so I was never considered one of the good ones. And when we ever did creative tasks, which was very rare because it was more of a dance school of like 'Right, you're going to move up your levels, take your exams and learn the routines.' When it was creative time I was always really scared and intimidated and because I wasn't very confident in all the technique stuff I therefore wasn't that confident in the creative stuff so was quite quiet. Then I remember when I was about 14 there was an extra class that was added in to the timetable where we just started doing choreography, oh I can't remember, or maybe, no, maybe it was just a normal class that I did but the teacher said 'Right we're going to do something different, in four weeks we're going to all bring in a solo.'
- * Oh right, okay.
- F Yes, so I started working on one at home and it was to Elvis Presley, Jail House Rock, and everyone else did theirs and then I did mine and I finished it and they were all sat down, so it was like all my class mates, there was like twenty of them and the teacher, and I turned around when I'd finished and they were like 'Bloody hell', and I was like 'What?' and they were like 'That was amazing.' and I was like 'Was it?' and they were like 'Yeah.' In my head it was like, I've just done the same as what everyone else is doing and they were like 'Oh my God' and I was like 'Shit'. She'd done is like this little competition thing so after every person you gave them a mark out of ten and then she added them and I came first and I was like 'Oh I've never come first for dance in my life.' So that was a really good confidence little boost, so that was when I was like 13/14 I started, I remember I enjoyed making that up, I

really enjoyed making that up. Then I did GCSE and A Level dance at school and I really enjoyed --

* Because that's quite unusual isn't it, to have, not all schools have got dance at school.

F I was really lucky. If I'd gone to a different secondary school I don't think that I would be where I am now. Well you say that about everything don't you? Everything changes everything but --

* Yes, but still.

F And also it was such a big, important thing because even though, so when I was in like the younger years, like your 7, 8, 9, the dance was there but it wasn't, I was the first year group where it was a GCSE and then I was the first year group when it was an A Level. We were literally the guinea pig year so if I'd have been born in the year above I'd have completely missed out on that opportunity which I always thought was quite unfair for the older students. But yes, so --

* So who was it who first, was it your mum who enrolled you at the private dance school? Was it something you wanted to do, like you asked her to do?

F I don't remember. No, she enrolled me and my sister when we were like five, four years old, so really young.

* Have you got any brothers?

F Yes, I've got an older brother.

* Did he go to dance school?

F No, no.

* What did he do?

F Oh football. Yes, that's one of those decisions, because it was, my mum is quite a traditionalist so I wonder if it ever crossed her mind to take Chris as well, probably not.

* Yes, no it's funny that isn't it? Obviously the tradition of the sending little girls to dance school, and I did ballet myself, and it's all about that idea of knowing how to hold yourself and be graceful which is --

F Yes and she liked us in the little ballet shoes and the satin tights and all of that rubbish.

* I loved all that. I can look at it now and go, but you know, when I was a little girl I loved all the paraphernalia.

F I enjoyed it when it came to the show but not the exams, I don't think I did.

- * What did your parents think about when you decided to do dance GCSE? What was the general reaction? Was it like a natural --?
- F Well there was a bit of a palaver with all of this. So you know when you have your Year 9 options evening to choose your GCSE subjects, my parents didn't come with me to choose for the options evening and I asked them to because I was really struggling with my choices. There are a few things that my parents have done that I really disagree with as a parent --
- * That's quite unusual isn't it, not to turn up to your options.
- F Yes and I said 'I would like you to come because I don't know what to pick.' and then said 'Oh well your brother didn't need us there so you'll be fine.' I think my mum and dad have always, it's swings and roundabouts isn't it? They like us to be very independent so they don't get in your face, which is a way, they're not meddling parents which is brilliant, but then the other side of it is there's a lot of, when I started to turn the age of 13/14 there was a lot of guidance that I could have done with that I didn't receive, that I had to look for elsewhere.
- * Yes.
- F And there's quite a few examples of that. So this was the first one, so I went to this options evening on my own, I made my choices, I made the wrong decisions. I decided to do a Performing Arts GCSE which was music, dance and drama combined instead of individual GCSE Dance, GCSE Drama, because then I did PE at the same time because when I was that age I was quite influenced by like my friends, and my friend was doing PE, so I was like 'Okay I'll do PE.' which was stupid. Anyway, so I started Year 10, or Year 9 or whatever year it was you start doing it, and I was really, really upset being in this Performing Arts because it was basically all the people that just wanted to mess about.
- * Right okay, so there was no rigour.
- F No and it was crap teachers and it was just crap, crap, crap. The GCSE Dram and Dance specific subjects were in the nice studio and we were in the crappy blue room by the canteen with the chips on the floor and, you know, all that. So I got really upset and was like crying and it got to the point where I was like 'Dad I don't want to go to school.' and so he wrote to the school and said 'Look, she's made the wrong choice can she just switch?' So I switched. So I dropped PE, dropped Performing Arts and took up GCSE Dance and GCSE Drama. So I joined, and it's funny because I didn't take GCSE Dance because I didn't think I was good enough.
- * Right.
- F Which at the age of 13 that's ridiculous to have that kind of self-awareness, or just lack of self-confidence, it's just stupid. Obviously I'm like --

- * Also the whole thing about the GCSE wasn't about learning to do something better, I mean that's two years isn't it leading up to something, to already make that decision at that point.
- F Yes.
- * I don't think it's uncommon but --
- F Well that decision was informed by my private dance where I didn't feel that I was good enough and then I got on to the GCSE thing so I arrived after the Christmas and everyone had started in the September, but I settled very soon and it was fine and I was with a lot of my friends. Then yes, it was just a natural progression to go from GCSE to A Level. Then when I was going my A Levels, I knew I liked dance but then again our teacher said to me 'So Lucy are you going to audition at some dance schools?' and I was like 'No, no I'm not good enough.' and she was like 'No, you need to.' and I was like 'No, no, I can't. I'll go to uni, I'll do like psychology or something.' She was like 'No Lucy you need to.' I was like 'No, no I can't.' So it's that, I don't know. There was a boy in my class called Josh who has got a dance company in Bristol, he's done really, really well for himself and he went to do the Foundation Course at Northern School of Contemporary Dance, but he left a year early, so out of the A Level two year he only did the first year and then he left to go and do that. Then he would come back throughout the year and talk us about it and things and then he said to me 'Oh yes, you should go and audition.' So I went and did the same course that he did but I did it two years after and she was like 'Yes, you should audition.' and I was like 'Okay I'll go and do it.' but I really didn't know. I just felt really pressured, I think that schools are crap actually the way that they do this. You're doing your A Levels and then they're going UCAS, UCAS, you need to think about --
- * Yes, yes.
- F What, like your A Levels aren't enough?
- * Yes.
- F And I remember I found no answers. Everyone at school was going 'You need to apply for uni.' My mum and dad were like, because my brother went straight to uni, were like 'Oh well that's what your brother did.' and I was just like 'I can't --' I was starting to have a nervous breakdown and I was like 17, I was like 'I can't make these decisions.' Then my boyfriend at the time was literally just like 'Well just don't do it.' I was like 'What do you mean?' he was like 'Well just don't apply.' and I was like 'But I have to.' and he was like 'No you don't.' and I was like 'Oh yeah, I'd never thought of that.' So I didn't. So I just finished my A Levels and then as soon as I'd finished A Levels in that summer then I was like 'Right okay, now I'll start applying for dance schools or applying to unis or whatever.' There was no way that I could have done that when I was finishing my A Levels, I think that's such an awful pressure that schools put on, because they just want --
- * Yes, I think it's an awful system.

- F It's ridiculous, because they just want the statistics, they want to say 70%, 80% of our pupils went on to further education in 2000 and blah. It's such a load of crap.
- * I know and I do, my eldest even now at GCSE level, they're already, the pressure is already on them.
- F It's ridiculous.
- * And we just said to him 'Look don't worry about it. First of all you want to do your music anyway, second of all we're not even that sure that you should be going to a HE in this country with the debts.' you know, all that kind of stuff starts to play in and you have to be really sure that that's what you want to do if you're going to come into that system. Because we both teach so we see what happens when people are just pushed through that.
- F The perfect example of that is we have like some family friends and their son Tom, he's about 23 now I think, he was forced so much by his school that he tried to do different uni courses and then he was just like 'No, I don't want to do this.' Now he works for a car manufacturing, you know, he got an apprenticeship with a garage and that was so much more suited to him.
- * Yes and it's not for everybody.
- F Don't force people.
- * No.
- F It's not necessary at all.
- * No.
- F So anyway, yes, so then I did audition.
- * Did you have in your school time, were there particular teachers who influenced you in your dancing, as in how you were dancing or were you looking at particular things? Did you have any idols that you kind of --?
- F Yes, yes. So when I was doing GCSE and A Level Dance the stuff that was on the curriculum was like kind of famous professional dance artists and people. It's so funny I think, when you introduce a person to contemporary dance when all they've known is private dance school ballet, tap and modern, I thought it was a load of shit when I first saw it. I remember, have you heard of like Akram Kahn or ... or any of these people?
- * No.
- F So Akram Khan, do you remember the 2012 Olympics?
- * Do you remember the opening ceremony? If you can remember it in detail, I don't know, there was a bit where there were all these dancers and Emily Sande was

singing and they were all dancing under this big sun and Akram Khan is an Indian man and he was dancing with this little boy doing all this.

* Oh yes, yes.

F That's Akram Khan. So we had to study one of his works and I just thought it was such a load of crap. But you were just 'What is this?' and the teacher was like 'It's contemporary dance.' but yes, and then your mind starts to come around to it. But yes, so, and yes, we were quite lucky at our school really, they took us, oh I remember they took us to see DV8 once, DV8 is a really well-established, since like the eighties or seventies even, company and they do great, really, really great work and we went to London to see them. Yes, we were all so fired up after that, it was brilliant. Then I remember we had Stomp come in and do a workshop with us, which was really good.

* Stomp?

F Stomp, do you know Stomp?

* Yes, with the drums and stuff.

F Yes, dustbins and that.

* Yes, yes.

F I'm sure it was Stomp, they came in and did a workshop with us. Yes, so we had quite a good few opportunities and things.

* And was it something, obviously you were doing that at the same time as having to do lots of other school things and stuff, but was it that, would you look things up yourself? Would you pursue kind of, or was it just something primarily that was contained in school at that point in time?

F I think at that point in time it was in school, but it was definitely like, I don't know if it's because we were the first year group, but we turned into a really tight-knit group. I remember our A Level group, we all sat together at prom, we didn't sit with our own friends. Yes and we knew it was really exciting what we were doing and we really, really loved it.

* Yes. So then, you said after that you auditioned at dance school.

F Yes, so I knew, because I'd said 'Piss off' to UCAS or whatever, so I was having a year out, so I finished the A Levels in the summer and then I started applying and then I had my audition in like the March at Northern. I'd auditioned at a few unis in different places as well and then got onto that in the March and then I went travelling April to July and then I started in the following September.

* And that was at the Northern --

F School of Contemporary Dance.

* And where's that?

F That's in Leeds. Yes, so I did the foundation course there.

* So did you move to Leeds at that point in time?

F Yes, so I moved to Leeds, so I'd just turned 19 and moved to Leeds.

* And then how did that go? What was that like, arriving there?

F So that is obviously an amazing dance school but I'd just come back from travelling, I was just moving out of mum and dads. I moved into a great little house with four other girls and we had such a nice time. We had like a really close group, the boys that lived down the road would always come up to our house and we did like a lot of partying.

