

Making Value:
craft & the economic
and social contribution
of makers

Mary Schwarz and Dr Karen Yair

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Mary Schwarz is a freelance cultural sector consultant with a portfolio of work in research, strategy development, evaluation and facilitation. She has held posts in regional arts bodies, local government, the voluntary sector and higher education, where she was founding Director of the Centre for Creative Enterprise & Participation at Dartington College of Arts.

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Dr Karen Yair is Research and Information Manager at the Crafts Council. She has worked in a range of regional and national research and public policy roles, with a focus on the creative and cultural industries. Karen has a background in glass making, and her doctoral research explored the role of craft in new product development.

Cover images
(clockwise from top)

Susan Kinley working on site, to develop a series of glass and textile panels for the Bewbush Healthy Living Centre, Crawley, 2010.
Photo: Tas Kyprianou, 2010

Graffiti*d installation at the British Ceramics Biennial, Stoke-on-Trent. Cj O'Neill with Unity and Nicholas Roach, 2009
Photo: Lloyd Reis, 2009

Pupils working with Amy Houghton, at a 5x5x5=creativity session at Twerton Infant School, Bath, 2010
Photo: Tas Kyprianou, 2010

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Welcome

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Making Value is one of the most significant pieces of research undertaken by the Crafts Council in the past decade. It sites craft squarely within the creative knowledge economy and provides fresh, vibrant evidence of the entrepreneurship, energy and integrity that makers bring to their work. It shows us the challenges makers face in making the most of the new opportunities they are opening up across the creative spectrum. And it gives us the message – loud and clear – that craft has a unique role to play in a changing economy and society.

The research comes at a crucial time. The past 15 years have been incredibly productive for the UK's creativity and innovation, and craft has been a part of that success. The craft sector now makes a £3 billion contribution to the UK economy, and represents 13% of those employed in the UK's creative industries. The total market buying original craft is 11.3 million people, far bigger than that for fine art. The value of sales of original craft doubled between 1994 and 2004. And however the world has changed, we believe that craft has a substantial part to play in the future.

Making Value helps us to show the great contribution of makers in many different contexts and in sometimes unexpected ways. While many craft businesses are small-scale, they display great creativity, innovation and resilience. *Making Value* helps us to make the case for craft with authority and conviction, through the working lives of makers themselves.

Joanna Foster CBE, Chair, Crafts Council
Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director, Crafts Council

Preface

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The Crafts Council's ambitious research programme is designed to inform our advocacy work, support the development of progressive craft policies and programmes, and equip makers and other craft professionals with robust sector intelligence.

When Mary Schwarz and I embarked on the *Making Value* project in January 2010, it was from this starting-point, and with the objective of identifying the distinctive contribution of craft knowledges and craft thinking to makers' work across industry sectors and community and education settings.

Our work would have been impossible without the generous support of the makers we interviewed, each of whom has given time and energy to the project over a period of several months. Mary and I would like to extend our warmest thanks for each maker's contribution, and also to thank the Crafts Council colleagues who have supported us in writing this report.

Making Value raises questions and challenges for the way in which craft is supported by Government, to fulfil the potential it identifies in a time of economic, social and political change. I look forward to the debate and dialogue in coming months.

Dr Karen Yair
Research and Information Manager
The Crafts Council

Executive summary

Research background

Making Value: craft & the economic and social contribution of makers is a qualitative research study commissioned by the Crafts Council to explore the characteristics of portfolio working makers and appraise their contributions to a range of industry sectors and community and education settings.

Portfolio working is prevalent in the contemporary craft sector: other quantitative studies show 65 – 70% of makers creating their careers in this way. *Making Value* is the first ever focused investigation of the nature and impact of these makers who are working 'beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object'.

Of the portfolio working makers we interviewed, over three quarters work in other industry sectors; over half in community contexts; and just over a third work in education settings. And nearly a third of them are making across at least two of these three areas. We have found makers engaging in a far greater range of places, and with more different types of people, than has previously been realised or recorded.

From fashion to film, hospitals to heritage, manufacturing to mental health projects and from retailing to residential courses, these makers are highly motivated in applying their practice to make a difference. Their stories provide a rich and nuanced picture. Setting these within the context of our literature review, we have been able to identify and analyse the distinctive qualities of craft knowledges and craft thinking that makers apply in this work with others.

Portfolio working makers: the picture

Makers with a portfolio practice take on multiple roles, consciously presenting themselves in different ways for different audiences, markets and areas of work. They have a deep sense of integrity about their creative identity and distinctiveness, which informs where, with whom and in what ways they choose to work. Moving with agility between different projects, they find creative impetus in their engagement in other sectors and settings. They are excited by how different elements of their portfolio practice creatively feed off each other and do not always see a distinction between 'own work' and 'other work'. Makers are keen to collaborate and always actively looking for learning. They demonstrate resourcefulness and resilience, using entrepreneurial strategies to sustain a successful portfolio practice.

Makers work in the wider creative and cultural industry sectors, and beyond. They have developed their craft knowledges and craft thinking into valuable consultancy services. They apply their understanding of the emotive qualities of materials to design which enhances narrative and characterisation in film, television, the performing arts and digital media. They contribute to economic growth in sectors such as manufacturing, driving innovation in products and processes through their materials knowledge. Their particular understanding of how people relate to material qualities and objects, in both a functional and emotional sense, informs distinctive contributions in fields as diverse as healthcare and cultural tourism.

Makers are engaged in community based projects in a wide variety of settings, facilitating people to work from their interests, concerns and existing skills to find new ways of expressing themselves. Unlike any other creative practice, craft participation uniquely offers people the opportunity to work with materials, make objects with meaning and permanence, while engaging in conversations that build individual worth and community value. In terms of craft and the social contribution of makers, the practice and the people give material voice to those who are often 'hard to hear'. Through making, participants attain a sense of achievement and ownership; experience the enjoyment of the immediacy and concreteness of materials; and build confidence, self esteem and a sense of value.

Makers working in education settings take a focused, individual pupil centred approach, creating an environment in which pupils can follow their fascinations with materials and gain confidence through the achievement of making something. This increases pupils' sense of autonomy and control, which can have positive impacts on their personal and academic development. Pupils learn specific craft skills, become more aware of the origination and characteristics of materials and also develop more general, transferable skills such as coping with problems and finding that 'things don't always go right', but that they can learn from this. Makers are able to work with more freedom than is often allowed to teachers, in turn giving the pupils more freedom, enabling them to follow different making paths to express themselves as they need and want.

Craft & the economic and social contribution of makers: main findings

Making a portfolio practice

Makers:

- Find their work in other sectors and settings particularly significant for the creative impetus it provides, with different elements of their portfolio practice creatively feeding off each other, to the extent there is not always a distinction between 'own work' and 'other work'.
- Express strong motivations in terms of making a contribution through the application of their practice 'beyond making for exhibition or sale', whether this is in other industry sectors or community and education settings, or indeed both.
- Take on multiple roles, with a considered and outward facing approach to presenting themselves in different ways for different audiences, markets and areas of work.
- Show resourcefulness and resilience, using entrepreneurial strategies for managing a successful portfolio practice.
- Evidence a deep sense of integrity in relation to their creative identity which informs where, with whom and in what ways they choose to work.
- Determine their varying patterns of work across a year and over years, informed by their choices regarding work and professional development.
- Experience challenges similar to other portfolio workers in the creative sector and beyond, in respect of the demands of finding work, dealing with uncertainties and financial instability, and finding a balance when juggling different activities.
- Move often from their initial education and training into other practices, working in cross- and multi-disciplinary ways, challenging the adequacy of some of our current terms for describing work.

Making value in industry sectors

Makers:

- Work in cultural and creative industry sectors including architecture and interior design, retail and advertising, film and television, performing and visual arts, cultural heritage and fashion; as well as in manufacturing, leisure, events and tourism.
- Contribute directly to economic growth and innovation, within and beyond the creative industries by producing:
 - New, patentable materials innovations and manufacturing processes
 - Provision of enhanced visitor experiences in tourism destinations, with substantial impact on local economies
 - New and successful product innovations featuring strong person-centred orientation that improves quality of life
 - Enhanced narrative and characterisation in film and television and digital environments.
- Apply their craft knowledges and craft thinking to make an economic contribution by bringing:
 - Materials knowledge: an in-depth, tacit knowledge of the material world and specific material qualities
 - Reflective dialogue: exploring materials and processes and reflecting on what they find, stretching existing possibilities to create new innovations
 - Understanding of people and objects: an intimate understanding of how people relate to material qualities and objects, both emotionally and in a functional sense

- Passion for materials and the material world: makers' love of materials and material exploration drives their work.
- Engage with clients in ways which site their work clearly within the creative knowledge economy, not simply providing clients with artefacts, but also applying their specialist skills, knowledges and ways of thinking into uniquely valuable consultancy services.

Making value in community settings

Makers:

- Bring materials knowledge, with making and facilitation skills, to enable people to experience for themselves the creative and social benefits from participation in craft.
- Work in community organisations, arts venues, environmental charities, youth groups, health projects and specialist centres, for example for children or for people with a disability.
- Offer a supportive, empathetic approach that enables learning and development in participants, with the following key social impacts:
 - Sense of achievement and ownership: from experiencing the immediacy and concreteness of materials and always being able to produce something that belongs to them, to be kept for themselves or shared with others
 - Development of employability: from newly acquired skills, confidence and abilities developed through making craft work
 - Experience of enjoyment and the development of imagination and skills: from engaging with the transformative nature of materials that hold meanings, and developing manual skills, including the use of tools and equipment
 - Development of focus and concentration: from sustained manipulation of materials
 - Experience of freedom and autonomy: from being allowed and supported to experiment without boundaries
 - Development of confidence, self esteem and sense of value: from a focus on the quality work being produced, not the situation of the participant, with opportunities to display work and pass on newly acquired skills
 - Experience of inclusion and social interaction: from a shared activity that invites and enables conversations and connections.

Making value in educational settings

Makers:

- Work in early years, primary, secondary and special education.
- Play a distinctive role in these settings:
 - Taking a focused, individual student centred approach, creating an environment in which pupils can follow their fascinations and find a positive role in group activities
 - Enabling sustained involvement and freedom of expression, providing a different range of activities and materials that engage students who do not usually become absorbed in normal classroom work
 - Encouraging experimentation and risk taking, supporting positive learning through 'trial and error' and focusing on processes rather than outcomes
 - Working cross curriculum, for example using weaving to teach science, mathematics and history
 - Supporting teacher development, encouraging creative approaches and enabling staff to feel confident in, and comfortable with, co-learning
 - Enabling participation in craft disciplines not normally found in school, such as felt-making and weaving
 - Providing an insight into the world of professional making, showing their work, talking about professional practice and educational opportunities.
- Enable pupils and students to:
 - Gain confidence through the processes of making and the sense of achievement provided by producing something
 - Increase their sense of autonomy and control, which can have positive impacts on personal and academic development
 - Learn specific craft skills
 - Become more aware of the origination and characteristics of materials

- Develop more general, transferable skills such as coping with problems and learning through trial and error.

Support for developing and sustaining a portfolio practice

Makers:

- Benefit as Higher Education students from preparation for portfolio working when:
 - they are involved in live projects
 - makers are visiting lecturers
 - the programme includes a professional practice module
 - research departments actively model portfolio working through their own engagements with different sectors and settings.
- Show a high level of commitment to their continuing professional development (CPD).
- Look actively for learning opportunities of different types, consciously making time to undertake CPD – including ‘taking learning’ from their work in different sectors and settings – as part of their portfolio of practice.
- Value development grants and support schemes for providing validation, access to key contacts and often peer support as well as the specifics of the particular scheme.
- See mentoring as the most highly effective form of support.
- Take time to attend courses which support, develop or extend their creative or business practice.
- Maximise the networking potential of any CPD opportunity and also invest time in establishing networks, which are often the impetus for collaborative work.

The distinctive contribution of craft and makers

The value of ‘craft’ in contemporary economy and society is not limited to the value produced by those identifying themselves as makers, or solely held within the objects they produce. Craft is increasingly understood as a distinctive set of knowledges, skills and aptitudes, centred around a process of reflective engagement with the material and digital worlds. Makers are engaged in this process across industry sectors and community and education settings, acting as what Richard Sennett calls ‘sociable experts’, with distinctive and beneficial ways of collaborating with others:

The craft of making physical things provides insight into the techniques of experience that can shape our dealings with others ... Material challenges like working with resistance or managing ambiguity are instructive in understanding the resistances people harbour to one another or the uncertain boundaries between people (Sennett, 2009).

Our aims for *Making Value: craft & the economic and social contribution of makers* are that:

- Makers, craft businesses, students and educational institutions will use these exemplars of activity ‘beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object’ as advocacy and as inspiration.
- Policy makers will be informed by a current understanding of the range of applied craft practices and makers’ economic and social contributions.
- Support and delivery agencies will develop partnerships and programmes which create new and relevant opportunities for makers, users of and participants in craft.

We hope this report serves to elucidate and invite debate on what is such a significant aspect of the distinctive contribution of craft and makers to the economy and society.

Background

10 *Making value: craft & the economic and social contribution of makers* is a qualitative research study commissioned by the Crafts Council to explore the characteristics of makers with portfolio careers, and their contribution to a range of industry sectors and community and education settings.

1 See Appendix I
Literature review page 92

While research studies evidence the prevalence of portfolio working in the contemporary craft sector (65 – 70% of makers¹) its nature and value have not – to date – been explored in any depth. This study uses narrative to articulate how makers are working outside the craft sector – ‘beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object’ – to apply their distinctive knowledge, skills and practices with a wide range of other people and in a wide range of places.

Set within the context of the 21st century knowledge economy and the significant growth and importance of the creative industries to the UK’s economy (both directly and indirectly through educational and social benefits), this research is significant and timely in investigating an area of work that has been little explored and from which there are lessons to learn in times of economic change.

Through providing a contextualised analysis of the work of a range of makers contributing to economic development and delivering community and education agendas, this research report aims to:

- Provide makers, craft businesses, students and educational institutions with exemplars of activity ‘beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object’ as advocacy and inspiration.
- Ensure policy makers are informed by a current understanding of the range of applied craft practices and their economic and social contribution.
- Enable support and delivery agencies to develop partnerships and programmes which create new and relevant opportunities for makers, users of and participants in craft.

Some definitions of terms

As this research is bringing a particular range of concepts and practices together for the first time, we thought it would be helpful to give some definitions of key terms.

We use the term **maker** to represent those working with a contemporary aesthetic in craft disciplines including, but not exclusive to, the following: automata, basketry, blacksmithing, book art, ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery, lettering, metalwork, mosaic, paper, printmaking, puppetry, stone carving, textiles and wood.

For **portfolio working**, we draw on the work by Charles Handy, who first wrote about the portfolio approach in *The Future of Work* (1984) and in *The Age of Unreason*, first published in 1989, explained portfolio work as ‘a way of describing how the different bits of work in our life fit together to form a balanced whole’². He described five main categories of work as:

2 See Appendix I
Literature review page 92

wage work and **fee work**, which are both forms of **paid work**; **homework**, **gift work** and **study work**, which are all **free work** (Handy: 2002).