* Were they all dancers as well?

F All dancers, yes, most of them were on the foundation course, and then Chloe, who is one of my best mates still now, I lived with her and she was on the degree course, so she was a first year when a lot of us were in foundation. I really, really enjoyed the training but I was so, I was so passionate, me and my friend Alice were so passionate to the point where we like, we almost tried to work too hard and we kind of, I think we missed a lot of the concepts. Yes, like we worked so hard and da-da-da and I remember people telling to us, who'd like done the foundation course before and then they'd got into Northern, like 'Oh yes, if you work really hard you'll get --' you know because, the kind of hierarchy, it's either go to Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds, London School of Contemporary Dance or Laban in London. They're kind of like the three, they've all got like the same reputation, and then above them is Rambert, but that's more like ballet training with contemporary. So then you've got those three and then below that you've got other conservatoires that aren't quite as well known with reputations and then you've got like university degrees where it's not as vocational, it's more academic, less physical training in the week.

* Yes right, okay.

F And I remember people saying 'Oh if you work really hard on the foundation course and you re-audition at Northern and Laban and London, you'll definitely get in.' and things like that. So I just kind of thought 'I'm working so hard so it will happen.' But there was a lot of things that I didn't understand, I think I wasn't ready to hear because I was having quite a nice, like we were going out quite a lot.' Not during the week because we were at dance school, it was knackered, but at the weekends and things and just had a really nice time. Yes, so then I didn't get onto the degree course there or in London or Laban and I was absolutely gutted about that, that was like the biggest rejection ever because I'd built this world in Leeds and lots of people were staying on to that degree course or going to London and things. So I auditioned up in Dundee and went up there and cried all the way up in the car.

* Really?

F Yes, it was awful, it was so dramatic.

* Couldn't you have waited for a year?

F No.

* Or did you have the pressure of --?

F No, because I was in the middle of my training and I wanted to get on with it and actually I did re-audition at Northern the following year, so I'd have done a year in Scotland and then come back down and I didn't get in again.

* Really?

F Yes but --

* Why do you think that was?

F Because I wasn't right for that school and I can so see that now. And by the time I auditioned the second time, I knew it already, I was just doing it for the sake of it. I'd already come to love the school in Scotland by then, I remember, because that day when I went back down from Scotland to re-audition at Northern, it was a gorgeous sunny day and I got cut from the audition, the audition started at nine and I got cut at like 12.01 and I remember going 'Oh okay.' and I went to the park with all my friends, because I had loads of friends at Northern from when I was there. They were like 'Oh how did it go?' and I was like 'No, I'm not bothered.' and they were like 'That's cool, you're obviously really settled in Scotland and things.' We stayed in the park all afternoon and then went on a, had a barbecue and went on a night out and it was just such a beautiful weekend. So I'd already realised by that point. So, yes, it was when I, so I went up to Scotland at the end of the August and the final year students were doing a performance in the November/December time, it was their project, and when I saw them I was just like 'Oh my God, this school is so right for me, definitely.'

* it's funny that isn't it? How things can work out.

F I remember, when I was at the Northern School, we had to present these solos and then we had to sit down and all get feedback from all the teachers at the school and I remember being sat there getting all this feedback from like the head teacher, the principal, and all these different people and literally not understanding a word they were saying.

* Right.

F It was like they were speaking Double Dutch, but which didn't I say 'I don't have a clue what you're saying to me.'? So I think there was something about, I wasn't almost, I enjoyed that year at northern and I did get a lot out of it but there was

something about I wasn't ready to learn and when I went up to Scotland -- I remember, so there's these really famous pioneers who started contemporary dance and Merce Cunningham passed away that year, so he was a massive pioneer, he's got his own Cunningham technique --

* Yes I remember, I saw a documentary on him.

F Yes. A huge pioneer, started the whole, you know, him and a few other people. He died that summer and I remember I didn't even know who he was, I was like 'How have I just done a year at a dance college and I don't know who someone like that is?' and I went up to Scotland and I remember just saying 'Right, this is your learning now, you have to take responsibility for it.' so anything I didn't know I was like, I don't care how stupid I look, I was just asking so many questions all the time. So there was, I wasn't ready when I was at Northern --

* Yes, you were in a different space by the sounds of it.

F Yes, definitely.

* And I think often we do, obviously traditionally A Level students for us would do a foundation course as well but they do it less and less, but the great thing about a foundation course for students is that it gives them space to grow up as well and to find themselves a little bit before they go onto a creative course.

F Yes. Well yes, so the course that I went onto is actually four years and I jumped into second year.

* Oh right, okay.

F So the first year was their equivalent of my foundation course.

* Yes.

F Because I auditioned there and they said 'Yes, we'll take you on first year.' and then I realised that in first year it was something weird about the student loan, you couldn't get it in first year. So I phoned them up and just said 'Look I've already done the foundation course at Northern, can I go straight into the second year?' And a few other people, they did this at Northern, at the Space where I went in Dundee it wasn't like a three-year degree, it was like an NQ, an HNC, a HND and then a top-up BA.

* Ah right okay, so you can drop out at any point.

F Yes, so you could drop out and you'd still have your HNC level or your HND and new people came every year. So there was like me and five other new people that joined that year and I felt like I was definitely in the right year, I felt like I was at a really good level. Yes, I just fitted in really --

- * It was just right, yes. Was that your third choice or was that kind of, why wouldn't it have been one of your first choices initially? Was it less prestigious or how you viewed it or --?
- F Yes, it is just less prestigious, yes, like you said.
- * Yes.
- F It's not got as big a reputation, it's a much smaller school, it's a tiny school. So it's kind of like, like at Northern everything is really organised, you know exactly what studio you're in and all of this, and the amount of times in Dundee you would often just kind of start warming up in a studio and then at nine o'clock when all the lessons started the teachers would be like 'Right okay, you're in here, you're in here.' and then a lot of, if the teachers were often off sick you just mixed two classes. I remember quite a lot of the time as a second year we would do a class with the fourth year, but I bloody loved that, it was like inspiring, I wanted to aspire to be like --
- * Yes.
- F It's a very small school which in a way I think is good.
- * Yes.
- F Because my friend Chloe, for example, who I said I lived with and when she was on first year I was foundation, she got onto the course at Northern but she just struggled the entire three years, I don't think she really enjoyed her training because she was a small fish in a big pond. Whereas I would, I was in Dundee and I didn't really want to be there at the beginning and things, but I would tell her about the training that I was getting and she was like 'Oh that's --' there was part of her that I think she thought 'Oh I could have done with that.' Because even though technically she was maybe better than me, just always felt like she, she used to get obsessed with her technique marks. She was obsessed with her technique marks and she always felt like she was at the bottom, the lower end of the class and things and, but they weren't that bothered about that in Dundee.
- * Yes, I suppose also different structures and if you go somewhere which is maybe quite maybe elite there's different pressures isn't there and different ways in which that's organised and impacts on your creative development I think in a different way.
- F Yes. I remember, when I was on that foundation course, we had to do a choreography project at the end of the year and I remember them saying, I just didn't get it, I mean I didn't ask I just thought it was stupid, they were like 'Okay, you can do a choreography project about what you want to do it but if you don't do it like this, this and this you won't pass.' So you can do what you want but if you don't do it our way you won't pass.'
- * So they're kind of cultivating a house style almost.

- F What?
- * Would you be able to recognise a dancer who had gone through their training?
- F Oh yes, oh yes, yes, yes, definitely.
- * Would you be able to recognise a dancer who has come from Dundee?
- F No, it's not as specific. It depends where you've gone. I think if someone's got to Laban you can tell they've got to Laban, I think if someone's gone to London School of Contemporary Dance --
- * So to some extent that's their brand but to some extent then through your training you embody that --
- F Yes.
- * Which is, to some extent, maybe a bit restrictive as well I suppose I think? Maybe?
- F Maybe other people that go to other schools would go like 'Okay, I can tell that she maybe has not trained at the top three.' or 'She's come from Dundee.' but a lot of people haven't heard of Dundee.
- * Right.
- F But then I got to Dundee and I remember it was time for us to do a choreography project and we would sit down and the teacher would be like 'So what do you want to do it about?' And I was like 'I want to do it about three abandoned puppets in a toy box.' and she was like 'Right, off you go, it sounds brilliant.' At Northern they were like 'You have to do it our way.' I don't think it's like that anymore, the principal has changed, a lot of the schools are changed now but it just didn't work for me --
- * Yes, it wasn't your thing.
- F And I think they could tell that.
- * And when you were doing your degree was there a particular dance tutor or were there particular people who, whether it was your peers or your tutors, that you felt really brought on your making, or did you feel like you pretty much had to find your own way through?
- F It's weird. I was never really into that choreography or creating, I always just thought I wanted to be in other people's work.
- * Right okay.
- F But that's very different from what you're doing now.
- * Yes, massively, massively.

- * So what happened then after you'd graduated?
- F Well I think it's that because of the economical world that we're in now, there's hardly any funding so there's not many full time companies, so there's not, so you're auditioning for jobs that are less likely to be given to you.
- * Yes.
- F So if you're as passionate about what you do as I am and other people are, there's lots of people that go to dance training and then don't do anything with it because they can't be bothered, whereas you've got to make it happen. So I guess one of the main things is 'Well all right, okay, if I can't be in other people's work I want to create my own.' And then you start to create your own work and then you're like 'Oh this is good.'
- * So would you say, did you create your own work when you were studying?
- F Yes I did, the stuff --
- * Yes because you were just saying your teacher would say --
- F Yes, so the main thing I really enjoyed was the last project I created in my final year which was three abandoned puppets in a toy box, and that went really, really well to the point where a film-maker came to watch and he selected my piece and another girl's piece to turn it into a film, which was cool.
- * Yes, so I'm just thinking in terms of you having your own making practice, rather than replicating --
- F Yes, I'd say that's a relatively new thing.
- * Reproducing somebody else's practice, even if you're improvising on it a little bit, but you know, there's something different about that isn't there?
- F Yes. I always enjoyed creating work for other people, so you're still being, even if you work for a company or you're being employed by someone else you're still being creative, because you're still -- Unless the choreographer literally puts every single movement on your body then, okay, you're not doing much creative work but that's very, very rare, because why would you? Why would you create something that's, that's just do dull and I have seen pieces where that's happened and it's dull.
- * Yes.
- F It's boring because you can tell it's not come from the dancer. So I was always being creative then and creating things for other people's work which I enjoyed, but when it came to creating my own work I really struggled. There was this piece I made when I was in my third year, which was technically my second year in Dundee, and it was awful, it was absolutely horrendous. I remember our choreography instructor saying 'That's awful.' and me getting really upset and it was just terrible. I didn't

know what I was, well I was just really struggling, I hadn't got my head into choreography then. And even creating that puppet piece it was pretty difficult. But yes, I guess, then you just start doing it more. So, for example, like even if I wasn't creating the piece that I'm creating at the minute, just teaching, in teaching you have a show every year. So, for example, I go and teach on a Saturday, I have four dancers that I'm creating at the minute for one dance school for different levels and then I've got to do another, they're all doing two dances each, each group.

- * Okay.
- F So that's kind of being creative as well but that's not --
- * So sorry, who are teaching there?
- F So that's like kids. So I teach at two different private dance schools, I teach at one on a Monday evening and one all day on a Saturday.
- * Right okay and how old are they?
- F So my Mondays are, it's teen contemporary, so they're like 8 or 9 to 15. Then on a Saturday I've got four different groups, I've got my really little ones, who are like 6, then I've got my 8 to 10s, then I've got my teens, which is kind of 11, 12, 13, 14 and then you've got like your 15 and up adults.
- * Is that quite unusual they've got that now? They obviously didn't have that when you were at dance school, that kind of --?
- F Well actually they're a Performing Arts School, they're not actually like a dance school. They don't do --
- * Grading and stuff.
- F Exams, no they don't. They're a Performing Arts School.
- * Yes, it sounds all right. Have you got both genders or do you have more girls or more boys?
- F It's mixed, I'd say it's even.
- * Great.
- F Yes, it's pretty even. That's quite a hard job at the minute actually, that Saturday one, because I only started there in September so they're still getting used to me from the old teacher and we're obviously very different. I expect different things from what she expected, but we're working on the choreography at the minute and the show is going to be in April and I was teaching to like other dancer/teacher friends of mine and I was saying I think after the show they'll start to trust me more because they'll feel confident with what they've done. I'm not going to create rubbish on them, do you know what I mean?

- * Yes, yes.
- F It's really good stuff that we're doing.
- * Yes, that's quite interesting isn't it, because to some extent I suppose a few years down the line it will almost be like you've got your own mini company.
- F Yes, it is. So basically yes.
- * I know they're obviously kids but if you've had them for some time then you've got that --
- F Yes, so this is it. So the teen contemporary that I have at Hype on a Monday, I've started with that group since the beginning and I've been there for about two years. So Evie, for example, when teen contemporary first started it was just me and Evie and she was like 7 or 8 and now she's like 10 and we've been together for like two years. So the choreography that I'm working with them at the minute, I actually created it last year for the Hype Dance School Show in April, but there's a South Yorkshire Dance Hub dance platform coming up to celebrate youth dance in South Yorkshire and I said to my boss, my principal at that school saying 'I'd really like to take my show choreography there with the teen contemporary and she said 'Oh yes that's great.' So now we're reworking it to take it there, so it's really, really good. So when that's presented at that platform it will be Hype Dance Company, so it's not my dance troupe but it's choreographed by Lucy Haighton.
- * Yes, yes.
- F And this is it, like Rufino said to me 'Why don't you start your own?' But what I've done is, I do creative projects and I invite all of my kids that I teach in these establishments. So, for example, a lot of the kids that I've taught at teen contemporary at Hype, they've also come and done a thing that I do called Tattva projects, which is when I collaborate with a woman called Nisha and we combine contemporary and classical Indian dance together. We've done Tattva 1 and Tattva 2 and the first Tattva 1 we did was about a year and a bit ago and it had like nine of my kids in from Hype, which was great, because then they could see me outside of that establishment as well. It was really good.
- * No, that sounds quite nice. I mean I kind of, I've got a question which is actually not the next one but I kind of fits, which is actually who do you think benefits from your making?
- F Okay. I guess it depends what we're talking about, because I wouldn't say I've spoken that much about my professional making, like for example, my Arts Council project at the minute. I feel like we've spoken a lot about teaching and what I've done --
- * The history of stuff, yes.
- F So --

- * Well maybe we should because the two questions before are what are your favourite ways in which you make and why? And what particular materials do you favour in your making and why? Now obviously most women I've interviewed they've got a craft or they've got a different kind of material practice, but I suppose in your head if you can transfer that question onto what your material is, the material that you're working with.
- F Okay.
- * So yes, what are your favourite ways in which you make and why?
- F Okay. Well yes, that really depends if I'm, do you want me to answer it from both angles?
- * Any angle you like, yes.
- F Okay. Well while I'm on the subject of teaching with, like creating on my students, I guess I would call them my students, I tend to have a same kind of frame. I'll get some music, I'll create a phrase, I'll teach it to them and then I will get them to create either in duets or in small groups, I'll get them to create their own things using the material that I've given them but also with their own.
- * Yes.
- F I might give them the lyrics of the song, or we might talk about a theme beforehand. Yes and then I'll kind of, you kind of jigsaw it all together so then you have, you might have group phrase of unison that everyone knows, then these two might have a duet, these two might have a duet, there might be four, a quarter over here and then you kind of slot it all together like a jigsaw. So that's not me, I wouldn't say that's me being an artist really, that's kind of, that's very easy you know?
- * Yes okay.
- F Whereas what I'm doing with the Arts Council project RUIDO, and what I've done with other professional work, I definitely don't have a way of doing it and I think if you do have a way of doing it then that's really boring. It's okay to have a formula when, for example, you're teaching or something --
- * But that's a combination of different things isn't it?
- F Yes.
- * But if, so would you say that you are, maybe your favourite way, but maybe it's not your favourite but maybe it's actually primary way in which you make, is this work that, for example, like the stuff you're doing with the Arts Council at the moment.
- F Yes.
- * Yes, because that's where you feel like actually you're creating something from scratch.

F Yes, it's research-based, so I'm doing my research and then taking it into the studio and then creating from there which, so you're responding as organically as possible to the research. So it's very, so you can't really plan it in advance whereas when you're teaching kids --

* Yes, you need a structure.

F Exactly, you've got eight weeks to put this choreography together, I can't go in and go 'Right, I'm feeling -- Evie, you're 9, what are you feeling about this?' Obviously we can talk about the concept and I can get them excited but it's my job to get a piece of choreography ready where they feel good to go on stage. So that's a formula that works and it's completely different to actually having a genuine enquiry question that you're working on in the studio. And I have to say, because this is my first Arts Council, I don't know, I don't know if in ten years' time I'll talk to you and I'll go 'Oh yes, I definitely have a formula now.' or 'I definitely have a way of doing it.' I have to say, when I work with other people who are much older than me, who I work for as a dancer, I do see that they kind of have a way of doing it, which I sometimes think is a bit crap because you're just doing the same thing every single time and it's not a genuine, you're not really exploring anything new.

* That's quite difficult though isn't it I suppose to stay in a moment of innovation because a lot of the time, I don't know, in other practices, so for example, I suppose you eventually, you instinctively do things because you've embodied particular practices and that also enables you to then become better. Then on top of that you can innovate I suppose but there's certain things, you know, you never, even in a visually creative practice I suppose you don't, normally you wouldn't start right from scratch because you need to, you build on your existing knowledge.

F Yes.

* Which I'm sure you do mostly when you dance as well. Is that the --? Or do you actually try to dismantle that in order to get to some kind of clean slate?

F It depends where I am in the process. Right now I'm definitely dismantling.

* Okay. So tell me a little bit about the Arts Council project because obviously I've been to join you on one of the workshops that you're doing in combination of that and we spoke a little bit when we initially met. But how did it come about and what is it about and --?

F Yes okay. So it basically came about in 2014 in the spring, so about two and a half years ago, maybe nearly three years ago, I went to Mexico with my boyfriend who is from Mexico, to meet all of his family and friends and couldn't speak any Spanish really. I can only speak a little bit now but I couldn't speak any at the time, and I was just very, very overwhelmed, like massively overwhelmed. And it was a bit daft on his part, I think, to try and, because obviously when he goes home he's like 'Let's see everyone.' but for me it was just a bit too overwhelming, massively overwhelming and I wasn't very confident at the time, I'm much, much, much more confident now.

* is he a dancer as well?

F No. Well he does, he's been in my projects. No, he's a research scientist --

* Oh really?

F But he's so creative though, he's great. Like for this project he's been in the studio with me for a day and we just mess about and he's just great, yes. He was in the, yes, I'll just tell you about it. So I was just really struck by like, oh I just felt so isolated, so frustrated, so despondent, but then also I started to get really intrigued by, obviously being a mover, I was really interested in people's body language and I could sometimes try and work out what was going on depending on how people were using gesture with what they were speaking about, which I was really interested. Then I was really interested in that fact that it was just all sounds, when you don't understand a language it's not a word is it, it's not got any meaning to it.

* Yes.

F So I was really interested as well in at what point does a word become a word, at what point do we attach meaning to it?

* Yes.

F Do you know what I mean? So I came back in the June, no the May, and started thinking about these things and I applied for a residency week at Yorkshire Dance in the July. And I didn't think I would get it, this is me being really like --

* There's a theme there isn't it?

F There's a recurring little niggle isn't there? I was just like, I remember I, yes actually I do remember Rufino made me do it. I was like, I've got this idea and he was like, and I was like 'Yes I was going to send this thing.' It was like the Thursday and he was like 'When's the deadline?' and I was like 'Well it was Monday.' and he was like 'Well send it anyway.' and I was like 'No, I don't know' and I just sent it and I was like 'Sorry this is a few days late.' and then she just phoned me and was like 'Yes, do you want a residency? It sounds like a really great idea.' I had the residency, really shocked myself and created something that I was really proud of, like genuinely. I'd done other work with other people but this was fantastic, I was in the studio on my own, in this massive studio in Leeds, I didn't have a clue what I was doing but by like the end of the second day I'd definitely found my hook into something and I was like 'Oh this is meaty, I'm loving this.' So I did a little sharing at the end of the week with what I'd created and all the Yorkshire Dance staff were really positive, they were like 'Yes, let's get you performing at our next platform' and I was like 'Oh cool'. So I performed it at two platforms, so by this point it was a ten minute piece, and during that week as well Rufino wasn't a research scientist by then, he was still working in the restaurant where we met, where I worked as well. So he came with me for a day and came with me into the studio and it was really nice because we did a lot of improvising together. So he was improvising with the microphone with text, responding off what he was seeing me doing and then I was responding off what he

was saying. I recorded what he said and then I chopped it up and used it as part of the soundtrack. So that was a really nice way of having him involved in it. Then yes, then I went to India and then I came back in 2015 and then I was like 'Right, I'm going to write an Arts Council and then I'm going to try and get this.' Then it took me from like the January 2015 and then I got the funding in September 2016, so it was third time lucky and there was loads of gaps of like 'Oh no' and it was really hard getting rejected two times before. It felt hard at the time, I think if I put something in now and got rejected I'd understand that's the nature of it.

* It's part of the process.

F Yes.

* So does that mean you resubmit the same thing three times but then change it every time or improve on it?

F Yes. The first application now, if I looked at it, I'd probably laugh. So I don't regret any of it because the amount that I've learnt on that journey.

* Yes.

F Like I so understand about the world of arts now, about what a producer is and, you know, what all these people do, what's a marketer and what's an administrator and I understand a budget. I'd no idea about a budget before, I didn't even know what support-in-kind meant, I didn't know anything. Do you know what CPD means?

* Continuous Professional Improvement --

F Continuous Professional Development.

* Development, yes.

F I had no idea what that meant, no idea of nothing.

* Yes but that's all just, you know --

F Jargon.

* Jargon and professional and academic and --

F Yes.

* It's one of those things isn't it? And there's like, every day I hear more acronyms that I haven't got a clue what they are.

F Oh I know, yes.