We focus in particular in this study on the ‘paid work’ – the multiple income streams, which may be craft or non-craft related – and ‘study’ (or learning) elements of makers’ portfolio lives, as our core interest is in the development and application of craft practice.

Within this context we use the phrase **work for exhibition and sale** to describe what makers produce within and for the craft sector, ie for craft audiences and consumers.

We refer to **teaching** when a maker is working in a formal statutory or higher education setting specifically in the role of a teacher or lecturer, rather than as a creative practitioner. This is seen as different from workshop leading or facilitation which may take place either within formal education or in informal community settings.

As a qualitative study with a particular focus and specific scope, we articulate the economic and social contribution of makers by taking evidence from the views and experiences of the makers we interviewed, and the reflections of those with whom they work. The **Literature review (Appendix I)**, which includes relevant quantitative data, sets the context for our investigation of portfolio working and the distinctive nature of makers' roles in different industry sectors and in community and education settings.

The research report

The report starts with short biographical information on the makers featured. It is then structured in sections looking at the characteristics of makers with portfolio careers; their distinctive contribution to a range of industry contexts and community and education settings; and their experiences of higher education and continuing professional development support in respect of sustaining a portfolio practice. There is then a concluding section which draws out **common** themes. The **Appendices** comprise a **Literature review**, a report on the **Research timescale, scope and methodology**, and a list of **Research participants and respondents. Profiles** of six makers are also available on line as supplementary information to the report. A separate illustrated version of the **Executive summary** of the report is available in print as well as on line.

Featured makers

Sarah Allen graduated from Nottingham Trent University in 1994 and took up a job outside the craft sector, whilst keeping up her weaving. She set up her weaving business on a part-time basis at the end of 2008, and is hoping to make this full-time. Sarah is interested in creating textures by using different yarns and makes a range of items (scarves, cushions, shrugs, corsages, purses and buttons) which she sells at craft fairs and shows, through shops and galleries and on line. She is developing a workshop practice in schools and through organisations such as Embrace Arts.

Mary Butcher was originally a scientist, but met and trained with a traditional basket maker, initially working on traditional, functional items. She gained City & Guilds qualifications and then a Diploma in Creative Basketry at the London College of Furniture (1998). Her Research Fellowship at Manchester Metropolitan University stimulated her to explore new materials and her practice now encompasses contemporary work. Mary has always had an education strand to her practice and has worked with many different community groups, from those experiencing homelessness to young people excluded from school and older people with mental health issues.

Professor Paul Chamberlain is Head of the Art and Design Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University and Director of Lab4Living, an interdisciplinary research initiative at the University. A graduate from the Furniture School at the Royal College of Art, he was co-founder of London based FLUX Design Ltd and achieved international recognition for his work through exhibition and awards. Paul has extensive teaching experience as course leader at under and postgraduate levels and has lectured and published widely, developing significant international collaborations.

Marcus Clarke is a puppet maker and puppeteer who has worked on Jim Henson productions and several award-winning children's television shows. He set up his company Hands Up Puppets twenty years ago. Marcus has designed puppet shows for leisure attractions and runs workshops in schools and community settings. His project in a secure children's home won two Koestler awards. Marcus also writes scripts, performs and lectures.

Jo Davis is a materials innovator building a business around workshop facilitation, teaching and making work for exhibition and sale. Since graduating from Wolverhampton University's Contemporary Applied Arts course in 2008, Jo has worked full-time in further education as a technician/tutor working with young people with learning disabilities. Jo currently specialises in ceramics and at weekends runs adult porcelain workshops at Birmingham's Custard Factory.

Rachel George is a prop maker, model maker and scenic artist, who works extensively in the film, advertising, leisure, performing arts and cultural heritage sectors. Rachel studied Theatre Design to BA level at Nottingham Trent University and was initially employed by Edinburgh's Lyceum Theatre, before establishing a freelance business and client base including Scottish Opera, BBC Scotland and Edinburgh International Festival. Rachel's film work includes sets and props for the 2010 feature films *Neds* and *The Eagle of the Ninth*.

Shelly Goldsmith has a BA (Hons) from West Surrey College of Art and Design and an MA in Textiles from the Royal College of Art (1987). She founded the pioneering Textile Art department at Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, where she taught from 1991 to 2006. Since then her portfolio career has comprised exhibiting, commissions, public art projects, lecturing and being a Creative Agent for Future Creative's Creative Partnerships work. Shelly joined the Crafts Council's board of trustees in 2006.

Claire Harris sees herself as an interdisciplinary practitioner specialising in textiles. She develops, makes and markets a contemporary fashion range, while also teaching at Coventry University, Nottingham Trent University and the University of the Creative Arts. Other work has a strong community focus, and Claire has partnered with a homelessness charity and with Groundwork West Midlands to run fashion and textiles projects with young people deemed not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Claire also has a strong impetus to develop the conceptual, research-led side of her practice.

Dr Jane Harris is Reader and Director of the Textiles Futures Research Centre at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. Her PhD at the Royal College of Art (1995–2000) included enquiry into the value of material skills in aesthetically altering the potential of digital imaging media. Her work, crossing research, practice and the development of enterprise activities, is concerned with bringing a 'materials sensibility' to the virtual world and exploring developments in a wide of range sectors including retail, film and museums.

Amy Houghton's work uses animation, video and porcelain to explore the hidden and revealed histories and stories related to old textiles and photographs placed in the context of our lives in the present. Amy exhibits and also works in community and education settings, the latter through the 5x5x5=creativity programme which is inspired by the child-centred Reggio Emilia educational approach. Amy has a BA (Hons) in Multi Media Textiles from Loughborough University (2000) and an MA Textiles from Goldsmiths College (2006).

Susan Kinley uses glass, silk and mixed media to make floating panels, hangings and installations and uses her design skills on public commissions including flooring and interiors for hospital and healthy living centres. She teaches in higher education and runs community workshops as part of public art consultations and alongside exhibitions of her work. Susan has a BA (Hons) in Textiles from Goldsmiths College and an MA from the Royal College of Art.

Barley Massey runs the Fabrications knitting and sewing shop in Hackney, East London, as a hub for creative and sustainable textile production, retailing and workshop activity. Producing and selling soft furnishings and knitting kits from the shop, Barley also undertakes consultancy work for clients who have included Red Bull, Glastonbury Festival's Lost Vagueness tent and artist Nada Prlja. In addition, Barley has created sets for Sands Films, and she runs regular textile workshops in community venues and at major public events. Barley graduated with a broad-based Textiles BA from Goldsmiths College in 1995.

Guy Mallinson trained as a cabinet maker at The John Makepeace School for Craftsmen in Wood (Parnham College) and undertook an MA in Furniture Design at the Royal College of Art. After running successful design and furniture making businesses, and being involved in the development of the innovative permanently flexible wood Bendywood®, Guy moved to Dorset and set up his Woodland Workshops, where he is making a significant contribution to the local tourism industry.

Cj O'Neill works in ceramics, and has built up a portfolio business since graduating with a BA (Hons) in Three Dimensional Design from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2005. Cj makes lighting and tableware to commission, and sculptural work for exhibition and sale. She has also initiated and run a number of innovative community projects engaging disadvantaged people including NEETs, in ceramic making. As part of her portfolio, Cj is also employed part-time by Manchester Metropolitan University as Programme Leader on the Graduate Diploma in Creative Business Development. Cj is a former participant in the Crafts Council's *Next Move* graduate support scheme.

Ptolemy Mann trained in textiles at Central Saint Martins (BA (Hons) Textile Design, 1995) and the Royal College of Art (MA Woven Textiles, 1997) and is a colour consultant, textile artist and textile designer. She provides colour consultancy for private clients and architects working on major hospital builds; designs for companies such as Christopher Farr; undertakes corporate, public and private commissions; and makes work for exhibition and sale.

Betty Pepper is a textile/jewellery designer maker. Her work is inspired by stories and memories. Betty has worked in schools and with community groups, including on one of Craftspace's projects with women from the Community Integration Partnership, Birmingham, which contributed to the first community based display held at Origin, the Crafts Council's London Craft Fair, in 2007. Betty graduated with a BA (Hons) in Jewellery and Silversmithing from University of Central England in 2004.

Sarah Rhodes originally trained as a ceramicist and glassmaker, developing her work as a jeweller while living in different countries, including setting up a successful workshop on the edge of the Okavango Delta in Botswana. There she also contributed to development projects with street children, disadvantaged women and people living with HIV/AIDS. Sarah has an MA in Design: Jewellery from Central Saint Martins (2009) and will shortly be undertaking a PhD. Informed by a strong sense of social sustainability, she has designed for the Fair Trade jewellery company Made and runs workshops in schools and community settings.

Professor Jim Roddis is an Emeritus Professor at Sheffield Hallam University, previously being Assistant Dean, Research and Business Development and Director, Design Futures. Jim studied Glass at Stourbridge College of Art and following a period running his own studio, established the BA Glass programme at North Staffordshire Polytechnic. Jim took up a post at the Royal College of Art in the mid eighties, and in the mid nineties moved to Sheffield Hallam University where he established the Art and Design Research Centre.

Yuli Somme is a Dartmoor based felt maker who places sustainability at the core of her practice. Having worked extensively in education settings, she now sells felt-making kits to schools and has established (through a partnership with another felt maker, Anne Belgrave) the Bellacouche company making felt shrouds for burials. She also sells a range of functional felt items, exhibits her work and undertakes commissions.

Sheila Teague works with Gary Wright as artist jewellers, inspired aesthetically and intellectually by the premier role enjoyed by jewellery in all societies, tribal, modern and ancient and its deep-rooted spiritual connection to ritual and heritage. Wright & Teague, established in 1984, is their highly successful collective work, jewellery that binds the cerebral with the artisanal, hand made and exhibited in their Mayfair gallery. Sheila has undertaken numerous commissions for film and television and collaborated with organisations and companies as diverse as Oxfam, Swarovski and the V&A. She is a graduate of Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design.

Melanie Tomlinson makes narrative, human and animal sculptures and jewellery from metal, which are exhibited at fairs including the Crafts Council's Origin and Collect. Melanie also runs community workshops with newly arrived people, asylum seekers and women seeking refuge from domestic violence, her interest in telling the stories of misunderstood people feeding between the two aspects of her work. Her research interests also include animals that are generally misunderstood and disliked, such as wolves, bats and moths. Melanie graduated with an MA in Illustration from Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, in 1994.

Amy Twigger Holroyd is a designer, maker, researcher and activist working in knitted textiles. Producing an alternative luxury knitwear label, *Keep & Share*, she also lectures part time at the University of Worcester, and is developing conceptual work informed by her workshop experience. In addition, Amy runs courses and workshops in hand and machine knitting from her studio and at music and arts festivals around the country, where she also sells knitting kits based on her designs. Amy graduated from the MA Art and Design course at Wolverhampton University in 2003, and is a former recipient of a Crafts Council Development Award.

Arantza Vilas's work moves between art and design, with a strong focus on textiles and fabric distressing technologies. Arantza's exhibition work has led to commissions in the film and television industries, as well as to collaborations with fashion designer Davina Hawthorne, with Foglizzo leather in Turin and with metal fabricators Based Upon. Arantza also contributes to the Spanish consumer trends journal, *Observatorios de Tendencias del Habitat*. She graduated with a BA in Fine Art Printmaking from Seville, then the MA in Textile Futures at Central Saint Martins (University of the Arts London).

Dr Jayne Wallace is an artist jeweller and researcher whose work explores the potential of digital jewellery within personal experience and human relationships. Currently Research Associate at the Digital Hub, Newcastle University, Jayne has a BA in 3D Design from Buckingham University, an MA in Metalwork & Jewellery and also a PhD from Sheffield Hallam University (2007). A series of pieces centring on her research into memory and memory loss feature within the Crafts Council's CraftCube exhibition.

Dr Lois Walpole is a designer maker who graduated in sculpture from Saint Martins School of Art in 1975 and moved into basket making, taking City and Guilds qualifications at the London College of Furniture in 1982. She ran a company for ten years selling work all over the world and has undertaken commissions for the film, performing arts, fashion and retail sectors. She currently exhibits, curates, writes, teaches in higher education and runs basketry courses in her studio in France. Lois has a PhD from the Royal College of Art.

Karen Whiterod has a BA (Hons) in Jewellery & Silversmithing from Birmingham Institute of Art & Design and completed an MA in Design by Independent Project at the University of Brighton in 2000. Having worked successfully as a jeweller, making in nylon in particular, Karen's interest in sustainability led her to experimenting with waste plastics and running workshops with an environmental theme in schools and community settings, the latter through the company Footprint Arts which she established in 1997. Karen's 'own' work has developed into large scale sculptural pieces for exhibition or public art commissions.

Jon Williams is a clay specialist who runs workshops in the Reggio Emilia tradition, with early years children, young fathers, and young people with profound physical and sensory disabilities. Jon also runs rural clay working courses for visitors to his Herefordshire studio, including specialist hen parties and corporate team building days. Jon graduated with a BA in Ceramics from Bath Spa University in the early 1990s, and continues to produce work for exhibition which reflects his evolving interest in participation and community work.

Section one:

Making a portfolio practice

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In this section, we explore how our interviewees 'make' a portfolio practice, crossing boundaries, moving with agility between different projects and types of work, and rejecting conventional labels to define their own way of working. We look at the centrality of making within a complex and frequently changing career path, and propose the portfolio working business model as a source of creative impetus in its own right.

We investigate some key characteristics of the makers' portfolio working practices, which take them outside the craft sector, whether into different industry sectors or into community and education settings. We draw on Charles Handy's definition of portfolio work as 'a way of describing how the different bits of work in our life fit together to form a balanced whole'³ focusing on the 'paid work' and 'study work', of makers within his five main identified categories of work:

³ See Appendix I Literature review page 92

... **wage work** and **fee work**, which are both forms of **paid work**; **homework**, **gift work** and **study work**, which are all **free work** (Handy: 2002).

Unlike any previous research, we are able to offer a craft-specific perspective that explores the relationship between different strands of a portfolio practice and also, in later sections, appraise the contribution these different strands make in economic and social terms.

Our interviews began with asking research participants what they call themselves in relation to their practice. For some, there is a straightforward answer, such as 'ceramic artist' or 'designer maker'. For others, the question opens up a deliberation about cross and multi-disciplinary creative practice, multiple roles, the significance of context, naming, integrity and distinctiveness.

Cross and multi-disciplinary practice

Several makers describe themselves as formed and informed by their education and training in one particular craft practice, but explain that they are now applying that knowledge to other materials. For example, Amy Houghton describes how she has moved on from textiles to 'crafting animated installation works using photographs' and Susan Kinley talks of moving out from textiles to glass design with an increasingly diverse practice in the public realm, saying she does not want to be pigeonholed by her degree. The desire not to be constrained by a craft related description is also shown in Jo Davis' comment: 'I do *say* ceramicist but I don't ever limit myself to ceramics and I won't always be a ceramicist', indicating a focus that is not fixed and is likely to shift in the future.