* So you're working on that at the moment and, so tell me a little bit about the theme of that? You were talking about it came from really of not being able, feeling isolated and --

- F Yes, so it explores language and communication barriers. So I'm really interested in those two things really.
- * And you've got quite a lot of different people involved haven't you? Because you were saying you're interviewing linguists or --?
- F Yes. So the project is pretty big actually compared to when I first put the application in. I've got four or five, it depends how you look at it, academics involved, who all work within neuroscience, linguistics, psychology, English departments, things like that and I've met up with them and had chats with them about their research areas. Then I've got my community groups, so I've got one group in Sheffield and I think, yes, about six or so in Leeds who I'm meeting up with. I've met up with quite a few already and I've still got a few more to meet up with. And I'm doing a performance, I'm doing the ten minute performance that I created two years ago which you saw and then I'm doing a workshop and then once I've got to know them a bit better I'm kind of doing a bit like this really, kind of sitting down and having chats and things like that. So that's all of the community research element and then I'm also, as part of it, it's led me to learn British sign language --
- * Right okay.
- F Because I'm really interested in body language and so I joined Sheffield University's Sign Language Society, I started there, like going regularly, in September and I took my first exam on Saturday.
- * Wow.
- F I took my Level 101. Yes, and there's a guy who runs that session as well who is, he was born deaf and so he's kind of like my BSL collaborator on the project, so we kind of Skype each other and Facetime and things and I just ask him anything I need to.
- * So with this project, have you got, I mean I asked you earlier who do you think benefits from your making, is that different with this project than with other work that you're doing?
- F Yes definitely.
- * Who do you think benefits?
- F Okay. So all of the academics benefit, seeing their research in a creative practice. All of the community groups I think really benefit, even though I'm only going in once or twice to see them, you can kind of tell that it's been a really good session and things. Then hopefully as many as possible of them will come to the performance in February, so they'll be able to see, again --
- * So that's your performance of the outcome.

F Yes, so they'll be able to see how my talking to them and being with them has influenced the work. I mean it might not be so obvious but it will be ingrained in the process.

* Yes.

F And then, once it's done, it's going to be an interesting piece because it's not come from a political place, but obviously in the current climate that we live in and it's like migration crisis, oh my God, it's going to be political without it even meaning to. So, for example, as part of National Refugee Week in June, there's an event in Sheffield called The Migration Matters Festival and I already did a thing for them in June last year, but they already want me, I already know that they want me to perform the work there and maybe do a workshop and things like that. So going on a wider scale, hopefully lots of people will benefit from it because everyone has been a situation, unless you've literally never left your county, where you've been in a place where you've not been able to understand language. Or you will have because when a dog barks at you you don't know what it's saying, when a baby cries you don't always know what it wants. So I think it's something that everyone can relate to, communication is what makes us human isn't it? Being able to have conversation.

* Yes, I suppose the difference with that kind of stuff maybe I would think is that thing of being in a different environment with the society or the cultural pressure. Like you were saying you were in that family environment, your partner's family environment and then kind of everybody is speaking.

F Yes.

* That's a different pressure on the person than a dog barking because of the expectation or there's something missing there isn't there?

F Yes.

* But then I think you talking about the baby crying, I think that's quite interesting because I think actually young mothers, a lot of mothers I've spoken to in the past and when you first half a child you're kind of literally going 'What do you want?' you know, because you can get so frustrated. So there's different tensions isn't there between not being able to understand or translate. But yes, that's just me pondering on the ins and outs of your project. I'm really looking forward to coming back to your group and the women's group in Leeds and just, that's your last session there isn't it?

F Yes.

* And just to see how that concludes. it's a shame I had to miss the one in the middle, but then also seeing what you're doing in the studio and then in that week is that the, at the end of that week are you doing your performance is then your performance a bit later than that?

F The week that you're coming in January?

* Yes.

F So next week I've got a residency at Yorkshire Dance. Then I've got a week in January which is in Doncaster and then in February I've got the last week in Yorkshire Dance and then it's at the end of that week where the sharing is.

* Right okay, well we'll see how that kind of all comes together with all the different work that you're doing.

F It is just a sharing, so I'm not putting pressure on myself with it, but I imagine it will end up being about 45 minutes.

* Yes. But as you said before, because it's a research-led practice now isn't it, this project --

F Yes, definitely.

* That's the whole point isn't it?

F That's exactly it.

* It's not about pulling together a final, and we talked to Jake a lot about the idea of process versus artefact and I suppose even in dance you can have the same struggle, because something about final performance becomes quite artefactual when actually from what I understand your project is a lot about process and staying in the process.

F That's something that we talk about a lot, is the value of sharing. For example, if you've just got one week of exploration in a studio and you're working, there's a group of you and you're working with a choreography or whatever, you know, you're working as a collective, if you say at the beginning 'Right we'll definitely do a sharing at the end of the week.' by like Wednesday all you're thinking about is the sharing and getting something together for that and it just completely takes away from --

* Yes, because it's performative then, it's as different kind of thing.

F Yes, definitely.

* I've got one last question and that's what stops you from making? What are the things that impact on you being able to make? So we were talking about your knees earlier.

(laughter)

* Or our knees, our crappy knees.

F Yes, definitely crappy knees.

* But obviously there are lots of ways in which --

- F There's lots of ways to answer that.
- * Yes.
- F Time and money probably are the big factors.
- * Because what do you do for money when you can't get funding?
- F Well I just do more teaching work and then I struggle a bit really. This is a novelty for me because this is my first fully funded project so --
- * Yes.
- F Yes, but then, so far in the studio I've had eight days and it was only on Sunday, which was my eighth day, where I started to feel 'Okay, all right, I'm sitting okay with this project.' The first seven days I had this battle in my head of like needing to create something but not feeling that I was able to and nothing was, I felt like all of the research and all the community groups were sitting really heavy in my head and I needed time to reflect on it all so it could sink into my body and then come out physically through some kind of movement, and it wasn't and I was getting really frustrated that it was taking as long as it was. Then I was getting upset, I was like 'Oh I'm not making the most use of this time and oh I'm crap and you know -- ' and then I spoke to my producer and she was like 'No, for goodness sake, you just need to give yourself permission for it to take as long as it needs, this is the whole point of it being research, you're responding to your research, so in the studio, whether that's your reading over notes or you're going for a walk or, it doesn't have to be you're always dancing, you're always creating.'
- * Yes.
- F And I think when you've got the studio it's like 'Oh dancing space.'
- * Yes, you have the space, do something in it.
- F Yes exactly. Which I imagine is what a lot of, like I speak to my friend who is a visual artists and I say to her 'How do you pay the rent of your studio if you've got a massive --' and she was telling me that she's had a big creative block the last few months and we were just talking about it and, you know --
- * That's funny isn't it, because in that sense the space, because I've been really interested in space in the past and what space does for you and what spaces you use to create in, so I'll be taking photographs of the space that you're creating in as well, that will be quite important for me to kind of reflect on.
- F Yes.
- * But what's interesting with you saying that, it's almost like, even though you need, you know, a space can be the thing that facilitates it, but then also the space almost becomes a burden on you, the pressure on your --

- F Yes, I think so.
- * On your making.
- F And I noticed I got, the space that I was in on Sunday where I started to feel a lot better with it, was the fourth time I've been in that space and suddenly felt smaller.
- * Oh really?
- F Yes, I was walking around it like, whereas before it had felt like this monstrous room that I was a tiny little thing in.
- * ...
- F Yes, so you can answer it in different ways I think that one.
- * Yes okay. That's great, thank you very much. Obviously, that seems to have recorded and we're just under an hour so probably with the beginning bit we're probably at an hour, 57 minutes.
- F Cool. Is that enough of what you need? I felt like I didn't talk that much really about making.
- * Yes, but don't think, no, don't forget that actually I'm going to get the transcripts written up and then I'm going to look for themes and then I'm going to look for holes and I'm going to look for things maybe where I, if I'd had time to reflect when we were talking, maybe where I would have asked you to kind of dig a little bit deeper in a particular area.
- F Yes.
- * But generally it's not, because it's really about also seeing where the conversation takes us so it's, you know, it's not like a formal interview as such.
- F Yes, yes. You've failed, you haven't said this, this and this.
- (laughter)
- * Yes, no. The only thing, I mean for me it's quite difficult because sometimes I think I naturally, because it's a conversation and I think 'Oh God, I've really talked too much and I've put too much of myself in it.'
- F Yes, I know what you mean.
- * But actually I have to try and make my peace with that because that's actually what I'm interested in as well, because I think in that, two people coming together and how that conversation and knowledge comes out, you know, that's kind of what I'm interested in as well.
- F Yes.

* And you do bring yourself into it, or you have to otherwise, you know, it's not the same thing. And I think it's a very female thing in the way that happens so --

F To have a good natter.

* Yes, yes it is that, have a good natter. Let's see if I can save this.

(end of recording)

A.6 Supporting Material WEAVING CHAPTERS

A.6.1. Supporting Material CHAPTER 7: Adult Making Support

As well as looking at themes in relation to how making attitudes develop in childhood, I also started looking at how support for making continued/dis-continued in the women's life in school, at home, at university and at work. Whilst this gave interesting and relevant insights into how gender interacts with making, I ultimately decided that in order to have enough space to develop my main arguments within the thesis I would not expand on this further, but would include it 'to have sight of' in the appendix.

Here I am showing my initial thematic ordering based on the different women's account. There is some interpretation of the emerging themes and some theory starting to be considered in relation to the findings, but I did not go on to analyse this data in further depth once I knew I would have to cut it. I am presenting it here as a way of showing other themes in the data considered in order to address potential questions over silences in my thesis.

ADULT MAKING SUPPORT

Cultures of Support in Home, Education and Work Since Childhood

Throughout the different interviews and observations, the women have been keen to mention how their making has benefitted from the support of others. Often this was mentioned when thinking about their making origins. Interestingly, fathers, grandfathers, husbands, uncles, male teachers and colleagues were mentioned as much, if not more, than mothers, grandmothers, aunts and other women. This is especially the case once the women talked about their adult making, both in private and in professional contexts.

This is important because there is ample evidence that female creative practice has been historically curtailed, de-valued and excluded within patriarchal societies. But being part of a patriarchal society, does, of course, not mean that individual males within it carry ideologies in agreement with systemic misogyny. The women here seemed to have broadly benefitted from particular men, who have supported their becoming or being makers over time, either from within the family or in the outside world.

Talking about the presence Fotini tells me '**my husband helps me a lot**', going on to describe how:

'He is very supportive because he thinks that I'm very good in mosaics and he's always thinking "Oh we have to make an exhibition, we have to –".'

Lucy talked about being supported by her dad and her boyfriends at critical times, both emotionally and practically, and Kaz mentioned a range of male art teachers who had gone out of their way to help her along the way. In her case, it was a female art teacher who nearly made her give up arts subjects at school, because of how she treated her.

Kaz recalls:

'When I went to secondary school, the art teacher there, she just hated me and oh it was awful and I just didn't want to do it anymore... Like I enjoyed doing it but she was just a bitch, I've no idea what her problem was, just anything I did, just trying to knock me down.'

Kaz's account is not the only time that difficult relationships with other women surface in the making context. In the different women's accounts there are more mentions of tensions with other women over aspects of making than with men. Her experience with male teachers was pre-dominantly recalled very positively:

'I think I did want it so badly though at uni and so I think I just didn't know how to handle, just not knowing and then coming back to Manchester and almost panicking that I don't really know anyone in the loop. Because in the past, even when I didn't like Salford it was my teacher that bailed us out, so you could just go to someone and they'd be like "It's okay, you can do this."'

Katy, who went to a public school had great difficulty accessing the subjects that interested her because of her gender. But it is within this systemically misogynistic system that individual male teachers made a point of supporting her:

'So I wasn't allowed to do woodwork and I wasn't allowed to do technical drawing because I was a girl, only the boys, it was a boys' school so only the boys were allowed to take those disciplines. They were also allowed to take fine art and home economics like the girls were, but we weren't given the full range of choices. I did go into the woodwork block for this one week of hobbying and I made so much in one week and realised that that was my space and place. I would have been 15 or 16 then and I remember the woodwork teacher very well.'