Shelly Goldsmith describes herself as trained as a weaver, a role she might have taken for the rest of her life, but explains that she has 'mutated' to be different things to respond to a more contemporary arts practice and a changing world. She is 'a creative person with ideas', applying those ideas in a multitude of ways, through a much broader scope of practice. Jayne Wallace is aware that the term she uses most often to describe herself, 'digital jeweller', does not capture adequately what she does, not least as her work is a new kind of making, a hybrid practice spanning different fields, provoking a need to qualify both words. Claire Harris regards herself as an interdisciplinary practitioner, not unusual now in the creative sector, saying:

I'm a textile artist I suppose. That's quite a broad based term that I use ... I define my own practice in quite a loose way.

There is a sense that current craft terms and the convention of thinking of people in craft discipline 'boxes' does not serve these makers well.

Multiple roles

Some makers we interviewed explained straight away about practising their craft through multiple roles, for instance as consultant, designer or educator. Interestingly, further roles sometimes became evident later on in an interview, when a maker talked about the full range of what they did, and added, for example, writer, lecturer, mentor, external examiner or moderator to the list. Jane Harris is an example of a portfolio worker with different roles within salaried employment. Reader and also Director of the Textiles Futures Research Centre at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, her roles in research, practice and enterprise operate within this context in what she calls a '360° manner'. Marcus Clarke, as a puppet maker, puppeteer, puppet show designer, screenwriter, film producer, lecturer, comedy writer and performer who also runs workshops for adults and children, exemplifies a wide range of roles centred round making and performance. No makers expressed difficulties about having multiple roles per se, although as we see later, there can be a challenge juggling and balancing a variety of roles.

Responsiveness to context

Many makers take the approach of 'testing the water' with whomever they are talking when asked to say who or what they are. For instance, Karen Whiterod says she calls herself an artist, but then waits for a response to then decide how to explain in more detail what she does. Jayne Wallace knows not to use the word 'jeweller' with computer

scientists, or risk losing their attention because of the assumptions they would bring, just as someone would bring assumptions about the word 'digital' based on their experience of the digital objects with which they were familiar. What she calls herself and her practice depends on her audience, which influences how she frames her work.

Barley Massey calls herself a designer maker but notes that other people like to categorise her according to their own agenda, so she can be a recycler, a craftsperson or a maker. Sometimes she responds to this, sometimes she doesn't. Depending on context, Arantza Vilas usually calls herself a textile artist and designer and then will 'have a conversation', as the response is usually, 'So you make clothes?' In certain circles she calls herself a designer, but not a fashion designer, as it is materials, and their use in a variety of applications, that are key to her practice. These makers show an ease with not expecting others to understand immediately what they do, a flexibility in describing themselves, an awareness of audience and a willingness to engage in dialogue.

Naming

There are also examples of people proactively creating a clear set of different named identities related to their portfolio practice, such as Ptolemy Mann presenting herself as a colour consultant, textile artist and textile designer and using the appropriate title according to the work context. One maker has constructed a whole separate identity for her craft work: Betty Pepper is the maker, the person undertaking what Handy would call 'fee work', but the person who has created her has a different name and identity for what Handy would call 'wage work' (in this case, part-time employment outside the craft sector) and 'homework'. Karen Whiterod promotes her own work in her own name, and her community practice as Footprint Arts, with a separate website as a platform for this side of her work. Claire Harris has established *Trash Blooms* to sell her commercially orientated eco fashion range, while also working as a higher education lecturer and workshop practitioner.

Jon Williams lists six 'names' he works under, according to the situation. He is *Jon the Potter* when working with children; *Mr Clay Man* on an under 4s project; uses the term *clay artist* when talking with educational partners; calls himself a *ceramic artist* when selling through galleries and exhibitions; is often called an *artist maker* by arts organisations; and for corporate work, is the *Flying Potter*. Cj O'Neill describes herself as sitting between craft, design and other creative practice, so having a range of words to describe herself and her practice means she can be flexible to fit different work contexts. So, for example, she is a lighting designer with industry and ceramics manufacturers and an educator or facilitator in other sectors. These approaches show a keen outward facing sense of developing and controlling the presentation of practice according to the marketplace, and what Fenwick (2002)⁴ would call 'the ability to name your own know-how'.

⁴ See Appendix I
Literature review page 95

Integrity and distinctiveness

Yuli Somme explains how her identity as a felt maker is tied up with her personal history, her environmentalism and green politics, informing her use of wool as a sustainable material and her development of felt shrouds as a response to her experience of death (see page 55). Others also have a keen sense of maintaining the integrity of their identity, resisting turning their hands to anything and always questioning whether an opportunity fits with their firm sense of their own practice. Karen Whiterod talks about the risk of being a 'performing monkey' and the importance of pulling back to focus on her interests, giving herself permission to say 'no' to work not connected with her practice, ensuring she is true to herself.

For several makers, understanding for themselves and maintaining the primacy of making as their practice, rather than designing, is key. Shelly Goldsmith says, 'I simply do not want to make batch items or hand over production, this is just not how I work'

20 and Betty Pepper does not want to 'sell her soul to the design devil'. Melanie Tomlinson describes her interest in social issues as 'part of the way I define myself' and some makers are particularly aware of what it means to have a unique selling point (USP), 'trademark' or 'signature' to show distinctiveness. Rachel George, prop maker, describes her USP as being experienced in producing work in all sorts of different materials and all different sizes, along with the skill and capability to take on any challenge and solve problems. For Ptolemy Mann, her signature is stretched, hand dyed woven work, which provides a focus despite her diversification beyond making for exhibition and sale.

Several makers have been through supportive professional development experiences which have helped them clarify their creative identity as a key part of deciding on the work opportunities and patterns they want to develop. We look at this in more detail in **Section five**. Overall, we see these makers reflecting what Fenwick (2002)⁵ calls the 'development of the enterprising self', finding that the portfolio workers' 'aspirations and development of self as well as enterprise, meanings of success, relationships and ... work environments appeared to be tightly inter-connected.'

5 See Appendix I
Literature review page 95

21

Some makers planned to be portfolio workers from the start; for others there has been a more evolutionary or serendipitous development into this way of working. The specific reasons why makers started a portfolio practice are varied. Economic imperatives have informed some, who realised at a particular point after graduation they were not able to support themselves just from selling their work. However, most makers talk about creatively driven starting points. These include: specific work experiences and situations; dissatisfaction with the solo studio life; a keen interest in collaboration; the stimulus of a variety of work; a need for a better work/home balance as a creative person; a desire to 'pass over the passion'; and the motivation to enrich the lives of others.

For Susan Kinley, it was a Fellowship at the then Falmouth College of Arts, that included working with community groups, which provided the platform from which to move into a range of participatory and public realm commissions. Karen Whiterod was 'restless' just making jewellery in her studio, so started exploring working with community groups, acting as a volunteer on other artists' projects before starting to run workshops herself. Volunteering at her son's school to 'give something back' led Sarah Allen to develop her workshop practice. Changes in the children's TV production industry in the UK led to Marcus Clarke applying his puppet making skills in community and education settings.

Barley Massey describes starting portfolio working as 'being practical', not relying on one aspect of work to make a living. Amy Houghton is clear it wasn't possible for her to 'go back' to what she sees as the 'old' model of the maker making just to sell craft objects. For her, collaboration with others is the way forward, using your understanding of materials and exploring a wider range of ways in which they can be employed. Cj O'Neill's lighting business was making her money, but her business model, selling through architects/interior designers and often for spaces she couldn't visit, gave her a sense of disengagement. She prefers responding to a specific space and set of circumstances, working with and responding to processes and getting feedback directly from clients. She pulled back from her lighting commissions, despite their success, to concentrate on her 'upcycling' work and begin community workshops.

Another maker with a conviction about the sort of working life she wants is Arantza Vilas, who always knew she didn't want to be 'doing the same thing all the time', but did want the possibility of working with different people on different projects. Melanie Tomlinson started teaching and doing commercial illustration work after graduating from her MA, then began developing automata and delivering participatory workshops. She says: 'I always suspected I would be doing a few things to make a living'. A desire for a better work/home balance and an enjoyment of teaching informed Guy Mallinson's move from managing a successful furniture design and making workshop in London to establishing his Woodland Workshops in Dorset, while still maintaining some commission work.

Dr Lois Walpole has had several 'starting points' over her changing portfolio career. Trained in sculpture, she left college and realised it was impossible to get work as a sculptor. Showing her work to get teaching on an evening class, she was invited to consider basketry. She learned all about it through reading books and then taught basic techniques using cane and plywood bases in day care centres, psycho geriatric homes and other institutions. She learned more techniques on a City & Guilds course, then a couple of years later realised that she could 'put her arty ideas' into basketry, harness its creative potential and find whole new ways of working. Having run a business using outworkers, selling all over the world, and making work for a wide range of clients, (including Danseteater Ingrid Kristensen, for whom she made the shoes shown on page 22), she is now starting all over again, running basketry courses in France, while still teaching, writing and exhibiting.

22

Dr Jayne Wallace's appreciation of the social context of jewellery and its connective qualities for people informs her portfolio of projects, making work with resonance with, and for, people with dementia and those at distance from their families. She is Research Associate at the Digital Hub at Newcastle University, where research is focused on 'meaningfulness' and practical outcomes for individuals, communities and society. Professor Jim Roddis and Professor Paul Chamberlain at the Art and Design Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University have a similar motivation in the 'process of moving problem solving out of academia to the real world'. Jo Davis says she is motivated by the need for social benefit and feels 'a bit selfish' just making for herself. Social motivations have also been key drivers for other makers such as Melanie Tomlinson, whose core interest in misunderstood and excluded people informs all aspects of her work. Sheila Teague designs for Oxfam (see photograph on page 25) and Sarah Rhodes for Made (the Fair Trade jewellery company), both committed to supporting ethical and sustainable small craft businesses in developing countries. Betty Pepper works in community and education settings 'to get the craft message across' that we can all relate to things in which craft skills are realised, that 'it's about looking, knowing and feeling something real'.



Shoes, Lois Walpole, 2009
Made for Danish ballet company Danseteater Ingrid Kristensen for their performance of the Wild Car Ballet.
Photo: Lois Walpole, 2009

23 As well as working as self-employed freelance makers or running their own businesses, over half of the makers with whom we held in depth interviews also have salaried employment (or 'wage' work as Handy calls it) as part of their portfolio. Three makers' main work is in higher education within crafts (two working full-time, one on a four day a week contract); six makers have regular part-time hours teaching in higher education (as opposed to one-off visiting lecturing, which the majority of makers undertake); one maker is working full-time in further education with a craft teacher/technician role split; one maker is working part-time in a project management role in a schools creative learning project involving craft; and two makers are working part-time in non-craft employment.

With respect to the two makers working part-time in non-craft employment, they are consciously undertaking this work to support their self-employment in craft (with one also noting the additional benefits of their partner having a 'sensible job'). One of them recognises they are applying some elements of their craft practice in their job in terms of design skills. For the other maker, their job is something completely different, chosen because it is better paid than many arts jobs and doesn't encroach in any way, as they don't need to think about it when the working day is over. As well as providing much needed income, the maker finds it helps prevent a sense of isolation. Most importantly, the job means they don't need to go into what they perceive as the most financially rewarding aspect of the craft sector – designing – as they just want to make.

Two more makers have in the last year or so finished part-time jobs in related areas. One held a curating post, particularly enjoying the connective and enabling aspects of this role, which was similar to the nature of their craft practice and ways of working with others. The other maker has previously held part-time posts in arts management and community development, and again felt a synergy between these roles and their craft practice, both being community based and involving partnership working.

The pattern of work for many makers shifts from one year to the next, as Karen Whiterod says: 'Every year has a different shape'. Teaching is a part of the portfolio often subject to change, particularly for those makers who do not want to make it a major part of their work but recognise the benefits of some security of income that it brings, enabling the investment of time in developing aspects of practice in which they are more interested. Once these other areas are established, makers do less teaching. For instance, Cj O'Neill talks about accruing income whilst teaching work is available, in order to facilitate the development of ideas for other work in the future.

Some patterns of working are, of course, opportunity led. Susan Kinley has had two years of concentrated public realm commissions, followed by a year of more exhibition based work. Undertaking a postgraduate degree (like Sarah Rhodes, for example) or securing a residency (such as Mary Butcher's six months spent on a Crafts Council/V&A residency at the V&A's Sackler Centre for Arts and Education) creates a particular, main 'paid' or 'study' work element within a year. This can, as Mary Butcher describes, provide 'a relief to be in one place...when doing a lot of different things can lead to a sense of dislocation.' This contrasts with Claire Harris' experience of:

... being used to working on many different things in quite an eclectic way, all at the same time and almost having small concentrated bits of time to work really intently on one project or piece of work, then flip into something else.

Within community and education based work, availability of funding for projects is a particular determinant of engagement, but there are also examples of makers taking conscious decisions about the type of work they want to do in this area. For instance, Melanie Tomlinson has moved from running many different one-day school based workshops to delivering fewer, longer-term high profile community based projects, wanting to work on more in-depth, thought provoking projects that target 'hard to reach' and 'hard to hear' groups in the community. This fits more closely to her driving social motivation as described above. Yuli Somme found running schools workshops taking up too much energy and running her own workshops too difficult to sustain, so she has developed a set of felt-making kits. She still engages with education and earns money

from 'teaching', but through sales of a DVD package. In Amy Houghton's case, her practice is based on collaboration and conversations, so she doesn't take up short projects, where there would be the possibility of what she calls 'barging in and taking from people', rather than developing a respectful relationship with them as she wants to do.

Others give examples of directing the pattern of work. Karen Whiterod explains how she always takes time every year, maybe a couple of months, to work solidly on her 'own' work, making and exhibiting. This is vital to her sense of wellbeing as a creative person, even if it means she is not earning. Times when she is less busy working with others are used to plan or create opportunities for her own work. While we explore in the next section how balancing work strands is a challenge, the more established makers in particular are shaping their portfolio by 'picking and choosing' what they decide to take on, depending on whether it will push them and feed back to their 'own' work. Jon Williams has 'cultivated the ability to say no', supported by advice from others about maintaining the desired focus of work and Barley Massey found that learning to say no 'for the first time' created a need to review her business in terms of activities, market demand and finance. Melanie Tomlinson reviewed her portfolio at one point to ensure the success of selling her jewellery range did not compromise the development of her sculptural, one-off experimental work. This resulted in her exploring manufacturing processes and initiating a partnership with a local industrial processing company.

It is also important to note how the makers' patterns of working connect with other makers and creative sector practitioners. For instance, Shelly Goldsmith works in partnership with Chris Tipping on public art projects; Jane Harris works with computer graphic operators and programmers; and Rachel George operates within a network of craft specialists for her work in the heritage sector. Guy Mallinson contracts other makers, who themselves have a portfolio practice, to teach on his workshops; Jon Williams has an assistant helping to run his workshops; and Amy Twigger Holroyd has a knitter making garments for her knitwear label. Barley Massey is part of a network of makers:

So if an event comes in I can make contact with others I trust to offer the service as part of a package because, for example, I have a relationship with a textile factory.

While she sometimes passes work on to others, more often she will manage it for a client, bringing other people and resources together. Yuli Somme also uses a network, but in a different way, as she contracts local practitioners, including a wood worker, film maker, photographer and designer, to support her in making and marketing her work.

We asked makers to provide some information on patterns of time spent on, and income earned from, different aspects of their portfolio practice in the 2008–9 financial year, as part of our exploration of patterns of work. While we deliberately only asked about work that comes under Handy's 'paid' definition, one maker identified time spent on some aspects of 'unpaid' work, indicating 15% of their time was spent that year on unrecoverable administration of self-employed projects and 15% of their time was given free to individuals and organisations wanting specialist information and advice. The first statistic opens up the issue of costing and pricing work and the latter represents quite a significant amount of what Handy would call 'gift work'.

Most noticeable from the responses is the common mismatch between time spent by a maker on work for exhibition and sale, and actual income earned. In one case, a maker spent 35% of their working time for a return of 15% of gross annual income; in another, time spent was 40% for a return of 18%. One maker earned eight times as much through consultancy work as for making work for exhibition and sale, while spending an equal amount of time on each. For someone in non-craft related part time employment, their job took 30% of their time and returned 50% of their gross annual income; 70% of their time was spent in making for exhibition and sale and running workshops, returning 50% of their gross annual income.

However, these figures need to be seen in the light of the following section, where we explore what makers are saying about how their work in other contexts and settings 'feeds' their work for exhibition and sale, in effect providing 'paid for' R&D time, one of the opportunities offered by portfolio working alongside the evident challenges.



Gary Wright and
Sheila Teague
working on their
Nuba collection, 2010
Photo: Sylvain Deleu,
2010

26 The makers identify several challenges associated with portfolio working. For those with a substantial element of self-employment, these relate in particular to finding work and earning a living: but all have to balance different work strands. However, the makers also describe many ways in which the range of work in which they are engaged is not only significant and satisfying in itself, but also provides a creative impetus for their own practice. We are aware that many of these issues are similar to those experienced by freelancers and portfolio workers in other creative sectors (eg Summerton, 1997 and 2003)⁶ and what follows are useful, craft nuanced perspectives.

6 See Appendix I
Literature review page 94

Challenges

Finding work demands time and energy in promoting yourself; searching for opportunities (in relevant websites, mailing lists and publications); networking; and responding to tenders. One maker has used an agent for interior design work, but no jobs have come to fruition through this route. Another stopped working through a commissioning agent as they felt too disengaged from clients. Finding work is also understood to require a pro-active entrepreneurial approach, constantly being on the lookout for creating opportunities for yourself. There is a high degree of awareness of the need to 'get work out there' and the importance of the quality of that work and reliability in delivering it to establish a good reputation, as work leads to other work, and 'word of mouth' referrals are significant. This echoes the findings of the graduate career path study *Crafting Futures* (Hunt, Ball and Pollard, 2010):

Finding work was one of the main challenges facing new graduates. Work experience and contacts established at university were crucial, and graduates continued to develop and nurture networks as their careers progressed. As work was often found through word of mouth, the serendipitous nature of creative work created uncertainty (Hunt and Ball, 2010⁷).

7 See Appendix I
Literature review page 93

Several makers express the dangers of taking on every opportunity and then feeling overloaded, as in Betty Pepper's comment: 'Saying yes to everything and then working yourself out'. The 'juggle struggle' (Sarah Allen) of managing a portfolio practice can result in being 'absolutely shattered all the time, trying to get a balance' (Jo Davis). Barley Massey is also aware of the danger of burn-out, when each strand of activity starts taking off and could be a business in its own right. Maintaining the creative integrity of your focus can also be difficult, particularly when, as Cj O'Neill says, 'Money generating elements can take over from what you want to be doing'. In this respect, teaching features for some as a 'downside' within a portfolio practice, if it is not undertaken by choice or because of the time it can demand, owing to a heavy administrative load or context of poor management. In the latter case, it may even fail to provide the financial stability that was probably sought in the first place.

We have seen from the figures quoted in **Patterns of Working** above how important earnings are from work 'beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object'. One maker in particular expressed a concern that, despite a diverse and successful practice, they are putting in too many hours and at the tipping point of no longer being able to earn a sufficient living. There are associated issues of pricing work, with experienced makers delivering teaching at the same rates as far less experienced makers, and the valuing of the maker on, say, a major hospital build, being much lower than the valuing of other professionals on the design team.

These concerns are not unusual amongst creative professionals, but may be compounded in the craft sector by the relatively low average earnings reported by researchers including McAuley and Finnis (2004).

Benefits

Despite these negative experiences and comments about earnings, many makers recognise that portfolio working is key to their financial sustainability. Rachel George acknowledges she has survived because she does 'lots of different things' and as Barley Massey says:

There are lots of ways to earn your living, so if one area drops off, you've got other strands to fall back on.

Many makers find portfolio working reinforces existing knowledge and skills, through engagement in the reflective process needed to then communicate something to others. It helps you, as Amy Houghton expresses, 'realise how your thoughts work'. Portfolio working also helps to develop a range of wider skills and knowledge. For instance, within public realm projects this includes communicating your vision and liaison, negotiation and consultation skills, when working in a multi-disciplinary team of architects, fabricators, interior designers and community representatives. Such projects also offer the opportunity to gain knowledge about large scale budgets and health and safety issues.

Control and flexibility to use time as you want to are seen as key opportunities and benefits by some. Rachel George explains independent freelance status makes her feel in control; she finds great personal satisfaction in controlling what materials she buys, how much time she puts into innovation and what techniques she uses. Amy Houghton enjoys the fact that she can use time as she wants to and be responsible for herself. Betty Pepper appreciates the flexibility of not having work hours imposed by someone else: with 'stretchy days', she can work till the early hours of the morning to get something completed and then sleep the next day.

Creative impetus

Makers are very clear about the creative and personal benefits of a working in contexts and settings outside the craft sector. Combating the isolation of the studio is a key theme, with comments such as: 'It means I'm not always locked away on my own...I get to meet people' (Susan Kinley). Several makers find that the combination of time in and time out of the studio enhances their experience of each. Ptolemy Mann explains that moving from working on her own to a collaborative context and then back again makes a day on her own 'even better' and that the 'two sit well together'. For her, being with other people is a source of inspiration, as it is for many makers, such as Sarah Rhodes who recognises her practice would not be as effective if she 'just sat in the studio'.

Many also experience the positive side of teaching, which often comes from a close fit between the makers' own interests and the teaching focus. Jo Davis finds that experimentation with students sparks ideas for her work, just as Amy Twigger Holroyd says that explaining ideas helps her to develop them and that working with students gives her new ideas too. She says teaching:

... clarifies things ... creating a workshop task allowed me to frame the issues in a way which pointed something out to myself.

Another example of this externalisation and reflection on practice is given by Cj O'Neill:

Working together and helping someone else to solve a problem can fire my own ideas. Often I use my own work to explain how to solve a problem or how *not* to do something, with students: articulating why something's gone wrong helps to resolve a lot of things in my own practice.



1
Susan Kinley on site,
with a laminated
glass sample, 2010
Photo: Tas Kyprianou
2010



2 - 4
The New Bewbush Healthy
Living Centre, Crawley
- glass fabrication and
installation meeting
and site visit. Susan
Kinley, 2010
Photos: Tas Kyprianou,
2010



Teaching interaction can also provide a sense of balance:

If I was doing my own work it would be quite isolating and I would disappear into my own head ... giving to others and passing on knowledge balances me out as a person.

Creative impetus is also found in the relationship between different strands of work: 'each strand feeds the other' is a common comment and Amy Twigger Holroyd says: 'Everything I do, I get something out of it which applies to something else'. In Mary Butcher's experience, working with a wide range of community groups, including older people and those with mental health issues, 'keeps me on my toes'. It pushes her perceptions and extends her experiences. Such projects also engender ideas: she finds project participants work with freedom and what they do feeds into her work for exhibition and sale. Melanie Tomlinson says she could work in the studio full time:

But I don't choose to. I choose to have that valuable element in participatory projects. I really like not being in here all the time. You learn so much and your mind is really opened to things.

For Shelly Goldsmith, portfolio working satisfies different aspects of herself, enabling her to use different skills. She finds it 'enriching' and that it 'stretches' her as a creative individual. The challenges within the work keep her on her toes and stimulated. Amy Houghton is 'never bored or in a rut'. Cj O'Neill finds, 'Creatively, working on lots of things keeps my ideas flowing', although there isn't always enough time for those ideas to be realised.

Karen Whiterod describes how her work for exhibition and sale and her community practice have a different pace. Her work for exhibition and sale is ambitious: she works slowly and feels her 'default' position is to overcomplicate things. Preparing for and running workshops means she has to re-interpret her techniques to make them accessible, and 'stopping' to consider in this way has a positive influence on how she approaches her own work. Amy Twigger Holroyd finds learning about how people feel and think about making informs the conceptual framework for her work for exhibition and sale. Having constantly to work with different materials for different contracts is something Rachel George really appreciates about portfolio practice:

I can't think of anything duller than working in the same material every day... I wouldn't want to be constricted just to clay all my life.

Portfolio working directly feeds creative development in terms of work for exhibition and sale. Susan Kinley says her 'own' work is now much closer to that of her public realm work, and she sees what she produced in the past 'as quite separate strands now'. Sarah Rhodes' experiences running craft workshops in a development context in Botswana taught her resourcefulness and a respect for all materials as precious, qualities that her jewellery now displays (see image on page 64). A project Jon Williams undertook at a children's centre transformed his practice:

Now I work like I see young children make, very directly in clay. I'm more innovative in my own work and making things with clay in its rawest sense... It's much more spontaneous, not at all about labour as it was in the past.

This has resulted in Jon developing a concept to extend creative interaction between people and materials into an exhibition context: so a pot might contain clay so people can intervene with the 'finished' object, or might be exhibited wet, shrink wrapped so it can be manipulated. (See overleaf for examples of Jon's changing work).

It is also interesting to note that not all the makers talk about a distinction between their work for exhibition and sale and the other aspects of their portfolio practice. Melanie Tomlinson talks about her themes being explored through both her personal and participatory work: they seem to be two equal applications of her socially engaged creative drive. Cj O'Neill sees all work as having personal meaning, so while she makes for exhibition and sale, works with other industries, teaches in higher education and runs participatory projects, she says it is 'all the same thing', not a 'personal practice' and an 'other'.

30

1
Tom working with
Jon Williams
on a Beaufort
School/Creative
Partnership/
Craftspace project
with Anand Chhabra
and Harmeet Chagger,
Birmingham, 2006
Photo: Janette
Bushell, 2006



2
Thrown and assembled
earthenware bottle:
early work by Jon
Williams, 1998
Photo: John Meredith,
1998

3
Black stripey pot,
showing influence
of Jon's work in
community settings,
2009
Photo: Christopher
Preece, 2009



- 31 We noted at the beginning of the previous section the makers' entrepreneurial approaches to finding and developing work opportunities, and many other characteristics they show as above can be described as entrepreneurial: enjoying autonomy; working flexibly; taking initiative; building networks; managing varied relationships; and innovating⁸. They combine individualistic values with collaborative working and are members of a wider creative community (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999). They have a keen sense of their intellectual property: distinctive practices, skills and attributes for which they seek – and find – many applications. Just one example of this is Amy Twigger Holroyd and her *Keep & Share* knitwear range. Amy realised people wanted to knit her garments themselves, as well as buy them from her, so she developed a knitting course around the range, then knitting kits, then downloadable patterns – and now she also bundles the fine industrial yarns left over from her collections into chunky yarn for hand knitting and sells that by mail order too.
- 8 See the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship template as cited in *Creating Entrepreneurship: entrepreneurship for the creative industries* (2007), referenced in **Appendix I Literature review** page 99.



Belt Kit, Amy Twigger Holroyd for *Keep & Share*, 2009
Photo: Amy Twigger Holroyd, 2009

32 This section exploring how our interviewees 'make' their portfolio practice shows that they are – in E.M. Foster's phrases, referenced by Handy – 'rounded' people, rather than 'flat'. It reveals the interviewees, in Handy's terms, as:

... portfolio people, the sort of people who, when you ask them what they do, reply, "It will take a while to tell you it all, which bit would you like?" (Handy, 2002⁹).

9 See Appendix I Literature review page 92

They also confirm Summerton's (1997) description of portfolio workers as 'chameleons' with 'kaleidoscopic careers'¹⁰.

10 See Appendix I Literature review page 94

Many have moved from their initial education and training into other practices, working in cross and multi-disciplinary ways, challenging the adequacy of some of our current terms for describing work. Taking on multiple roles, they have a considered and outward facing approach to how they explain who they are and what they do, often choosing deliberately to 'name' themselves in different ways for different audiences, markets and areas of work.

While they often use a range of 'labels' with which to describe their practices and roles, the makers hold to a deep sense of integrity in relation to their creative identity. This not only contributes to articulating the distinctive nature of their work, but also informs where, with whom and in what ways they choose to work. In this respect, whether they decided early on to pursue a portfolio practice, or came to this way of working through a more evolutionary process, they express strong motivations in terms of making a contribution through the application of their practice 'beyond making for exhibition or sale', whether this is in other industry sectors or community and education settings, or indeed both.

Makers experience challenges similar to other portfolio workers in the creative sector and beyond, in respect of the demands of finding work, making opportunities, dealing with the uncertainties of the freelance element of work and being able to find a balance when juggling different activities. Patterns of work vary across a year and over years, and while some of this is dictated by external circumstances such as availability of opportunities or funding, in many cases makers are determining these patterns. This is often informed by the sense of integrity noted above, evidenced for example in the choice of long-term rather than short-term community based work to ensure relationships are fully developed for collaborative work. The need to make space for professional development is also important. Overall, we see the makers we interviewed as resourceful and resilient, using entrepreneurial strategies for managing a successful portfolio practice, although a number still seek greater financial stability.

While there is a common mismatch between time spent and income earned in respect of work for exhibition and sale, makers demonstrate that their work in other sectors and settings, while important for the income it provides, is particularly significant for other benefits it brings, not least in terms of creative impetus. Many see the different elements of their portfolio practice as closely linked and creatively feeding off each other, to the extent there is rarely a clear distinction between 'own work' and 'other work'.

Section two:

Making value in industry sectors

34 From existing research, we know that makers 'bring their skills to animation, set building and prototype production in a wide range of creative industries' (Press and Cusworth, 1998¹¹). In this section we investigate the actual work they undertake in these industries and others, and the role and distinctive value of making within it.

11 See Appendix I Literature review page 98

We discover makers developing craft knowledges and craft thinking into valuable consultancy services which locate their work squarely within the creative knowledge economy. On the one hand, we see makers creating and applying the expressive value which drives the creative economy, and we chart its permeation into film, television and digital media. On the other, we see innovations in materials, products and industrial processes resulting from the maker's engagement with manufacturing.

We discover the influence of materials knowledge on sectors ranging from interior design and architecture, to tourism and retailing, and throughout, we see a business model where there is little distinction between creative and commercial work, but where materials knowledge and the capacity for innovation it unlocks is crucial.



1 Kings Mill Hospital woven façade colour concept. Colour specification by Ptolemy Mann, for Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, Nottinghamshire, 2006
Photos: Timothy Soar, 2008



2 Kings Mill Hospital final visualisation. Colour specification by Ptolemy Mann, for Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, Nottinghamshire, 2006
Computer visualisation: GMJ, 2006



3 Warp Threads, Ptolemy Mann, 2006
Photo: Ptolemy Mann, 2006

Our interviews demonstrate that both the range of industry contexts with which makers engage and the variety of roles they undertake are wider than previously identified. Below, we list makers' roles with specific project examples, grouped into broad industry sectors. We then draw on the views of makers and where possible their industry partners, to consider the distinctive economic contribution that craft makes in these contexts.