Recalling how being able to do what she loved made her feel in his workshop, she says:

'Gosh, yes, I was very happy in it so I must have been confident in it, and I was comfortable just playing in it. But it was only literally a week, but I remember vividly, I'm 46 now and that would have happened in 1983/4 and I still don't forget it. I don't forget the teacher, I only had him for a week, I remember him well.'

At the school, girls were allowed to take Fine Art and it is her Fine Art teacher she credits with having supported her the most, saying:

'He was the only teacher I really kind of had, I would say I'd align with today in my adult life ... he was the one that I felt I could be comfortable with and say what I wanted to ... I was myself in them.'

The same teacher ended up setting up a small Art History A-level class in which Katy was one of three people, all girls. He took them on trips to museums and to see architecture, and as Katy describes it created a curriculum that provided a general escape from the narrow confines of the public school. Katy taking the Art History A-level had, however, serious repercussions both at school and at home:

'It wasn't something that the school took seriously and I had a huge fight with the school and my parents about doing it. I had to drop a, what they would consider to be a "proper" A Level to achieve it and that led to my dad not talking to me for six solid months -- And all sorts of shenanigans, real serious shit went down.'

The repercussions of not conforming to norms was, however, not just confined to being a girl. Katy remembers a boy choosing to take Cookery:

'The one boy who did cookery, oh God was he bullied, but he was bullied all the time anyway for all sorts of reasons, but yes, his cookery, I think his cookery desire came from both genuinely liking cookery.'

Within her family this differentiation between what girls were allowed to do and what boys were allowed to do also played out to the detriment of all involved. She acknowledges that her Dad had all his children's best interest at heart based on his beliefs of what was best for them. What he thought was best for them was definitely dependent on their gender. She recalls that she'd braced herself when she told him that she wanted to do an Art-History degree, but was surprised to find that:

'.. he accepted it exceptionally willingly and then the second I started the

course his interest was immense.'

Her younger brother, however, did not receive the same support:

'...he wouldn't let my little brother do the same degree as me in the same institution, he banned him from doing it, so he was forced to do business studies. So, he did see my degree as not an academic subject but he saw it as something that women can do while they're wasting their time, as Itten would say in the Bauhaus, so where there's women you will find them knitting just to waste their time. So, I think my dad very much had that attitude about the degrees me and my sister did.'

The idea of it being okay for Katy and her sister to 'waste their time' on any degree, was based on her Dad's belief that they would both soon get married, have children and be housewives, whereas their brothers would have to ensure that they would have a good income in order to marry, have children and have a stay at home wife. Writing on the social uproar in relation to the admissions of the women into Cambridge in the late 1860s, Carter (2015) highlights that 'Within the realm of education, "proper gender relations" held that a woman's learning should ultimately serve to bolster a man's' (p.121). That such a conception of a girl's education would still be active in the 1980s is at once staggering but sadly also not all that surprising considering the continued tenacity of gender discrimination in society as a whole. It is, however, a perfect illustration of how patriarchal constructs are not only bad for women, but just as damaging for men by circumscribing their development through narrowly conceived, gender based confines, as feminists have been pointing out for decades. Wherever inclusion or exclusion is exercised based on gender, it is, more often than not, to the detriment of all genders and gender identities.

Some women's accounts tell of more nuanced reasons for being included in making opportunities. Eirini recalled in great detail how her grandfather engaged her in making practices and how it was her, rather than her brother, who was the main benefactor. She explains why:

'... my brother was less into making things for himself. I'm sure my grandfather made them for both of us but I think I was more interested in the process.'

This means that her grandfather supported her in her making because she was the one of the siblings who was interested, with gender being irrelevant to his decision on who

should benefit.

Being aware of gender inclusion and exclusion can also mean that parents may seek for the children to benefit from non-normative inclusions based on gender. Although Becky recalls her Dad going out of his way to supply her with materials and tools for her making, she primarily credits her mum with the development of her making practice. Her mum was also very adamant that she should not take subjects at school that were perceived to be in the female domains:

‘We weren’t allowed to take home economics, absolutely not allowed, it was a wasted subject “You're not doing it.”

Instead she was pushed to take subjects primarily taken by boys at that time, with her mother expecting her to outperform all of them. Commenting on her mother’s high expectations of her, she recalls:

‘I once came home from secondary school and I was the only girl in 300 kids, 300 boys, doing engineering metalwork. The only girl. I came home and I’d got 97% on an exam and I was so chuffed and excited and I ran in to tell her and the first thing she said to me was “What happened to the other 3%?”

Although she now appreciates some of the training that her mother’s preferences gave her, she points out that she had little choice in the matter.

‘She wanted me to be the engineer or the architect or the whatever in a man’s world, regardless really of what I wanted. She persuaded me that that’s what I wanted and I really didn’t, it wasn’t my thing at all.’

Although she wasn’t involved in these subjects by choice, she highlights how her male teachers were very supportive of her:

‘Mostly male teachers, certainly in the engineering, metalwork and tech drawing, they were male teachers and they were really supportive.’

The support of her male teachers could, however, not make up for the exclusion she experienced from her peers. When she went to college to do engineering metalwork, and it didn’t start well:

‘I went to college for three days and absolutely hated it. Can you guess why? I was the only girl doing my course and the boys hated me.’ ‘Yes, all the boys

hated me, nobody would sit near me, I was ostracised and so I thought “Screw it, I’ll go and get a job.” and I did.’

She went to work in a pewter factory and somewhat surprisingly here her gender did not appear to be an obstacle to progressing her making. She started off in the warehouse, which she describes as **‘simple, mindless work, which is fine, its work that needs to be done and it’s a job, but I wanted something a bit more challenging’** When I ask her how it came that she became the engraver for the company, she says: **‘I wanted to, I asked.’** She recalls:

‘Our boss, he bought a machine and said “We need an engraver.” I said “Will you take me on?” and he left me to figure it out basically.’

It was then also left up to her to find out how to use the machine and, again, it was another male, who enabled her to learn:

‘So I went into the market in Sheffield where I knew they’d got a machine the same and I asked him to show me how to use it and he did bless him. Which looking back it was very good of him to because it meant him possibly losing work, but he showed me.’

Bill, who is Becky’s oldest sister, the first of four girls, recalled helping her dad repairing cars, the scrapyard being her favourite place. This was unusual in her community and because of what she was interested in she had always been told that she should have been a boy. When I ask ‘By whom?’ - She says: **‘Mum and dad, sisters, you know, friends’.** She explains that she has never been one for girly things but comments on that being a stereotype. When Bill went to work in her first factory, there was only one other woman working in the factory but Bill comments: **‘she was the gaffer, oh my word.’** She goes on to explain that in her working life, she had always preferred working with men:

Bill: ‘I find women, one woman to work with is fine, two is pushing it, three or more is hell on earth, absolutely hell on earth. Two women can do the job of four men. Three women can do the job of half a man. Absolutely dreadful.’

Me: Why is that?

Bill: ‘They’re cliquy, bitchy, two-faced. No, I’ve not got much time for women.’

Bill: 'Yes. Like I said, the best factories were the mainly men ones.'

Me: And did you feel in those factories that actually the men were absolutely fine with you being there as a woman and was there any tension?

Bill: It was novel and in one particular one, the very last one that I was in, there were three women and 180 guys and I rose through the ranks kind of thing, got to be a supervisor and got to be one of the highest paid in the firm, you know, man or woman. But you had to work twice as hard as a man to be considered half as good.

Bill: But they're genuine, if they don't like what you're doing or saying they will tell you instead of bitching about you behind your back like women do. Yes, it was, I right enjoyed it, I made some good friends.

Bill obviously thrived in a mostly male environment at work, as did Becky. It is difficult to tell here where exactly Bill's negative perception of women comes from, but it is obvious that Bill's experience with women at work cannot have been all that positive.

Bill's recollection of working in pre-dominantly male environments reminded me of an account by Cindy Harris in Elinor et al. (1987), who worked as a roofer and carpenter. She had said:

'For a woman in the building trade the male tradition has other effects too - for example, I take criticism very personally. A man would shrug it off, but I take it to heart because if you're a woman doing a job it's got to be bloody perfect; it can't just pass, you know, it has to be wonderful or it's no good at all.' (p.96)

This is reminiscent of Bill talking about having to work twice as hard to be considered half as good. Harris in Elinor et al. (1987) also mentions the tension of 'taking a men's job', which although it did occur as a negative accusation in Bill's or Becky's account, is there in the way they are considering the generosity of men helping them. Harris commented:

'With caretaking I do a lot of work outside and I have people I don't know informing me that I'm taking a man's job away from him. Many male building workers will just assume that they've got the right to come up and talk down to me. Being a woman out there seems to give everyone the right to patronise; I've even had them attempting to take my ladder away from me. And accepting help is fatal; they just take over.'
(Elinor et al. 1987, p. 96)

A.6.2. Supporting Material WEAVING CHAPTERS: Modes of Making

THE MODES OF MAKING

Modes and Materialities in Female Making

This is the thematic emerging of the modes and materialities visible in the different women's practices. It was initially intended to become chapter eight. Again, this is to be viewed as a point of reference of how data emerging was structured and considered. Some aspect of this thematic surfacing was incorporated into the three final versions of the weaving chapters, but the majority of it was not used in the main body of the thesis and was also not taken forward for in-depth analysis and reflection, apart from the final part here, where I am discussing 'Making and the Body'.

Vignettes:

- 1. Kaz Un-making and Re-making**
- 2. Katy Talking about Drafts and Prototypes**
- 3. Becky and Bill Talking about Re-production**

Emerging Themes:

- **Iteration vs. Repetition**
- **Experimentation and Risk**
- **Making/Learning/Making**
- **Learning from Others/Communities of Practice**

Discussion: Making and the Body

Vignettes of Modes and Materialities:

1. Kaz Un-making and Re-making

Whilst I am watching Kaz working on her mosaic I ask her about the glue she is using and she says:

'I just use pvu glue because I do indoor mosaics, if you want an outdoor one you need to use a different adhesive which is almost cement like and with my work I change a lot of it and rip it all up if I don't like it I just pull the whole lot off and it's really hard to do that with the cement. It's like you need to start again. It's hard with the glass, I had to rip some of the glass up of these bits here, that was hard cause obviously, it's glass so it was shattering. This

might be a bit easier cause its porcelain. But hmm yeah.'

Later Kaz shows me several of her paintings which have the same motive, but which she explored in different media. When she shows me paintings stored away, she remarks that these were just study pieces really, created in order for her to learn and perfect a particular technique. She mentions she is still not quite happy with how some of them have turned out and that she is planning to re-paint some of them again in the future.

2. Katy Talking about Drafts and Prototypes

When I talk to Katy about the need to finish things whilst making, she remarks:

'So I don't mind things taking forever but I do need to have what I think is now, I'm now referring to as drafts. So, I've finished a View-Master frame, it's sealed, it's finished, but it's not good enough for me, so I'm seeing it as Version 1, draft. That's great, I've got something finished, but it's not really finished. That item is but it's going to lead to something else.'

Katy also talks about a further function of this kind of proto-typing - the ability to use the finished but not final artefact in order to discuss its further iterations with others in order to help improve it:

'So the futility of knowing and completing this item but it's not really the item I want because I'm using things that I've developed or got but, you know what, I'll see what it looks like prototype and then I'll be able to show this to someone and say "Right, this plastic is cut too small, it's got a bit of an edge here, I'm not happy about that".'