Architecture and interior design

Makers bring specialist knowledge of materials, colour, light and space – and their expressive value – to design for built environments, and to materials innovations which contribute to the built environment and public realm. Specifically, interviewed makers are:

- Providing colour schemes and materials consultancy for hospital, school and community centre building projects: Ptolemy Mann (Kings Mill Hospital with Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, see page 34); Susan Kinley (Crawley Borough Council and S&P Architects – Bewbush Healthy Living Centre, see page 28).
- Designing, fitting, furnishing and lighting bars, restaurants and corporate headquarters: Cj O'Neill (Four Seasons Hotel Mauritius); Barley Massey (Mayajima Restaurant (see page 56), Bar Mode, Red Bull UK, The Hub).
- Developing entirely new materials innovations for architectural and interior design specification: Bendywood® by Guy Mallinson; and TTURA/Resilica™ by Professor Jim Roddis and Gary Nicholson.

Cultural heritage

In the cultural heritage sector, interviewees are:

- Animating textile artefacts in digital environments (Dr Jane Harris at the Museum of London).
- Bringing the ability to solve problems collaboratively, through materials, to their work researching, recreating and furnishing historic sites (eg Rachel George at Edinburgh Castle, see page 36).

Fashion and advertising

Craft knowledges enable makers to undertake a wide range of collaborative roles in the fashion and advertising industries, including:

- Designing and making couture collections (Amy Twigger Holroyd's *Keep & Share* range, Claire Harris' *Trash Blooms*) and fashion accessories (Lois Walpole at Paul Smith Womenswear; Ptolemy Mann with Ritzvi Millinery (see page 36); Arantza Vilas with fashion designer Davina Hawthorne; Sheila Teague with Oxfam; Sarah Rhodes with Topshop).
- Making models for advertising shoots: Cj O'Neill with Hitachi; Rachel George with Chalkworks.
- Design and making promotional giftware: Lois Walpole with Tetrapak UK and Marks & Spencer.
- Researching new ways of digitally depicting and animating textiles, with application in online fashion display and retail environments (Dr Jane Harris).



1
 Babylon - Hat
 Collaboration,
 Ptolemy Mann and
 Yasmin Rizvi for
 Rizvi Millinery, 2008
 Photo: © Adam Parker,
 2008

2
 Replica of The
 Whithorn Cross for
 Historic Scotland.
 Rachel George with
 Chalk Works, 2005
 Photo: Rachel George,
 2005

Creative media

Knowledge of materials and their expressive value, combined with expertise in specialist fabrication processes, enables makers to make a distinctive contribution within a range of film and television industry roles:

- Building sets: Barley Massey (Sands Films); Rachel George (Kevin McDonald's *The Eagle of the Ninth* for Focus Features, see page 42).
- Developing bespoke costumes and costume fabrics: Arantza Vilas (fabrics for Joel Shumacher's *The Phantom of the Opera* for Warner Brothers, see page 44 and Annabel Jankel's *Skellig* for Feel Films, see page 45; Barley Massey; Deborah Cook (eg costumes for Henry Selick's *Coraline*, see page 37, for Laika Inc and for Wes Anderson's *Fantastic Mr Fox* for The Fantastic Mr Fox Productions Ltd).
- Designing and building props and models: Sheila Teague (jewellery for Shekhar Khapur's *Elizabeth* for Universal Pictures; Deborah Cook, (animation models for *The Wombles* and *Paddington Bear*); Lois Walpole, Rachel George (models for Peter Mullan's *Neds* for Bluelight/Fidelite/Studio Urania, see page 42).
- Creating puppets: Marcus Clarke (*Milky and Shake* for Channel 5); Deborah Cook (armature making and silicone modeling for Tim Burton's *The Corpse Bride* for Warner Brothers).

Leisure, tourism and events

Makers contribute to the design and fabrication of leisure venues, ranging from theme parks (Rachel George, Marcus Clarke at Legoland) to Glastonbury Festival's Lost Vagueness Tent (Barley Massey). It is also common to see makers selling the experience of making as a leisure or tourism activity, running:

- Residential and day craft courses: Guy Mallinson (wood), Amy Twigger Holroyd (knitted textiles), Jon Williams (clay), Lois Walpole (basketry).
- Corporate team-building events: Jon Williams (for Unilever, Royal Bank of Scotland and BT).
- Festival and event workshops: Amy Twigger Holroyd, see page 52 (at Latitude Festival); Jon Williams (at The Big Chill); Jo Davis (at Birmingham Custard Factory Creative Open Workshops); Barley Massey (at the Thames Festival).
- Production of knitting kits and pattern downloads: Amy Twigger Holroyd, Barley Massey (see page 31).

37



1
Coraline in her
pyjamas with her
doll, Deborah Cook,
Head of Costume
Design and
Fabrication, 2009
Photo: Courtesy
of LAIKA, Inc. and
Focus Features 2009

2
Coraline with Mr
Bobinsky from the
film Coraline, with
costumes by Deborah
Cook, 2009
Photo: Courtesy of
LAIKA, Inc and Focus
Features, 2009



Performing and fine and visual arts

Makers engage with theatre, ballet, opera and fine and visual arts, in the following roles:

- Realising and fabricating fine art concepts (Barley Massey for Lucy Williams and Naja Pjidi).
- Designing and making sets and props (Rachel George for Scottish Opera).
- Producing costumes and costume fabrics (Arantza Vilas for the Cathy Marston Project).



1
Topiary Deer made for Scottish Opera's production of *Falstaff*, Rachel George, 2008
Photo: Rachel George, 2008



2
Lonely heart agency installation, Nada Prlja, with fabrication by Barley Massey, 2004
Photo: Nada Prlja, 2004

3



3
Caught Pouffe, Barley Massey, 2008
Photo: James Champion, 2008

Retailing

Makers contribute directly to the retail sector through their founding and ongoing management of specialist retail outlets (eg Sheila Teague at the £1m turnover jewellery gallery Wright & Teague in Mayfair; Barley Massey's Fabrications knitting and haberdashery shop in Hackney).

Makers are also adding value to existing retail businesses, bringing craft knowledges and understanding of the expressive value of materials and objects to the design and installation of window displays (eg Arantza Vilas at B Store and Ysh London; Barley Massey at London Fields Cycles, Lois Walpole at Fortnum & Mason).

1
Souvenirs
Entomologiques,
Arantza Vilas,
displayed at the
B Store, London, 2007
Photo: Michele Panzeri
www.panzeri.co.uk,
2007



2
Wright & Teague
Gallery, London, 2010
Photo: Sylvain Deleu,
2010



Manufacturing

Makers bring their specialist knowledges and craft thinking to new products for mass manufacture, and to innovations in manufacturing process. These include:

- Medical and sanitary ware design, and therapeutic furniture design: Professor Paul Chamberlain (for Ideal Standard, Rompa, Braun).
- Packaging design: Lois Walpole (for The Body Shop).
- Fabric design: Ptolemy Mann (for Christopher Farr Cloth).
- Innovations in manufacturing technology: Arantza Vilas with Based Upon; Cj O'Neill with Control Water Jet; Melanie Tomlinson with Precision Micro.

In addition, makers are researching ways of engaging with emerging models of customisable, digitised manufacturing processes and are exploring the use of digital manufacturing technologies in the creative process (Autonomic Research Cluster, University College Falmouth).



1
Tac-Tile Sounds System. Professor Paul Chamberlain/Tony Jones, 1999
Photo: Paul Chamberlain, 2002

2
TTURA/Resilica™ counter top for Department of Health Headquarters, Whitehall, London, 2008
Photo: Gary Nicholson, 2008



41



Solas GoldLeaf – fine
bone china lights,
Cj O'Neill, 2005
Photo: Orla O'Brien, 2005

Craft and the creative team

Makers bring a specialist knowledge of craft materials and processes to their work across industry sectors, which creates economic value for their colleagues and clients.

Some makers describe this knowledge in terms of the qualities and affordances of particular materials – how far fabric will stretch, to what temperature ceramic can be fired – and others in terms of the understanding of formal composition developed through practice. Cj O'Neill, for example, talks of a 'sensibility' towards the relationship between the surface and form of a three dimensional object, gained through years of making patterned ceramic forms. For her, this feeling for surface, form and space has enabled her to comprehend the 'flow' of architectural spaces and the significance of the placing of objects within them, which informed – in every sense – her work on commissioned lighting schemes for hotels and restaurants.

For Rachel George, craft knowledge is crucial to problem solving. For her, every job brings new challenges and builds new expertise applicable to the next, as she learns how to use one material to suggest another in her set building and prop making work. In this respect, Rachel's work illustrates the findings of Szabó and Négyesi's study of portfolio workers, which observed a gathering and reusing of knowledge across different working contexts (Szabó and Négyesi, 2005¹²). As Rachel explains,

It's about challenging things and materials all the time, so taking something from a plumber's merchant and making it into a balcony, without a rule book ... The best discoveries are made this way: the more you work with materials, the more you instinctively know about which material to use, the quicker you can pick new knowledge up and the more you can work with something you see in B&Q and get it to do something different.

The ease with which Rachel George describes her instinct for problem-solving through materials – and Cj O'Neill her sensibility towards form, surface, space – belies the complexity of the tacit materials knowledge these makers employ. This 'feel for materials' has been described as a synthesis of knowledge relating to the material's objective properties, its subjective qualities and the changes it undergoes when manipulated by hands and tools (Pye, 1968; McCullough, 1996). It is considered tacit, or personal (Polanyi, 1958), resistant to articulation and learned only through practice (Dormer, 1998)¹³.

For the makers and clients we interviewed, this tacit craft knowledge has a very distinctive and practical value in the realisation of a collaborative creative vision. For Cj O'Neill, when working to design lighting schemes for architectural spaces, it is a technical understanding of lustres, pigments and other glaze ingredients which is key to her achieving the exact surface quality required to complement a specific interior.

¹² See Appendix I Literature review page 96

¹³ See Appendix I Literature review page 109

Similarly, for Jonathan Wilson of Ansen & Allen Associates, it is Ptolemy Mann's practical knowledge of how colour theory applies to different surfaces and materials which is unique. For Barley Massey, it is the ability to work on set, using her knowledge of textile materials and techniques to make last minute adjustments to costumes and sets. For Rachel George, a reputation for specific materials knowledge attracts work. For the £15m Kevin Macdonald film *The Eagle of the Ninth*, for example, her polystyrene knowledge was brought in to complement the set builders' and painters' generalist knowledge, enabling the construction of a realistic set depicting Neolithic huts which went beyond the team's expertise.



1
Hut made for Kevin
McDonald's film
*The Eagle of the
Ninth*, Rachel
George and Elaine
McLenachan, 2009
Photo: Rachel George,
2009

2
Life size statue of
Christ made for Peter
Mullan's film *Neds*,
Rachel George, 2009
Photo: Rachel George,
2009

This role for specialist craft knowledges within a creative team is a feature of the work of many of the makers we interviewed. Barley Massey, for example, describes herself as 'contributing creatively to interpreting the designer's drawing' when working to design and create costumes for film. Arantza Vilas reinforces this point: costume designers, she says, may lack the fabric knowledge or tailoring skills they need to carry the creative vision through, 'so a partnership between a costume designer and a textiles specialist can work well'. Her comment is borne out by Jonathan Wilson, describing his work with Ptolemy Mann on the Kings Mill and Southmead Hospitals. According to Jonathan, Ptolemy improved the building design both aesthetically and therapeutically, 'tuning up' the building in a cost-effective manner. As a maker, he says, Ptolemy considered both the building's structure and its surface: she had an integrated approach which made it easy for her to engage with the team. From Ptolemy's perspective also, makers have something very particular to contribute, given their particular understanding of the 'human starting point' and their unique interest in touch. In all these projects, makers bring core skills to a collaborative team in a way which is common for portfolio workers across sectors:

Cultural producers generally have a core discipline...skills [which] are their central contribution to the creative process ... these independents accept collaborative team-working as the norm (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999¹⁴).

14 See Appendix I
Literature review page 95

15 See Appendix I
Literature review page 93

The *Crafting Futures* study of craft graduate careers (Hunt, Ball and Pollard, 2010¹⁵) shows craft graduates to be naturally collaborative, using their contacts to bring together teams and peers to work on specific projects. Our interviews back this finding, showing makers take on facilitation roles, in which they bring together teams of materials specialists to realise particular projects.

To produce her sustainable and funeral shrouds, for example, Yuli Somme sources wool from Dartmoor farmers and planked wood from a local woodsman, to make an integral bier. Yuli's role is not only to make the felt shroud, but also to build the relationships with other specialists which enable the product to develop with visual and ethical coherence.

Rachel George takes on a similar facilitation role when working in the cultural heritage sector. Typically commissioned by a heritage venue to 'reconstruct' a heritage space such as a medieval kitchen, Rachel researches and assembles the objects which once defined its use, both commissioning the restoration of actual antiques and having replicas made by specialists in glass, leather, iron and other materials. Rachel then fabricates additional 'props' to support interpretation, for example making model food to contextualise the original and replica equipment gathered within the kitchen. Her role goes beyond fabrication, to encompass research, creative visioning and facilitation.

Arantza Vilas' collaborative work with television and film costume designers, including Alexandra Bryne and Phoebe de Gaye, indicates a different collaborative role for makers – one in which craft knowledges contribute to dramatic narrative and characterisation.

Arantza has an ongoing interest in the passing of time, particularly as embodied in the transformations undergone by insects and fossilised creatures, and works primarily in fabric to explore material qualities which convey this transformation. For the Joel Schumacher film *The Phantom of the Opera* (Warner Bros, 2004), Arantza worked with costume designer Alexandra Byrne to devise and create fabric which transformed itself as the two lead characters made a descent from the 'real world' of the opera house to the 'underworld' of the Phantom's lair. Transformation was a key theme, and Arantza used 'distressed' fabric qualities developed through her exhibition work (as displayed at the B Store, see page 39) in designs for the Phantom's cloak and Christina's dress (see page 44).



1
Still from *The Phantom of the Opera*, Joel Shumacher, 2004, with fabric by Arantza Vilas and costume design by Alex Byrne
Photo: Alex Bailey
© Scion Films
Phantom Productions Partnership



2
Samples and sketchbooks, including development work for *Phantom of the Opera*, Arantza Vilas, 2010
Photo: Sylvain Deleu, 2010

3
Samples of rusted and pleated pieces, including development work for *Phantom of the Opera*, Arantza Vilas, 2010
Photo: Sylvain Deleu, 2010

Arantza also worked on an Annabel Jankel television adaptation of the novel *Skellig*, made by Feel Films. Arantza was contracted to produce fabric for the Skellig character's costume, and worked with costume designer Phoebe de Gaye to devise and create a material substance which would enhance the film's characterisation and narrative. Phoebe needed a brittle, fragile looking fabric to evoke something of the Skellig character's chrysalis-like confinement, transformation and emergence. At the same time, the fabric had to be strong and opaque enough to conceal a hidden harness and wings which would unfold from beneath it. Together, Arantza and Phoebe worked towards describing the material quality they wanted from the fabric in words (arriving at the word 'papery') and then in material samples, eventually finding the desired quality in a linen/cotton mix, devoréd using techniques more usually applied to silk (see images on page 45).