Katy also mentions that it is not that important to her that her final artefact is 'in sight', instead she talks about how she actively seeks to extend the open-endedness of the process, as it is this part she enjoys the most.

3. Becky and Bill talking about Re-production

Becky talks about the importance of her making process to her enjoyment of making, highlighting iterative and experimental aspects. Repetitive processes based on re-production are judged primarily negatively. Becky explains:

'... making multiples of one thing doesn't interest me, I like everything to

be different.'

If she does make a particular item several times, like her money boxes, for example, she keeps herself interested by theming the decorations, so that each one is different. Becky makes clear that she understands that her making would be commercially more sustainable if she was making things in batches:

'If I was to sell them it would make sense to make five gingerbread houses all in one go because then you can cut out a job lot of fencing or roofing or whatever, and it would save an awful lot of time.'

But she is very clear and adamant about why she is making and who for:

'My crafts is my interest for me, it's not a commercial thing, even though I have made things and sold them that's not the reason why I make things and if it was to become that I think I would get bored very quickly. I'm not very good at making the same thing again and again and I have tried, but I'm not very good at that.'

She mentions agreeing to re-produce items for her sisters:

'I will because I'm making for my sisters but it's not because I'm going to enjoy the process.'

Bill also repeatedly talks about getting bored with re-producing particular items. In her up-cycling practice this was easier to avoid as each piece was already unique in some way. With her smaller craft items she enjoys thinking of new/different things to make: there's no shortage of ideas it's just what I fancy, do it and once I've done it and got it out of my system that's great and I'll move on to the next thing. When I ask her about not making the same things again, she says **'No because I've been there, done that, it's kind of scratched that itch'**.

MODES OF MAKING

Iteration vs. Repetition

Iteration and repetition are important aspects in the making and creative process. But this is also a question of time affordability.

‘I embroider, and I see it very much as an extension of drawing; the same thought processes are involved, the same concerns of contour, volume, weight, stress, tension. It’s not a question of embroidering a drawing, but using the information acquired through drawing. I don’t find it possible to do a little every day. I first have to think around an idea, let it mature. Then I draw and draw, to clarify the image; when I’m ready I work at it non-stop till it’s finished. That’s the luxury of working for myself.’ (Bowman, 1987, p.152)

Kaz described ripping large parts of her mosaic back up and relaying it to make it better. This initially surprised me as I was thinking about the mosaic as more static than a drawing, for example, where you might rub something out, or a painting where you might paint over an area you are not happy with. Considering that Kaz had previously told me how long it takes her to make a mosaic, this signals to me that it is more important to her that the piece looks how she wants it to look, than the time she has to invest to get it to that point. This is in contrast to how she had previously described the cost of the material impacting on the compromises she had to make when designing a mosaic. Her monetary resources are impacting on the piece in that she had to compromise on the size and colours. Her time resources impact on the piece in that she can afford to invest time to re-do parts of it if she isn’t entirely happy with it.

When Katy talks about making more than one version of her piece in the form of drafts, it exemplifies the Design practice of proto-typing – essential to developing and testing new ideas and materials. A proto-type is like a model of what you want to produce and if you are going through the Design process this directly links to the iteration, refinement, production trajectory. The idea is that each new version is an improvement on the previous one, things can be tried out without the stifling worry about it being the final artefact. But in contrast to a professionalised design process, she is not necessarily striving for completion, but aims to remain process bound for as long as possible, whilst gaining a sense of satisfaction from completing ‘drafts’.

Both Becky and Bill highlight how their interests in making are based on production,

rather than re-production. Becky shows that she is very aware that in the context of monetary economics of potentially commodifying her making practice, her reluctance to re-produce is an obstacle. But when she says 'I am just not very good at it', what she really means is not that she is not capable of re-production, but that it doesn't motivate her to make. Bill also highlights how little value re-production has for her when she says '**... I've been there, done that, it's kind of scratched that itch.**' Once she has materialised an idea, she has little interest in materialising it in the same form again - she is not motivated by the idea of re-production.

Experimentation and Risk

Experimentation is a central part of the Design process, so it is not surprising that it is both mentioned in the conversations and I could also observe it in the women's practice.

Kaz said '...it's one part cutting one part sticking - 'But I like cutting, it's a lot of luck - it's finding out what you can do.'

When Eirini describes the final work she created for her Fine Art degree, she says: '**So they were all kind of experimentation ...**'. When talking about time spent on an artist residence, she remarks:

'But really I was experimenting the entire time I was there, I didn't do anything significant.'

Although she says she didn't do anything significant, there is no evidence that this is a negative value judgement on the time she spent on the residence.

Bill highlights how her years of experience support her making practice and how most things she learned through '**Trial and error**'. Katy also mentions trial and error, but her context is that she is often contracting out the parts of her making she can't achieve in her own workshop:

'I'm paying for them and they're coming back not good enough, so I'm going to the wrong places. But that's trial and error and I don't have a problem with that although it costs me too much because I can't do other things because the money has gone.'

This means that if Katy is having to pay to try out some of her ideas materially, she has to take a certain amount of risk that it will not be materialised in the way she had envisaged, but that this still enables her to move on experience-wise. The main question of risk in this context is affordability in monetary terms, though monetary/economic affordability

often plays an important part in risk affordability indirectly.

Talking about her mosaic practice, Fotini points to a certain decisiveness learned in childhood and related to time constraints, which enables her to take risks whilst making:

‘It’s just, I think it just fits on the mosaics and because I have also learnt as a child to be fast, quick, I’m also quick with mosaics and I am taking the risk, it means that I’m not just sitting there wondering “Oh it might be not nice, I’ll put it out.” I’m just saying “I’m doing it” and that’s it.’

Here, Fotini is talking about taking a design risk, which she links to time-affordability, but indirectly she is also highlighting that she wants to *do*, rather than *think* (or rather overthink), as thinking might lead to hesitation and reversal. So, for her, the forward momentum is important, which might also indicate less temporal affordability.

Vicky mentions how **‘sometimes it’s just nice to mess around’**, and highlights that she is in an environment in her shared studio space where this is part of the everyday practice:

‘I think all of us are quite curious like that, like we like tinkering about and playing with things.’

She says that though there is no overt intention to turn the results of this ‘playing’ into commodifiable items, the fact is that this experimentation is an essential part of their professional practice and the results often do end up being integrated into commercial work sooner or later. This points to the formal Design training Vicky and her peers have undergone.

Within the studio there also appears to be a certain competitiveness about making and finding new ways to make. Vicky mentions creating visuals out of tin foil and getting enjoyment out of the others not being able to guess how she had made them. Her experimentation, risk taking and research pre-cedes commercial making - she talks about the need to *feed that thing*, which is her creative practice. Her speculative making enables her to speed up her commercial making, where deadlines are often tight which precludes time for experimentation and research:

‘... because I just don’t think I’d be able to make as quickly.’

Being able to experiment requires being able to afford to take risks. Wayland Barber (1994) proposes that, historically, women were often too deeply bound by the pressure

and responsibility of reliable production to be able to experiment. They could not 'afford', financially and temporally, to take the risks required for experimentation. This meant that:

'... women of all but the top social and economic classes were so busy just trying to get through what had to be done each day that they didn't have excess time or materials to experiment with new ways of doing things'
(Wayland Barber, 1994, p.32).

She highlights that in addition to this - any experimentation carries a certain amount of risk, which means that the affordability of risk is greatly compromised when it could impact on food spoilage or production failure. The idea that female labour itself has been traditionally so closely linked to the potential of the family's economic ruin, is in itself testament against the critiques of women's lack of production over the centuries. The point here is not that women have not produced, but that because the reliance on their production was intrinsically linked to survival, there was little affordability in terms of risk taking, which may have led to more widely recognised innovative production. But even when women have innovated, their efforts have rarely been recognised within the patriarchal systems, which may also have been a disincentive.

Kaz also brings up the idea of taking risks financially in order to pursue her practice:

'Well it's just a case of getting by, I'd probably financially get by a bit more than I was now, this is like, I know this is a massive risk but I'm glad I took it. I don't know where it's going to go but I don't regret, I won't regret this. I regret more the fact that I took so long to get back into it, yes, that's how I feel. But then my mum has never been happy at her job but she stayed in it for that financial security.'

To be able to make freely, you have to be able to take risks. And being able to take risks is a question of affordability, which relates to a myriad of issues in relation to power and economics.

Making/Learning/Making

Many of the women highlight how learning is an essential part of their learning practice and it is visible how an underlying willingness and ability to learn supports their making in a fundamental way. Kaz talking about trying out new media to work in, said:

'Because do you know what I liked? I liked the fact that I knew nothing, so I think, because there's so much to learn, I like that, I always like the idea of

opening a door and there's so much.'

Kaz, who had long years of being estranged from her own practice, describes confronting and overcoming fears of failure she has had in the past, which were often based on her presuming that other people (in Design) knew much more than her and that she didn't have the right skills:

'I think that was what I would tell myself at a time, "I can't do this because I need that." and then I just got to a point of "Well what have I got? Let's start with that."'

She describes how she became re-engaged with making while switching to a new medium she had previously not worked with:

'Because do you know what I liked? I liked the fact that I knew nothing, so I think, because there's so much to learn, I like that, I always like the idea of opening a door and there's so much.'

She has now arrived at a point of her making practice where her starting point is not only one of: **'What can I do that I will be happy with ...'** but also defiantly facing any skills she is lacking, or barriers she is facing: **'... like I had friends as well, like when I said I was going to be doing it "Oh no, you shouldn't do that, you should do this." but that's just their fears.'**

This points to a reflected inner stance she has arrived at now, one that isn't only quietening her inner critic but also external critiques that could potentially paralyse her making.

Toni, who is a trained fine artist, also describes her inner stance towards any, real or perceived, barriers she encounters, saying

'... my, I think maybe I'm just a little bit antagonistic, somebody saying "You can't do that." just makes me more determined. It's like "Right, I'm going to bloody do it."'

She also makes a point of framing her making practice in an almost deliberately nonchalant way, when she is describing her underlying attitude to making. She tells me about listening to a talk another female artist gave:

'she said "I'm not really an artist I'm just somebody who gets really stupid ideas and then sees if I can do it." That's kind of what I do.'

Reiterating that she identified with that statement, Toni says:

'... Yes, I was like, I get really stupid ideas and it's like "Yes, let's have a go at that, let's see if we can do that.'"

Although this is similar to how Kaz talks about her making in terms of deliberately not paying attention to any doubts of feasibility of making and other's comments upon it, when Toni talks about this it has a certain lightness to it, whilst Kaz talked about the hard (intellectual & emotional) journey it had been in order to own this attitude to her making. It might also be that the idea of being 'artist' is difficult to own and to live up to within specific confines. When I ask Kaz what she says she does when someone asks her now, she answers **'I'd say "artist" but it did take me a long time to be all right saying that.'**

Toni talked to me quite a bit about the journey her making practice had been on so far and how she approached any obstacles in terms of skills she was lacking to progress something at any particular point in time. When she ended up with repetitive strain injury because of her sewing work, she started thinking about how the mathematics of her sewing could link to experimental digital work. She learned how to write digital code in about five different programming languages. She is trying to think what other media she is working in and what she has been learning to aid her making

'What else do I use? I'm even having to think now. There are half a dozen things depending on what I'm doing and that's, I couldn't even solder a year ago. (laughter) I can laser cut but I couldn't solder and now I do.'

Despite Toni's ability to pick up new skills at a furious rate and her positive attitude to learning, she still identifies learning as presenting a kind of barrier to her making:

'... But I think that's probably my biggest block at the moment, it's just I can't get enough knowledge in fast enough ...'

For Toni, learning presents a block to her making, but only in terms of time. She is confident enough in her learning/making that she will try to learn whatever she needs in order to make. But this is slowing her down to the point where she is experiencing this as a barrier to making, because she does not have enough time.

Katy also highlights that she sometimes gets to the point where she doesn't have the skills to make what she wants to make:

'Time stops me, but also skill and I'm absolutely aware of wanting to develop and

have my own skill.'

She explains that she is getting other people to teach her certain skills, so she can move on with her making, which she says stops her from making. It appears that for both Toni and Katy having to learn something is not conceptualised as being part of making, but presents a barrier to be surmounted in order for making to resume on its intended path. This does not surface in parts where they are talking about 'trying things out' or experimenting, which is of course also learning, but primarily in relation to part of making, where foundational skills are lacking to the extent that nothing can be materialised yet that would further the actual making they have in mind. As Katy talks about wanting to have her 'own' skills, I think she might also be particularly referring to learning, where she is dependent on other people, rather than learning she feels she can pursue on her own.

Becky also reflects on her foundational attitude, when she wants to make something that currently exceeds her skill level. She reflects on how she achieves her goals, concluding:

'Yes, but I've always been quite pig-headed really I suppose. I'm trying to think of a nicer word than pig-headed but I can't really.'

I suggest 'Single-minded?' she counters **'Focused, let's go with focused.'** This seems to chime to some extent with Kaz saying **'I'm going to bloody do it'**, as both reflections highlight a similar certain inner stance that is needed to overcome challenges encountered during making.

Learning from Others/Communities of Practice

I had expected more of the women to mention that they were using online media to learn things but it was generally not a big feature in the conversations even when I asked about it specifically. Interestingly, both times the use of online social media comes up in relation to making, temporality emerges as having both a positive and a negative impact on making.

When I ask Becky about using social media as a resource to help her make things, she points out that she primarily goes to these resources in order to support her in problem solving whilst making:

'So I would, the only time I search for something on Pinterest is if I'm already making something and I need an idea of how to make a roof ...'

She says this can also lead her to new ideas and inspirations, but that this has

time implications:

'... So I don't search for things, I come across things and then as you look at that you might see something else below it and think "Oh actually that's a good idea." and it's a bit of a rabbit hole you fall down'

I reiterate on the amount of time you can end losing, when you go online for anything, saying 'Yes, yes, five hours later,' and Becky expands on this to also comment on the distraction from one's focus online media often presents:

'Yes, yes. You start off looking at doll's house windows and you end up with a fajita chicken recipe.' (laughter)

Bill also mentions going online to help her solve a problem:

Bill 'Whatever I do, has got, - I've benefited from experience, but there is always You Tube. I've used that once and it saved me so much time.'

Me: And, generally, do you use online stuff?

Bill 'No. ... Not really. So, it's years of experience of making lots of different things and trying things out.'

I thought it was quite funny how on the one hand she noted that it had saved her lots of time, but - that she had only used it once. It appears that, for Bill, online media is only a last resort for when she has a very specific problem she can't solve by herself. You could assume that this limited reliance on social media might be because both Becky and Bill are of a generation that didn't grow up with online media, but I don't believe that this is the case. Both of them use online resources heavily in their everyday lives for all manner of other things. From our conversations, I gathered that it is more an underlying recognition that time online takes time away from making time and is, as such, avoided.

Being supported by a community of practice in 'real time' emerged from all the women's accounts in some way. Kaz and Fotini talk about their mosaic group, Fotini talks about learning about colours from Attie, and Katy mentions how discussions with friends have supported her making over the years. When Toni talked about shifting her practice into the digital realm, she said:

'Luckily I work at Access Space down the road and there's a whole big bunch of nerds with a workshop down there and whatever particular problem I've

got I generally know somebody I can ring or go “I'm stuck on this bit” and there's people that have got more experience than me.'

For Becky, her sisters are the 'go to' people when she is stuck on something or just wants some feedback while she is making. She goes to Bill for practical and critical advice and to her other sister for positive re-enforcement:

'If it's genuine “What do you think to me doing this?” I'll go to Bill. If I just want somebody to agree that I am doing the right thing I go to (other sister).'(laughter)

Attie also talks about other women having been a resource in her making and also reflects on her knowledge of how textile production has traditionally been carried by a whole community of women, where each woman might carry a different part of a specific weaving knowledge. She mentions how her interests and skills also integrated her (being a foreigner) into the local community. When she was looking for local herbs and plants to dye wool with, she found local women who still had knowledge of those things:

'It makes you make contact with people in another way and from that I could show something to other people. So, I had a connection to the women in the village and they took me in, not being Greek, in a programme for knitting and dyeing, so that gave me the contacts in the neighbourhood.'

Attie also mentions how weaving knowledge used to be shared across different parts of the female community. With some women having more knowledge about how to set up the weft and the mathematics of that and others knowing more about designs or particular ways of weaving, coming together to set up the frames and share knowledge. Making together can create a powerful sense of belonging and for Attie, making has given her meaningful ways of engaging in her Cretan community, by sharing her own skills and knowledge:

'... that makes that you feel at home, you have something to talk about, not only talk about but they come here and someone helps me with the weaving loom and I go to a home where I've never been and I find a big weaving loom and we work on that. So, it's nice.'

Learning from others supports your own making, but *teaching others* can also be a powerful propellant. Attie mentions how over the years her teaching work, always also expanded her own making practice as she had to learn something first if she wanted to teach it to

others and Vicky talks about how teaching can make your own knowledge more visible to yourself, which also enables reflection and growth. It is a particular way of being together. Eirini talks about how important community was particularly whilst she was studying. Talking of spending her final year at an artist centre in Brittany, which was run by the director with an egalitarian ethos, she comments that it was:

‘... most amazing experience and the most valuable experience of everything I’ve done as a student, including my studies.’

Describing the set-up, she says:

‘... So it was basically like he had all this little family around him and the interns would, because we all lived on the estate so we would all stay up together, we would all eat together and you would get to be with the artists and everyone.’

Dicussion: **Making and the Body**

The body impacts on making and making impacts on the body. The mind, and with that the body, often benefits from making in significant ways. Here I was looking for how the physicality of making interacts with the body and can impact on, or even shift, the women’s modes of making and material practice.

I was guided by Elizabeth Grosz (1994) writing on the materialities of bodies and their importance to feminist practice and theory:

‘All the effects of depth and interiority can be explained in terms of the inscriptions and transformations of the subject’s corporeal surface. Bodies have all the explanatory power of minds. Indeed for feminist purposes the focus on bodies, bodies in their concrete specifics, has an added bonus of inevitably raising the questions of sexual difference in the way the mind does not. Questions of sexual specificity, questions about which kind of bodies, what their differences are, and what their products and consequences might be, can be directly raised in ways that may more readily demonstrate, problematic, and transform women’s social subordination to men.’

(Grosz, 1994, p.vii)

Almost all the women mentioned their making having taken a toll on their body at some point in time. Toni, whose primary practice is needlework, mentions how her eyesight had deteriorated significantly over the years, which she had tried to counteract by using ever more sophisticated magnifying glasses and lenses. But her sewing has also taken a toll on her wrists and hands, which has been more difficult to work around. When I visit her in her studio she is wearing a wristband to support her hand and also mentions:

‘... my wrist now hurts after 20 minutes, so I physically can’t do as much.’

She goes on to say:

‘I used to be able to stitch of 10 hours, it wouldn’t bother me, and now my eyesight’s going, I’ve got to wear magnifying glasses, I’ve just had to put a wrist brace on just because my hand is hurting today.’

She directly links this restriction her body is putting on her through pain, as the reason as to why she has started to re-invent her making practice over the recent years:

‘That’s probably also why I’ve started working a lot more with digital technology because I’ve physically hurt myself now.’

She talks about this re-invention very positively throughout our conversation, highlighting how it had led to her learning new skills and becoming involved with other artists who have a digital making practice. She highlights how this has facilitated not only a shift in her material practice but also in how she conceptualises her making:

‘So I can’t physically do as much as I used to do so I’ve had to start looking more conceptually at it.’

Despite her reference to physical pain being scattered throughout our conversation, she is generally quite upbeat about how this has affected her practice. This may be because some time has passed since she had to adapt her modes of making,

Having to shift your making practice because of your body is not always experienced in a positive way, though this may also depend on how it has been since the shift had to occur. Bill had suffered a neck injury a couple of years ago, which triggered a range of health problems and meant she had to give up up-cycling furniture. She is currently focusing on making smaller things which she wants to sell at craft fairs or online, but she comments:

‘I wouldn’t have looked twice at the little stuff that I make now, I like the big

stuff ...'.

Her remarks like, **'I liked the upcycling of furniture, I loved that'** and stressing that she would still be doing the furniture up-cycling if her health would allow it, highlight her deep frustration with having had to change her material practice in order to respond to her body's changed state.

For Kaz, her body has also thrown spanners in the works of her making more than once in her life. Whilst in her final year on her degree, she broke her arm playing for the university's football team, which she recalls completely impaired her ability to complete her animation work as intended:

'I couldn't animate, like I'd been knocking things over. So, I had this film which I'd been writing for ages and it just didn't happen.'

She also went digital in order to at least be able to submit something, but was very unhappy with the final results and believes that it was a contributing factor in her not being able to pursue a career in animation, because she wasn't able to complete her portfolio. Talking about how she felt at that time, she said:

'I felt like, oh I felt like I'd blown my chance, that's all I felt. 'I felt like "Oh God, I had such a golden opportunity and I've blown it."'

She is philosophical about it now, but there is a sense that it was a great loss for her at the time:

'... you look back on and you just think "*It wasn't meant to be, for whatever reason, it just wasn't meant to be.*" Me, in a parallel universe I would have gone off and worked somewhere else, you know things like that? It just wasn't meant to be and it was a shame because I loved it.'

For Kaz, her body continues to affect shifts in her modes of making more, though maybe in less dramatic ways. As previously outlined in Kaz's vignette, cutting the stone for her mosaics impacts on her body and this in turn impacted on her making - it influences her designs because certain colours are easier to cut than others, and her body also encourages her to alter her modes. She described batch cutting and taking breaks from particular types of making in order to not overstress parts of her body for prolonged periods of time.

Lucy the dancer, whose body is the actual material with which she makes, has to be alert

to how her body reacts to her making. When I observed one of her dance sessions, I noticed that she stopped now and then to inspect her feet. When we were talking afterwards she told me that she had been bothered by chilblains most of the winter. She had also previously mentioned that she was very paranoid about her knees, with which she had some problems in the past and had been told that it wouldn't get any better with age. Another common problem for dancers that she mentioned is apparently the skin splitting between the little toes, which happens when you do a lot of turns and is difficult to heal because of where it is and you can't really put a plaster on that location. She explained that, if you are dancing for yourself you can augment the way you move in order to alleviate your pain but this is more difficult when dancing in somebody else's piece.

Attie, who was the oldest one of my participants summed up the holistic impact that her making had on her body and mind beautifully:

'Because I can only sleep when I have done something in the day that I'm satisfied about and I early realised, from my mother that, not only from my mother but generally and in school, when you have made something and you can look at it and that's, "I have created something" and you can look at it and rest.'