In this work Arantza drew on her interest in time and transformation; and she herself notes the conceptual and aesthetic connections between her commissions and the work she develops for exhibition and sale: 'concepts do bounce between projects'. In this, her



1
Still from *Skellig*,
Annabelle Jankel,
2009, with fabric
by Arantza Vilas and
costume design by
Phoebe de Gaye, 2008
Photo: Phoebe de
Gaye, 2008

2
Souvenirs
Entomologiques,
Arantza Vilas, 2007
Photo: Michele
Panzeri, 2007
www.panzeri.co.uk

work echoes Janet Summerton's assertion that 'stimulation, challenge and excitement of the potential and actual cross-fertilisation from one activity to another' is a strong characteristic of creative portfolio workers (Summerton, 1997¹⁶).

Both *Skellig* and *The Phantom of the Opera* drew on Arantza Vilas' specialist knowledge of fabric distressing techniques, but also on her sophisticated skills in devising material qualities which prompt a particular emotional or interpretive response from the viewer. These skills have, for Arantza, been developed through years of learning through making in fabric, in pursuit of material qualities which convey thoughts or feelings about the passing of time. Applied to enhance the narrative and characterisation required by film and television scripts, they perfectly illustrate the concept of the production of 'expressive value' as a key function of core creative fields – such as craft, visual art and dance – within a creative economy (Work Foundation, 2007¹⁷).

16 See Appendix I
Literature review page 94

17 See Appendix I
Literature review page 100

Craft and innovation

Materials

Makers we interviewed have, in two cases, developed patentable and commercially successful materials innovations, which continue to make a visible impact on the construction, architecture and interior design industries, as well as on design for the public realm.

The first, Guy Mallinson, developed a material called Bendywood® during his time running a company in London which designed and made bespoke, contemporary furniture. Bendywood® is a process invention which renders wood permanently flexible, and enables it to be shaped into non-conventional, organic forms. Guy led on the development of this innovation prior to the move to Dorset and establishment of his Woodland Workshop business (see page 52). Since the sale of the Bendywood Ltd company in 2004, Bendywood® has continued to be supplied internationally to architectural specifiers and builders and also to win critical acclaim, with Guy being awarded the FX International Interior Design Award for Best Public Space Installation for its use in Herzog & de Muron Architects' Laban building (see page 47).

The second innovation, TTURA/Resilica™, is a recycled glass and resin composite material developed by glass specialist Professor Jim Roddis and research assistant Gary Nicholson, for use in worktops and other interior surfaces through an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) award to Sheffield Hallam University.

The spin-off business established by Gary to develop markets for TTURA/Resilica™ has seen the product specified and used for national catering chains including Pitcher & Piano and Costa Coffee, as well as for high-profile architectural projects including Thomas Heatherwick's Blue Carpet in Newcastle-on-Tyne and Martha Swartz's redevelopment of Dublin docks. A PricewaterhouseCoopers evaluation study for the AHRC projected Gross Value Added (GVA) from companies selling TTURA/Resilica™ up to £3,200,000 over 25 years, and projected income streams from Intellectual Property royalties of up to £930,000 (see page 47).

Processes

Other makers interviewed have developed unexpected new innovations through their partnerships with industrial fabrication and finishing companies. These partnerships have typically been established by makers to assist in the making of work for exhibition or sale, and have resulted in spillover benefits for the companies in terms of new – and saleable – manufacturing processes using existing technologies.

Arantza Vilas, for example, worked with creative metal finishing company Based Upon, to explore ways of applying the company's patented liquid metal treatment techniques to Arantza's textile work. This project led Arantza to explore new ways of using the technique which produced an innovative, rusted silk surface (see image, page 47). The work led Arantza in new creative directions – 'it began my 3D journey' – and has also been used by Based Upon within recent commissions.

Makers describe their work with manufacturing process companies in terms which suggest an extension of craft thinking¹⁸ – defined as 'reflection in action' (Schön, 1983) or in terms of 'working with' a situation to transform it (Sennett, 2009) into an industrial setting.

Melanie Tomlinson, for example, explains her worked with Precision Micro, a manufacturer of mobile electrical and engineering components, to devise a way of photo etching and finishing jewellery components. She describes a process of testing and re-testing the industrial processes on different materials, working towards a surface finish which was malleable and suitable for etching, but also met her requirements for a particular degree of tactility and sheen. The development process involved an iterative process of sampling, testing, reflecting and adjusting materials and tools; and it enabled Melanie to expand the volume of her jewellery production, whilst also creating new awareness at Precision Micro of the importance to consumer-oriented clients of surface finish.

¹⁸ See Appendix I
Literature review page 109



1
TTURA/Resilica™ Staircase
in 'Wigs and Warpaint'
hair salon, Professor Jim
Roddis with Tim Hubbard
and Tom Slater, 2002
Photo: Tom Slater, 2002



2
Distressed, metallic
silk, rusted and
pleated, Arantza Vilas,
2007
Photo: Sylvain Deleu,
2010



3

3
TTURA/Resilica™ public
restroom for the National
Trust, Clandon Park,
Surrey, 2010
Photo: Gary Nicholson,
2010



4

4
Helix Bendywood® hand
rail at the Laban
Building, London, Guy
Mallinson for Herzog & de
Muron Architects, 2001
Photo: John Blythe, 2001

Cj O'Neill worked with a company specialising in water jet cutting, on a project which aimed to progress her ceramic exhibition work and extend its vocabulary. The work in question explores the histories and evolving lives of objects – and alludes to the hidden stories and secrets they hold – through domestic ceramic plates which are found or created, then embellished and patterned to suggest 'layers' of narrative. Having worked with and 'layered' the plates' surface in her early work, the next step for Cj was to cut into the ceramic using new water jet technologies.

Cj approached Control Water Jet, a Chesterfield company whose expertise in water jet cutting had previously been limited to two dimensional surfaces. Initially encountering scepticism from the company, Cj used her knowledge of ceramic materials and her ability to discuss the process in practical terms, to build confidence in her request. As she explains:

Initially, the water jet guys said it's impossible to cut anything that's not flat. I convinced them to try it, I knew because I know that earthenware's not that strong, and because I know how fine you can go with the structure that's left behind ... I think that ability to go in and explain the pressure of the water and how it works, helps them to have confidence that I know what I'm asking for. Someone not material based wouldn't get it.

The approach adopted by both Melanie Tomlinson and Cj O'Neill resonates with existing research, which suggests that an extension of the 'reflective dialogue' characteristic of craft thinking¹⁹ into industrial manufacturing settings can create economic value for both maker and industry partner (Yair, Tomes and Press, 1999). As in this research, both Melanie and Cj brought materials and process knowledge which enabled them to communicate effectively with technical and engineering staff to overcome scepticism and stretching existing capabilities to produce new innovations²⁰. What is newly evident in Melanie and Cj's work is the value of this approach in new, digitised manufacturing industries as well as in the traditional pewter and glass industries where it was previously observed.

Cj's project produced an acclaimed body of work titled *Feeding Desire* which has been exhibited internationally. It also produced a new and marketable innovation for Control Water Jet, which both added to its portfolio of services and built its flexibility and responsiveness to client needs.

19 See Appendix I
Literature review page 110

20 See Appendix I
Literature review page 110



300 plates, from the *Feeding Desire* collection, Cj O'Neill, 2007
Photo: Ade Hunter, 2007

For Cj, Melanie and Arantza, extending craft thinking into an industrial manufacturing context opened up new creative and commercial possibilities, whilst also producing unexpected and commercially applicable benefits for the partner company. For both Cj and Melanie, public sector support and funding (from Design Initiative and the Manufacturing Advisory Service, respectively) made this work possible, indicating one area of continuing professional development where intervention can produce a substantial return on investment.

Digital making

Dr Jane Harris demonstrates the potential for craft to make a distinctive and economically significant contribution within the digital media sectors, with their recognised high growth potential. Working in virtual environments, Jane draws on textiles knowledge to create digital fabric which depicts future fashion and historical dress. Her work has produced new innovations in the use of Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) to express cloth and clothing, which indicate a new and future role for materials knowledge in virtual worlds.

Working with the Museum of London and supported by an Arts & Humanities Research Council Innovation Award, in one project Jane worked to 'bring to life' a 200 year old dress from the Museum of London's collection, and show how it might have moved as worn by an 18th century woman. Collaborating with a dancer, Jane and the museum curators were able to depict the dress moving as though worn by a woman wearing footwear and underwear of the time, and influenced by the etiquette of the day (see image overleaf).

Through this work, Jane Harris has discovered that CGI tools can be relatively crude in their depiction of cloth. The CGI operator has a relatively limited range of digital textile effects to work with, and in its mathematically literal, digital form the silk can behave like cling film whilst the linen may operate visually more like cardboard. Collaborating with a CGI operator, Jane sets aside these standard textile effects, and instead experiments with mid range material weight and drape, manipulating glitches she finds in the technology whilst digitally hand painting and manipulating intricate fabric surfaces. Jane and the CGI operator synthesise their expertise, to achieve a believable 'look' of material. Jane herself identifies the characteristics of the slow, considered approach to a craft practice and the sensibility to engage in digital environments in order to unlock new potential within them: the 'reflective dialogue'²¹ she describes is essentially a digital equivalent to the craft thinking employed by makers working in conventional materials.

²¹ See Appendix I
Literature review page 109

For the Museum of London and the wider cultural heritage sector, the value of Jane Harris's work lies in its ability to animate delicate historic artifacts in complex and context-specific ways. For the CGI industry, the value lies in an opening out of potential for a new material vocabulary in digital environments, beyond the 'cartoon' aesthetic familiar from mainstream digital animation. For Jane, the CGI environment is 'like a theatre, a cinema space' and with her materials knowledge, she operates 'a little like a film director', considering the scene and the subjects' positioning spatially, the scale, motion and camera angles and the elements of the environment such as lighting, gravity and wind, that the viewer has to be 'told visually' are there.

Working from outside the conventional crafts sector, Jane is looking at other sectors where the potential of the technology could be harnessed, and she anticipates significant commercial operating models in digital spaces within the next five to ten years. She sees the virtual consumer experience as being 'very normal' in the future, with fashion brands using digital spaces to deal in both physical and virtual forms, and feels it is imperative to advance the aesthetic of these new worlds of communication and commerce. Her work suggests that the proliferation of broadband and new interactive technologies could present new opportunities for materials specialists, intimate with materials' characteristics, and skilled in using this knowledge to contribute to the design and delivery of a high quality digital experience.

1



1
Bubble Top Jane Harris with fashion design by Shelley Fox and 3D CG by Mike Dawson, 2003.

2
Empress's New Clothes Jane Harris, with 3D CG by Mike Dawson and performance/choreography by Ruth Gibson, supported by the curatorial team from the Museum of London. 2003.

2



University of the
Arts London
Central
Saint Martins



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

VICON

NESTA Making
Innovation
Flourish

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In investigating the overall role of craft in innovation across creative sectors, it is clear that makers engage in a 'reflective dialogue'²² not only between materials, processes and vision or creative intent, but also with people. Existing research shows makers using craft knowledges to engage with industrial manufacturing teams and unlock organisational creativity (Yair, Press and Tomes, 2001²³). Here, however, makers are seen working constructively with a far wider range of professionals including clients and product users, as well as collaborators ranging from surgeons and psychologists to set builders, milliners and architects. Craft thinking – as distinct from craft knowledges – may have a role to play here, according to Sennett, who states that:

The craft of making physical things provides insight into the techniques of experience that can shape our dealings with others ... Material challenges like working with resistance or managing ambiguity are instructive in understanding the resistances people harbour to one another or the uncertain boundaries between people (Sennett 2009).

This idea of a craft as a distinctive way of thinking characteristic of 'sociable experts' (Sennett, 2009) who create real economic value resonates with existing research. Clearly, in a knowledge economy where innovation emerges from melding disparate but complementary knowledge sets, the ability to work with others is a distinct source of economic value; and the role of craft knowledges and craft thinking in this is a subject worthy of further research.

Craft and the consumer

Selling the making experience

Our interviews revealed a number of individuals making a living from selling the experience of making. Whilst other makers apply their passion for materials and their creative facilitation skills to teaching and to leading workshops (see **Sections three and four**), those profiled here are marketing taught courses to identified market niches, and in the process are contributing substantially to local tourism economics.

Working in clay, wood and knitted textiles respectively, Jon Williams, Guy Mallinson and Amy Twigger Holroyd all run courses from permanent workshop spaces, offering leisure experiences focused on relaxation, fun and creative exploration in a rural environment. All three makers focus on the experience of immersion in making, and feedback from guests to Guy's courses shows that they enjoy being creative, learning slowly, making something by hand and working with the rhythms of the pole lathe. In this, the feedback reflects the findings of our literature review, which suggests that a first opportunity to make things can represent a reawakening of an essential but neglected human experience²⁴ (Metcalfe in Dormer, 1997). In addition, visitors are said to appreciate the peace and quiet, being surrounded by nature and 'away from it all'. Guy recognises the significance of the phrase 'touch wood' within this experience: wood, he says, 'promotes a deep affinity... it's a material that invites you to stroke it and smell it', and visitors' different personalities come through in the way they work the material and the things that they make.

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Guest Ros Fry, a newcomer to woodworking, talks enthusiastically of her experience at Guy's Woodland Workshops in terms of a personal development process: with materials, things never go quite right, so you have to deal with that and make it work; and in the end she was proud of her achievement, and continues to feel proud of the bowl she made when she uses it. This sense of pride in accomplishment through materials is also key to Amy Twigger Holroyd's courses, which tend to be more focused on an ambition to learn a particular technique or to make a particular garment: Amy sees increased confidence and creativity amongst her visitors as a positive outcome of their weekend immersion in making.

Jon Williams' clients, meanwhile, are encouraged to 'come and have fun and relax', and Jon suggests that key to this relaxation is the opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves completely in the experience of making. In this, Jon echoes theorists including McCullough (1996) and Fisher and Gibbon (1998), who align Csikszentmihaly's theory of 'flow' and its therapeutic benefits, with making.²⁵

25 See Appendix I
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1
Guy Mallinson at the
Woodland Workshop in
Dorset, 2008
Photo: Stefan Siba,
2008



2
Wishbone Stool,
Guy Mallinson, 2008
Photo: Mike
Murless, 2008

3
Keep & Share
Travelling Store
at Hay-on-Wye
Literary Festival,
Amy Twigger Holroyd,
2009
Photo: Amy Twigger
Holroyd, 2009



4
Workshop participant's
work with Amy Twigger
Holroyd at Latitude
Festival, 2009
Photo: Amy Twigger
Holroyd, 2009

In all three cases, a rural location has enabled a significant tourism offer to be developed, facilitated by web-based marketing and – in Jon Williams' and Amy Twigger Holroyd's case – their involvement with and co-management of the maker-led *Creative Breaks* website for Herefordshire. While Jon and Amy tend to offer informal advice to visitors on accommodation, entertainment and outdoors activities to extend their holidays, Guy Mallinson's website actively markets the experience of a creative rural escape featuring fresh air, locally produced food and recommended places to stay.