Materialities of Making Bodies

The body is a vital component in making and it is often only when the body 'fails', that this becomes fully visible to us. It's not so much that we don't know this in principle, but that an abstract understanding of pain or lessened ability is not the same as a lived pain or lessened or changed ability. Of course, this is something that we all experience during aging, at varying paces, but sudden illness or injury can make accepting and adapting to a changed body more difficult. Alaimo (2008) alerts us that:

'Acknowledging that one's body has its own forces, which are interlinked and continually inter-acting with wider material as well as social, economical, psychological, and cultural forces, can not only be useful but may also be ethical' (p, 250).'

I believe that situating the body and its material interactions in the realm of ethics is absolutely vital and we often fail to appreciate this until we experience our own bodies as changed or less able. This is something that the women have experienced or are experiencing when their changed bodily states impact and alter their making practice.

Talking about the importance of considering the body in the context of material feminism, Grosz (1994) proposes:

‘It is based on a wager: that subjectivity can be thought, in its richness and diversity, in terms of quite other than those implied by various dualisms. ... Feminist theory, with its commonly close relations to psychoanalytic theory and to various forms of phenomenology, has tended, with some notable exceptions, to remain uninterested in or unconvinced about the relevance of re-focusing on bodies in accounts of subjectivity.’ (p.vii)

Giving attention to bodies on account of subjectivity is a question of ethics and with that is political. The ethic in the first instance is the ability to self-care, but of course this ethic needs to be situated within a broader societal ethic and politic, as self-care is reliant on broader socio-economical support systems. Kaz, Toni and Bill have been able to enact self-care because they could find ways to alter their making to accommodate their body. For Lucy, this can be more difficult, especially when she is making/producing for others. In that instance, she is to a greater extent reliant on others to act within an ethical dimension on her behalf, which will then allow her to self-care. But those others, are likely to be producing the dance within a monetary economic, which pressures may prevent them from being able to act ethically on her behalf.

Alaimo (2008) also refers to Barad’s (2007) conception of material agency as “doing”/“being” in its intra-activity, as a good way of understanding the myriad forces within the body at all times, whether through illness, weather, diet or any other number of forces. Alaimo (2008) also points out that:

‘Disability studies works to account for a different sort of corporeal agency - bodies that resist the processes of normalization, or refuse to act, or act in ways that may be undesirable to those who inhabit them or to others’ (p.250)

but that ‘the obdurateness of the disabled body itself insists upon a recognition of corporeal agency’ (p.250). For Toni and Kaz, changing their modes of making in response to their body’s corporeal agency may have been undesirable at the time, but having changed their making, they have adapted their conceptualisation of their making practice and Alaimo (2008) explains that ‘the agency of the body demands an acceptance of unpredictability and not-quite-knowing.’ Whilst Kaz and Bill are acceptant, Toni is downright positive about it, because it has led her making down avenues she had

previously not conceived of. For Bill, her body's corporeal agency is still felt as having caused a loss, as her new making practice does not give her the same satisfaction as before. This may also be because she has not had enough time yet to fully grow into her new modes of making. Grosz (1994), reminds us that:

'The body image is always slightly temporally out of step with the current state of the subject's body ...there seems to be a time lag in the perception and registration of real changes in the body image.' (p.84)

This means that the mind of the maker, in having to adjust to the changed reality of their bodies, needs time in order to consolidate and accommodate new modes of making that are in tune with their bodies.

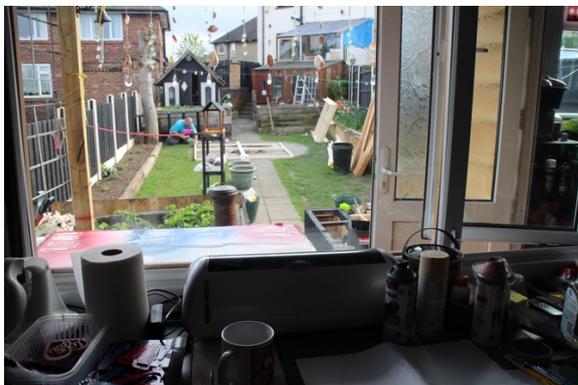
A.6.2. Supporting Material CHAPTER 8: Vignettes of Making Spaces

As part of my participant observation I wrote up fieldnotes based on my observations of the different making spaces.

Bill's Making Space

Bill's cabin has a workbench in front of a big window that looks out over the garden and is full of craft and making materials and different tools. All this is curated into areas of similar materials, similar processes but there seems to be lots of aesthetic ordering going on here. The space and how her materials are ordered are clearly important to Bill. Some of the ways in which she stores things are made from recycled materials such as plastic containers, but she has made sure they are all the same and also prettified them by wrapping them in the same purple coloured paper. Materials are ordered not just by their use but sub-ordered by their colour and shape, such as the rolls of tape hung up in rows on sticks. Different sets of containers are kept in the same style and colour and some of her finished products are displayed in glass cabinets. There is evidence of her conviction to re-use and recycle where she can, with stores of used plastic household tubs, glass jars and used cardboard in various locations. In between are household items to make her time in the cabin more comfortable, such as a radio, tea-making facilities, a toaster and a fridge. From her workbench inside Bill looks out onto a porch, full of wind chimes she has made from shells and glass, and a large bird feeder. There is a pull-out bed, hidden behind a drying rack. When she can't sleep at night because of her health problems, she comes out here to make and then to rest.

Bill's Space:





Kaz's Making Space

We enter the living room where a sofa table is pushed to one side of the room. On it is the mosaic she is currently working on. There was nobody else in the house, but Kaz mentions that it's her mum's house and she is at work. Her mum looks after Kaz's nephew who is a toddler a couple of times a week, so on those days working on a mosaic is impossible because he is messing with everything in reach. Kaz laughingly remarks '**... children and mosaics don't mix very well!**' Kaz's making practice is visible all around her mum's house. Her paintings are on the wall, her artefacts dotted about and her materials stored in different nooks and crannies of the house. The little lean-to behind the kitchen has canvasses of her oil paintings stacked on top of her mosaic materials and various paints and utensils. Her bedroom has a stack of finished artworks and materials intermingling with other everyday items. There is an overspill stack of materials in the spare bedroom. But there is no space anywhere permanently set up where Kaz can make, leave things and return to. When I observed her making, Kaz is on the living room floor with her back against the sofa and her legs stretched out under the coffee table, which is pulled up right up to her body, with her work on the table in front of her.

When she offers me to try out the tile cutter, I press down and manage to split the tile, but one part shoots across the room and lands on the carpet. I apologise - Kaz bends down to pick it up and says: '**Don't worry, I always have to Hoover after each of my sessions.**' Kaz talks about trying to get enough money together to get a shared space in a mill with other creatives. She has previously applied for a space, but didn't end up getting it. It's the thing she wants most at this point in time.

Kaz's Space:



Fotini's Making Space

Fotini has a little studio off the main family living room in which she has mosaics she is currently working on permanently set up. When she first started making mosaics, I remember her just having it on a board on a shared desk in the main room, covered with a cloth. Her mosaic studio was created later. It used to be one of the balconies off the main living space, which they made into an enclosed space with big windows along the front.

The studio has a particular smell to it, different from the rest of the house. There is an earthy, dusty smell probably due to all the pieces of marble stacked up in the cupboard, mixed with something more artificial, probably emanating from the glue and paints beings used and something fragrant, probably some dried herbs hung up somewhere out of sight.

When you enter, to the right is a big open wooden shelf with rolls of paper and film, then several shelves with miscellaneous items that range from plastic cups filled with pre-cut pieces of marble sorted into colours, drawing materials like: brushes; pencils; chalk; scrapers; glue; tape; scissors and some odd bits of natural materials, such as shells, drift wood and a dried corn husk. There is evidence of the same kind of recycled little containers I have seen with the other women, but not in a curated way like in Bill's cabin.

On the wall to the left is a large desk covered in a cloth, on which there is a mosaic in progress laid out on a board. There are a couple of plastic cups with the pre-cut mosaic pieces and a large art book, opened on the page depicting the painting that inspired the mosaic currently made. There is another huge, thick art book and a board with a large photocopy of a Greek icon painting and some of Fotini's drawings with their own motives underneath.

Fotini's Space:





Lucy's Making Space

Lucy's space is more complicated - as a dancer she utilises a broad range of spaces, which can bring its own difficulties of how to make within a space. She described the pressure of having time in the studio could put on her making, because having studio space for a limited time signalled to her that she should be using that time to dance, only that she often found it impossible to just enter a space and start making in it with her body. Lucy:

'And I think when you've got the studio it's like "Oh dancing space."'

She mentions how her producer told her to stop worrying about this, and that everything she was doing whether it was researching, reading over her notes or just being in that space, was her 'doing it' because it was part of the overall process of dancing. Lucy commented that this made her feel a lot better about it and also how familiarity with a space can make it more conducive to making:

'And I noticed I got, the space that I was in on Sunday where I started to feel a lot better with it, was the fourth time I've been in that space and suddenly felt smaller. ... Yes, I was walking around it like, whereas before it had felt like this monstrous room that I was a tiny little thing in.'

Lucy's making space is located in body, time and space in a more precarious way than the women's spaces who have a more artefactual practice. Her physical space is more rigid timewise because of mostly scheduled time slots, her body and her mind have their own fluid dynamic of reacting to a space at a given time and her sketchbooks are space that is portable, but require an intellectual effort to de-code previous making and translate it into new space and body time.

Lucy's Space:





A.7 A Selection of Images from the Fieldwork

Becky:



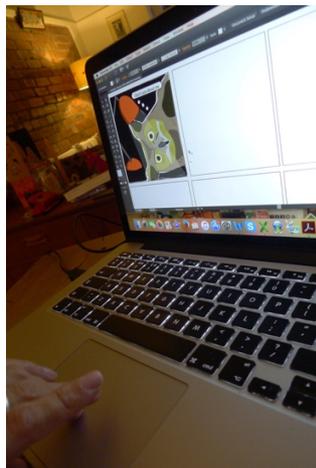
Katy:



Attie:



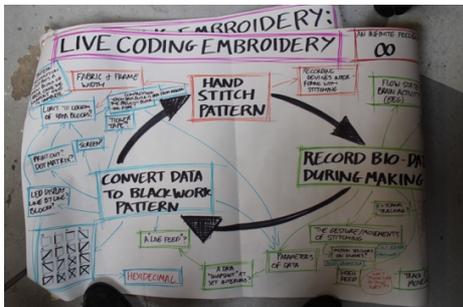
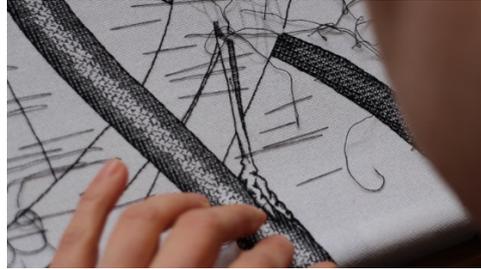
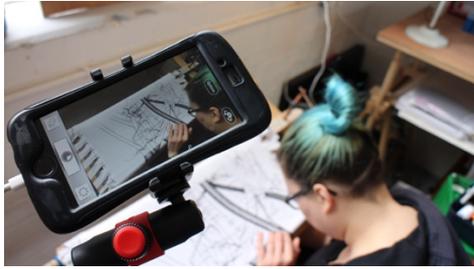
Dylan:



Vicky:



Toni:



Eirini:



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