Guy's courses have a turnover of about £50,000 a year, and there is a positive economic impact on the local hospitality industry. For instance, Jo Donovan from the nearby Bridge House Hotel has been receiving several extra new guests each month, since the Woodland Workshops were established. Jo also notes the Woodland Workshops are making a significant addition to the growing food and culture related tourism offer in Dorset, which is resulting in a change in visitor demographics, with more professionals and families coming to the area.

All three businesses are diversifying, as Amy, Jon and Guy look for new markets for the making experience as part of a portfolio of activities which – for all three makers – also includes producing work for exhibition or sale. For Amy, running similar workshops at festivals such as Latitude and Green Man is a key strategy, particularly as knitting kits and items from the *Keep & Share* collection can be sold on-site as part of the visitor offer. For Jon, diversification is around niche marketing, to birthday and hen parties for example, whereas for Guy, the use of the Woodland Workshop site for weddings and parties is an area under investigation.

Jon, Guy and Amy have each developed a leisure and tourism offer which, in packaging and selling the experience of making, meets people's needs to engage with materials and make physical things. Jo Donovan sees Guy's work as 'creating an experience' for people 'an experience that can't be found elsewhere', whilst Ros Fry describes him as 'fulfilling people's dreams'.

This development is significant in the context of trends towards experience-led tourism within a wider experience economy; and the viability of these businesses also reminds us – in direct terms – of the importance of materials interaction in people's lives.

User-centred design

The centrality of human, material interaction to makers' work is evident in a very different way in Professor Paul Chamberlain's products for the healthcare and sanitary ware industries. A Royal College of Art graduate with an international exhibition record as a furniture maker and designer, Paul's more recent work has seen his interest in people's interaction with objects applied to design capable of transforming quality of life.

Paul Chamberlain's current work with Ideal Standard – the Futures Bathroom project – seeks to address the needs of an ageing population, and specifically to help older people to live at home for longer, by working with people and testing their behavioural responses to objects, materials and physical environments. Previous projects have seen Paul work with children with visual and hearing impairments, exploring the children's sensory responses to different tactile and visual experiences in collaboration with acoustic engineers and therapists, and building the findings into furniture – manufactured by Rompa – which engages the children with a multi sensory experience.

The skill Paul demonstrates in observing, interpreting and responding to people's interactions with objects has even resulted in a life-saving innovation, in the form of a medical connector device developed with Braun and in collaboration with psychologists at the University of Leeds. Research had revealed a 23% risk of fatality from mis-connection of the existing Luer connector across the five drug delivery routes (intravenous, intrathecal, respiratory, cardio vascular and enteral); and had identified the connectors' location, hidden from view under bed sheets as a key risk. Paul's project – funded by the Department of Health – sought to eradicate this risk by making the five routes easily distinguishable by touch.

Paul's work took place within an interdisciplinary team, including specialists in human factors and anaesthesia as well as the manufacturer B. Braun Medical. He adopted a user-centred approach which involved hand modelling, testing and refining the connector through many iterations. Paul articulates clearly the crucial role played by his ability to understand the dynamic between people and objects, in developing products which meet user needs. For him, it is about 'using artefacts to find out about people, as people respond through objects emotionally and psychologically, and as they find value in things.' Engineers and psychologists often bring a theoretical solution to the problem, he says, but lack the ability to translate these into artefacts which will become a useable and desirable part of people's lives.

The 'non-Luer connector' design concept has gained professional recognition through the Committee for European Normalisation, and patents have been filed.



1 + 2
 Non-Luer, medical connection system, Professor Paul Chamberlain with Dr Rebecca Lawton, Dr Peter Gardner and Dr Phillip Bickford Smith, 2007 (Image 1 is the final product and image 2 shows the prototypes) Photos: Paul Chamberlain, 2007



Design for sustainability

Several makers interviewed use craft skills, materials knowledge and an intimate understanding of the connections between people and objects, to engage with the sustainability agenda.

An appreciation of materials interaction and the power of materials in human emotion and narrative are brought together by Amy Twigger Holroyd, who works in textiles to promote long-lasting and meaningful relationships between people and objects, as a basis for sustainable consumption.

Amy's *Keep & Share* knitwear collection is designed to encourage people to 'buy less, more special pieces, and to keep their items in use for longer'. The collection is made to age slowly and gracefully, employing high quality yarns selected for tactility and a design ethos which aims for 'unconventional familiarity' rather than responsiveness to trends. Utilising specialist craft knowledge in its use of machine knitting techniques, the collection also draws on Amy's understanding of people's interactions with clothing – over the product lifecycle – to promote longevity of use through its versatility in being designed to be worn 'in different ways and by different people over their lifetimes.'

Amy recognises the complexity of people's relationship with the making process and the hand-made object, and in her business seeks to provide a range of ways in which people build their own story around their purchase, strengthening the emotional connection they feel with their chosen item. The collection sells in different formats: as finished items purchased online, through retail outlets and at Amy's stall at festivals, as kits including patterns, wool and knitting needles, and as patterns for digital download. Amy's workshops also encourage people to adapt existing patterns, employing techniques such as 'stitch hacking' and 'pattern blagging' to build people's confidence in producing objects in a personalised way which feeds emotional ownership.

Amy's work demonstrates a particular role for the maker's understanding of the material world and the dynamic between people and objects, in contributing to design for sustainability. Other makers working to promote sustainability through the symbolism and material qualities inherent in their work include Barley Massey and Yuli Somme.

Yuli's company, Bellacouche, makes felt shrouds for human burial, which bring wool's 'special properties of warmth, strength and flexibility' to sympathetic and human-centred green burials and allow the body to be buried in a comforting cocoon, customised by the family to connect with the person and the place where they lived. Barley Massey's 'Remember Me' service enables clients to work with Barley in selecting pieces of cloth and clothing associated with a lost person to be made into furnishings or toys – typically cushions and bears – which are designed to be embraced and held for comfort (see image overleaf). The service combines Barley's appreciation of the emotive qualities of fabric and the therapeutic value of capturing memories in objects, with her skill in facilitating the client's own grieving process. As she explains, the process of constructing something is inherently therapeutic, in that it creates a place for memories or stories to be held.

Amy Twigger Holroyd, Barley Massey, Yuli Somme and others make additional contributions to the sustainability agenda, through their choice of – and innovations in – materials. Guy Mallinson and Yuli Somme, for example, source only local, sustainable raw materials, whilst Barley Massey transforms recycled materials into furnishings for homes, bars and restaurants. Jim Roddis and Gary Nicholson, as outlined above, have developed the TTura/Resilica™ composite which finds new use for 'difficult to recycle' materials. Whilst the environmental impact of small-scale craft production remains debated, makers' capacity to promote sustainable consumption by influencing consumer behaviour appears strong.



1
Leafshroud felt
coffin by Yuli Somme
and Anne Belgrave,
2007
Photo: Anne Belgrave,
2007

2
Yuli Somme at work
in the Bellacouche
studio, Devon, 2010
Photo: Chris Chapman,
2010



1
Barley Massey
with Forget-Me-Not
cushion from the
Remember Me range,
Barley Massey, 2008
Photo: James
Champion, 2008

2
Tube Cushions for
Mujiyama Restaurant,
London, Barley
Massey, 2008
Photo: Agnes
Mitchell, 2008

3
Tube Cushion
selection, Barley
Massey, 2008
Photo: James
Champion, 2008



This section demonstrates that both the range of industry contexts in which makers work and the variety of roles that they undertake are wider than those identified in previous research. Makers interviewed currently work in architecture and interior design, in cultural heritage, in fashion, retail and advertising, in film and television, in performing and fine arts, in manufacturing, and in leisure, tourism and events.

Through their work, makers are contributing directly to economic growth and innovation, within and beyond the creative industries. The impact they are making is evident in:

- New, patentable materials innovations (such as rusted silk and TTURA/Resilica™) and manufacturing processes such as water jet cutting of 3D ceramic surfaces.
- An enhanced visitor experience in specific tourism destinations, with a substantial secondary impact on local businesses, through the development and marketing of craft courses.
- New and successful product innovations featuring a strong person-centred orientation, in terms of a useability which improves quality of life (eg Rompa and the 'non-Luer connector') and/or a powerful emotive connection encouraging appropriation and longevity of use (eg *Keep & Share*).
- Enhanced narrative and characterisation in film and television and digital environments, through a sensitive and intelligent employment of material qualities (eg *Skellig*).

Craft knowledges and craft thinking shape the way that makers work 'beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object', and the economic contributions that they make. Specifically, this section demonstrates practical applications, within industry sectors, for the following characteristics of craft practice:

- Materials knowledge: makers bring a uniquely in-depth, tacit knowledge of the material world and specific material qualities, to their work across a range of designed sectors including architecture, interiors, fine art and fashion.
- Reflective dialogue: makers work by exploring materials and processes and reflecting on what they find, stretching existing possibilities to create new innovations. This distinctive way of working can be seen in making for both real and virtual spaces – from interior design to animation – and for manufacturing settings. In each context, the 'reflective dialogue' remains, creating new designs and innovations which work.
- Understanding of people and objects: makers bring an intimate understanding of how people relate to material qualities and objects, both emotionally and in a functional sense. This human perspective on the material world adds significant value to makers' work, in particular by adding to the design mix a concern for useability and expressive value which promotes sustainability and longevity of use.
- Passion for materials and the material world: makers' love of materials and material exploration drives their work, and in this section also finds it applied to the development and management of craft-based tourism experiences.

In this chapter, we see makers engaging with clients in ways which site their work clearly within the creative knowledge economy: makers are not simply providing clients with artefacts, but are applying their specialist skills, knowledge and ways of thinking into uniquely valuable consultancy services.

We also see makers creating and applying the expressive value which defines craft as a 'core creative field' within the creative economy, or as a sector whose economic value lies in the permeation of the creative content it produces into the creative and cultural industries and the economy as a whole.

Finally, we see how makers' work in industry contexts both shapes – and is shaped by – craft knowledges. Makers' engagement with different clients and collaborators, with new materials and processes, and with the requirement of the client brief all contribute to the creative mix, driving innovation through materials and processes. There is little evidence from our interviewees of any distinction between creative and commercial work, but rather of a business model where creative and commercial progress is made through a number of mutually beneficial, craft-related activities.

Section three:

Making value in community settings

In this section, we explore the distinctiveness of craft within participatory arts practice. We find craft uniquely offers the opportunity for people to work with materials, making objects with meaning and permanence that they own, while engaging in conversations that build individual worth and community value. We investigate how craft practice and people give material voice to those who can be 'hard to hear', and we look at the role of the maker as 'sociable expert' in this context.

Half of the makers within the in-depth interview group undertake work in community settings as a significant part of their portfolio practice. While this section focuses on exploring the work of some of these makers and the distinctive social contribution they make, it is useful to set these particular examples within a wider context. The following alphabetical list has been selected, including information from the initial telephone interviews, to indicate the breadth of makers' engagement in these contexts. It includes specific organisations and venues, named projects and programmes, and types of venues and people involved in participatory craft work.

Age Concern – Alzheimer's Society – asylum seekers and refugees – Big Issue – Bridgwater Hall – Bristol archives – children's centres – Community Integration Partnership – Coventry Cyrenians – Craftspace – Creative Junction – fathers' groups – disability groups – Embrace Arts – ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes – festivals – Gallery Oldham – generation organisations – Groundwork – Holt Country Park – Hulme Sweet Hulme – Knowle West Media Centre – libraries – long term unemployed – NEETS – Manchester Science Festival – mental health projects – mosques – newly arrived people – North Norfolk community arts carnival – North East Somerset Arts – people with learning disabilities – people with physical disabilities – Richard Attenborough Centre for Disability and Arts – Slough Learning Revolution – Somali Sisters Support Group – Suffolk Wildlife Trust – Victoria & Albert Museum – Vauxhall Centre arts and disability project – young offenders – Wesley Community Furniture – women's refuge – Women's Institute – World Aids Day – youth groups and centres.

60 As evidenced above, we found makers are working with a wide range of people in a wide range of places, very much within the context of arts and social inclusion work (see DCMS, 1999²⁶). In order to explore this area of work, we first describe some specific projects and the general role of the maker involved in them, grouped under broad headings as below. We then draw on the views of makers (see Moriarty, 2002 for the importance of artists' self evaluation of projects addressing social exclusion²⁷) and observed experience of participants, to consider the distinctive social contribution that craft makes in these settings.

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27 See Appendix I
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Children and young people

Jon Williams worked with very young children and their parents/carers on Craftspace's 2004 – 5 *Treasure Boxes* project at St Thomas Early Excellence Children's Centre in Birmingham and has worked at other children's centres since, with fathers' groups, in family workshops and with groups of children. In the *Treasure Boxes* project he worked with a nursery group and their parents/carers and also a 'play and stay' group. He brought in his own work for children and parents to explore, then over the following sessions brought clay in different forms and worked with participants in different making processes, introducing new ways for them to look at and respond to their material. Not having worked with such young children before, Jon had to think about making his practice accessible and be flexible in supporting the needs of the participants. With current fathers' workshops at St Thomas's Children's Centre, he has the participants' initial 'front' to overcome, which he does through demonstration and encouraging a sense of inclusion. The focus of the family workshops is in giving people the time and impetus to do something constructive together which builds positive interaction.



Workshop participants with Jon Williams, at Craftspace's *Treasure Boxes* Project at the St Thomas Children's Centre, Birmingham, 2005
Photo: Marcus Rowlands, 2005

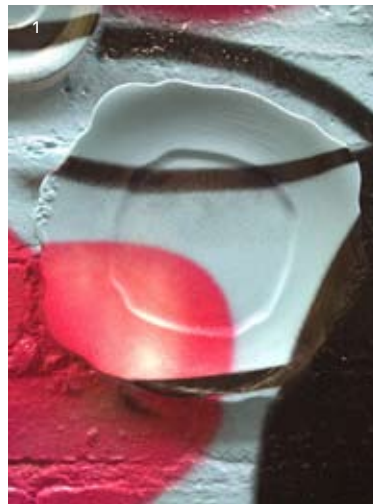
Claire Harris and Cj O'Neill have both worked with young people described as NEETS (not in education, employment or training).

Claire worked on a Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots supported project with Groundwork West Midlands, *Stitch in Time*, which ran over six months in 2009 and involved a mixed group of 16 – 24 year olds. Claire ran a series of creative workshops to introduce the group to different ways of working with textile materials and enable discussion around perceptions of fashion and body image, the impact of migrant communities in the local area, and the influence of heritage textiles on fashion garments and interiors. Claire started the project by bringing vintage clothes, shoes and accessories for the group to dress up in and style themselves with. This started the young people thinking immediately about issues around identity. She then introduced the young people to heritage textile collections at the V&A, Compton Verney and the Herbert Art Gallery, types of environment some had never entered before. From working with textile samples, painting and drawing, they produced collaborative art garments which they exhibited. Another dimension of the project was the exploration of image-making in the context of identity, the media and the hand made.

Working with the young people was demanding as the setting could be quite volatile and unpredictable: Claire had to deal skilfully with challenging language and aggression when personalities clashed. However, she enjoyed such unpredictability and the fulfilment of instilling a passion in someone and showing them possible ways of channelling this into making a living through hard work. Claire feels this work is all about empowerment and giving young people the confidence to develop their own interests and self-expectations, for instance in terms of raising aspirations about pursuing further education opportunities.

Cj O'Neill worked with 13–16 year old boys in Stoke-on-Trent on a ceramics and graffiti project supported by Unity as part of (and funded by) the British Ceramics Biennale (see page 62). She experimented with different approaches to develop graffiti, ceramic and transfer decoration skills in a series of workshops. With the boys, she then assembled an installation of wall-mounted plates which they spray graffitied. Good media coverage enabled the work to be made public, equivalent to an exhibition. This made her realise the significance of participants' sense of pride and the importance to the boys of how they were going to be represented.

As a workshop facilitator, Cj feels she had empathy with the participants because her Belfast background had given her experience in dealing with judgements made by others. Her role was to encourage participants to overcome their fear of making mistakes. She was conscious of the need to match her approach with the values and motivations of the group and work with an appropriate immediacy. Some of the boys started off saying, 'I'm not doing pottery'. Initially, they didn't want anything to do with the project because of the negative connotations in Stoke with the fall of the industry in which their parents had previously been employed. However, using the word 'ceramics' and referring to male role models, in terms of people who make installations or are designers, showed them another set of possibilities. It offered some kind of redefinition and recognition of positive opportunity within the industry.



1
Graffiti*d
installation (plate
detail) at the
British Ceramics
Biennial, Stoke-on
-Trent, Cj O'Neill
with Unity and
Nicholas Roach, 2009
Photo: Cj O'Neill,
2009

2
Graffiti*d
installation at the
British Ceramics
Biennial, Stoke-on
-Trent, Cj O'Neill
with Unity and
Nicholas Roach, 2009
Photo: Lloyd Reis,
2009



3
Graffiti*d
installation
(section) at the
British Ceramics
Biennial, Stoke-on
- Trent, Cj O'Neill
with Unity and
Nicholas Roach, 2009
Photo: Cj O'Neill,
2009



Community groups and organisations

Claire Harris and Cj O'Neill also work with community organisations.

Cj's project at Wesley Community Furniture project in Moss Side, Manchester involved both staff and volunteers at this social enterprise which sells furniture to the local community at very low cost. It typically employs long term unemployed or excluded people such as referred asylum seekers, ex offenders and substance abusers. Cj bought a selection of second hand plates from the company and encouraged people to choose one each to respond to in their work with her, combining their responses with the plate's own narrative in weekly sessions. She also made plate portraits of the staff in gold silhouette. The resulting work was exhibited, along with the plate portraits, and auctioned at the Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collection Gallery– with the money generated going to the charity. Cj ran this project at a slower pace than when working on the Stoke NEETs project. Her use of objects which are perceived as 'throw away' helped her work with people to overcome a sense of preciousness which could have held them back. There was always another plate which could be a replacement if something went wrong. Also, having 'found' objects meant there was an existing connection for people to build on – they did not have to deal with a blank canvas; another method of building confidence.

Claire Harris has worked with the Coventry Cyrenians, a homelessness charity which enables people to get housed and back into mainstream life, on the *Refreshed* fashion project. This responded to the needs of Trading Standards to find uses for the counterfeit goods it seizes, such as fake Gucci bags. Claire worked with homeless people to customise these goods to make new clothes which could be sold to raise money for the Coventry Cyrenians. As a spin-off from the project, Claire is writing this idea of customisation and counterfeiting into the Fashion degree programme on which she teaches, so students can explore ideas of appropriation, identity and branding.

Amy Houghton's community based work focuses on conversations and collaborations. Within a reminiscence project with older people for North East Somerset Arts, she made and talked with participants and cast their hands, showing all the marks that have a story behind them: the casts were exhibited with work she had made, in a context of co-creation where the process is as much a product of the project as the final piece. Commissioned by Knowle West Media Centre to make works for their new building, Amy chose to work on a cross generational story project with local people, drawing on community and city archives, including animating photographs to elucidate the stories behind them. She also contributed to the parallel young people led *Amazing Archive* project.

In Karen Whiterod's 'social making' work, individuals come together to make components for the creation of a suspended sculpture made of recycled plastic bottles, which in turn will provide an environment in which more making, and talking, can take place.

Sarah Rhodes is very experienced in using craft within development work in Botswana, having worked on projects with street children, people with HIV/AIDS and women's groups. Back in the UK, she worked on a textiles decoration project with Somali women leading to an exhibition she curated at Slough Museum. Capitalising on the skills they had learned in earlier needlework workshops, the women wanted to learn tie and dye techniques for textiles to decorate products for their homes and Sarah worked with them to develop these and other craft skills. The project also served as a platform for participants to practice and improve their spoken English skills.

Betty Pepper and Melanie Tomlinson have both been involved in Craftspace's work with the Community Integration Partnership (CIP) in Birmingham. The CIP provides a wide range of educational and skills building services within a safe environment for refugee and newly arrived women from diverse ethnic communities, helping women to progress into employment and to feel at home in their host community. Craftspace has been working with CIP on a series of projects since 2003.



1
Sterling silver necklace with orange cotton thread & blue electrical wire, Sarah Rhodes, 2009
Photo: Sarah Rhodes, 2009

2
New Growth: workshop participants' work with Betty Pepper and Craftsplace, at the Birmingham Community Integration Partnership, 2007
Photo: Chris Smart, 2007

Betty was commissioned to make a piece of work with a group of women accessing general courses at CIP, based on them exploring their journey to arriving in the UK and reflecting on the integration process. She asked them to bring in fabrics which had meaning for them and from these created a craft piece. Betty saw her role as helping people reflect on their experiences and feel part of something that linked them to other people through the creation of the work. The work was on display at Origin 2007 where the women were able to talk to people about it and see the work of other artists. It is still on display in CIP's main reception. Melanie Tomlinson's project involved working with a group of women with flat sheet metal, using fruits and flowers as inspiration, to produce art pieces that were painted or printed on to. Melanie's approach is to create workshops as social experiences, starting with a feast and having food every week to break the ice and start people talking. She starts with easy, achievable tasks (eg a simple drawing) and builds to something quite complex. She picks out individuals' interests and shapes their direction. Working with women from diverse countries and backgrounds, she is practised in gesturing, as well as learning positive words of encouragement in other languages.

Health and disability

In the health field, Dr Jayne Wallace is working on a project called *Personhood in Dementia*. Following a period of research with the Institute of Ageing and Health and volunteering with the Alzheimer's Society, Jayne is well briefed about dementia and its effects on the brain and body, including current research that shows how a person retains elements of themselves despite the illness. She has developed a unique craft based approach to working with people with dementia, drawing from the relationship between people and artefacts, given that 'craft making is never removed from the person'. Jayne is working on a specific project with a woman called Gillian, who has dementia, and her husband and full time carer John, making and using objects with Gillian as 'probes' that invite responses and keep memories alive. These have included a wooden house made out of balsa wood which Gillian and John decorated with

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memories about members of their family, in the process talking about life before and after dementia; and also a digital piece, created out of the remnants of material John had cut from dresses Gillian had made and then thrown out, before she developed dementia. Jayne has made a frame in the shape of a dress, like an embroidery hoop, that will hold one of these pieces of fabric with radio-frequency identification tags, and which can then be placed on a sensor in a bespoke wooden jewellery box to release a sound (maybe a song) that relates to the time when the dress was worn, sparking off memories. The piece can be added to, by Gillian and John, making it co-creative and generative. Jayne is exploring how some of her one-to-one work like this can be generalised and used with greater numbers of people.

Barley Massey has run a community textiles project in Tower Hamlets with mental health service users, offering taster workshops in different techniques and using the design phase as an opportunity to discuss the idea of wellbeing. The work produced was exhibited at the Ideas Store in Whitechapel. Barley sets up her workshops to allow for people's own way and pace of working. 'Some people want to have a go and see immediate results, whereas others can sit there for hours'. She sees it as important people are free to work alone or collaboratively, privately or publicly, as they want.

In the arts and disability field, Betty Pepper's work for Craftspace's *Craftbox* project included running brooch making workshops for adults with special needs and their carers. Jon Williams works with young people with special needs and Karen Whiterod has worked on several projects with people with a disability. At the Vauxhall Centre in Norwich, she worked with people with learning and physical disabilities to make wearable art and jewellery from waste material. Another recent project was with people with a learning disability making fantasy foliage, again recycling materials.



Dress from the
'Personhood' in Dementia
Project, Dr Jayne
Wallace with Gillian,
John, Professor Patrick
Olivier, James Thomas,
Dan Jackson, David Green
and Dr John Shearer,
2008 - 2010
Photo: David Green, 2010

66

In this section we look first at the skills and attributes of some of the makers from the projects above, from the perspective of people with whom they have worked, either directly, or in a project management context, and set this within both a participatory arts and craft specific context. Then, in relation to all the projects, we consider the range of social impacts the work of makers, and making, has on project participants.

Makers' qualities

Dally Panesar, former CEO of CIP and Shain Akhtar, Operations Manager at CIP, offer reflections on Betty's and Melanie's ways of working on CIP projects. They note the makers bring a range of social and facilitative skills that create a welcome and supportive environment for the women. They are patient, give positive reassurance and use demonstration so the women can visualise things, which is especially important when they can't understand or speak much English. Shain notes that Melanie encourages women to utilise techniques familiar with those of the crafts of their own countries, and they have learned a number of techniques from her which they have then merged in their own way. Dally says:

The craft sessions were run in an informal yet organised way always taking into account the different skill levels and knowledge of participants. The project became one that the women and staff always looked forward to. The project both helped participants to feel at ease and also pushed their boundaries using skills the women already had and then using those skills in a different setting.

John, the husband and carer of Gillian, the woman with dementia with whom Jayne Wallace has been working, describes how important Jayne's personable, friendly and empathetic approach is to working in a trusting and respectful way. John sees Gillian brighten up and come to life when she is handling and using the multi-sensory objects Jayne has created, out of their discussions, to stimulate memories and conversations.

These perspectives give a clear picture of the personal qualities of these makers, which work alongside their appreciation of the human meaning embedded in craft objects. The understanding of the individual, their culture and life experience informs a highly nuanced response, which builds on people's interests and abilities and offers something new for them to explore.

28 See Appendix I
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These qualities align closely to the 'types of positive interaction'²⁸ proposed for successful amateur practice (Animarts, 2003) which include recognition, negotiation, collaboration, abstention (from power), play, celebration, validation, empathy and facilitation. They also 'match' to the key characteristics of artists working in social inclusion contexts as identified by Jermyn (2004)²⁹, namely having flexible and adaptable working methods; working collaboratively with participants; pursuing quality in both process and outcome; and responding to individual's needs.

29 See Appendix I
Literature review page 102

What is interesting about these makers, and others we interviewed who undertake work in community settings, is that they have no formal training in community practice, and seem intuitively to bring the approaches that are appropriate to such settings. Just as we noted in the previous section about makers working in industry sectors, they are perhaps able to work in these ways because, as Sennett says:

The craft of making physical things provides insight into the techniques of experience that can shape our dealings with others... Material challenges like working with resistance or managing ambiguity are instructive in understanding the resistances people harbour to one another or the uncertain boundaries between people (Sennett, 2009³⁰).

30 See Appendix I
Literature review page 110

67

Social impacts

Focus and concentration

In projects Jon Williams and Claire Harris have run, there were particular examples of heightened concentration achieved through exploration of materials and the making process. For instance, in the *Treasure Boxes* project, the evaluator noted that the young children's concentration improved so much that by the end of the residency, the nursery group were able to stay focused and engaged for a session lasting an hour and a half (Craftspace, 2005³¹).

31 See Appendix I
Literature review page 103

Claire Harris notes that the young people identified as NEETs she worked with displayed more positive, focused behaviours though engagement in making, as even those who were really loud or attention-seeking showed 'tenacity and patience with the process of making the textiles'. McCullough (1996³²) writes about craft practitioners' experience of the making process, and in providing and supporting a making experience in others, these makers are enabling an equivalent range of satisfactions from focus and concentration on the manipulation of materials.

32 See Appendix I
Literature review page 111



Workshop participants
with Jon Williams,
at Craftspace's
Treasure Boxes Project
at the St Thomas
Children's Centre,
Birmingham, 2005
Photo: Marcus
Rowlands, 2005

Freedom and autonomy

Mary Butcher says that in her projects people tend to work with freedom, as 'they don't know otherwise' – in other words, they are not bound by conventions and techniques they don't know about. Similarly, the *Treasure Boxes* evaluator reports the project was significant in enabling the parents the freedom to experiment themselves. The activities allowed them to stand back more from their children, and they became more relaxed as the process developed.

Confidence, self esteem and sense of value

The evaluation for the Somali Sisters Group project on which Sarah Rhodes worked showed increased confidence levels by the end of the project and the *Treasure Boxes* evaluator saw an increase in the confidence of both the parents and the children over the period of the project.

Melanie Tomlinson's work at the CIP developed the women's creative skills and also their confidence – to the extent that they then passed on their skills, delivering workshops to other people. This helped them recognise their achievements, gave them additional confidence and a sense of self worth. When Betty's project work with the CIP women was on display at Origin, lots of people saw it and the women were able to talk with people about the work, and gain a sense of value in their part in it.

Shain from the CIP observes that craft activities draw out people who are reluctant in more formal classroom situations: they do not make too intense a demand. Craft is a very popular activity at the CIP and she sees people building their confidence more quickly through crafts than other activities. Dally Panesar reports too on her observations that women increased their confidence. This was demonstrated in two ways: women involved in the work seemed visibly 'lifted' and they also found it easier to interact with each other and with staff. Dally also points out that neither the projects nor the work that comes out of them are labelled 'refugee'. It is about quality work that values the history and backgrounds of the participants, rather than their legal status.

Achievement and ownership

Mary Butcher describes how making provides a sense of achievement as something always results. There is no right and wrong: a piece of weaving may be random, but there's no 'ought to be' and you can dive in without inhibition and still be successful. There is an immediacy and concreteness to working with materials and she believes making activities are less threatening than other arts activities and can therefore lead to that sense of achievement much more easily. Working in basketry has the advantage of it being very 'low tech' and accessible.

Working with people with a learning disability, Betty Pepper observed something similar, saying:

They enjoyed learning, doing and having something to take home; the here and now, making and getting involved.

Melanie Tomlinson explains that going through a process where skill is acquired in increments, and where people exceed their own expectations to make something they consider very beautiful, gives a strong sense of achievement. She recognises that people grow through this process.

In her reflections on the craft work at CIP, Dally Panaser believes that the projects help to instill a sense of pride not only in the women directly involved in the project but also others who attend the centre. The work that women make is framed and displayed, and this helps the women to have ownership of the place. This ensures it is somewhere where they feel they belong: it is familiar to them and they have helped to create a legacy, with work for others to see.

The act of sharing or exhibiting work is seen as an important part of creating a sense of achievement. Talking about her project with young people considered NEET, Cj O'Neill says:

Some wouldn't talk about it – you knew they were chuffed with themselves for doing it but they wouldn't say anything. But you could tell because other people were complimenting them, and they were saying how easy it had been when actually they'd found it difficult.

Experience of enjoyment and the development of imagination and skills

Working with materials provokes a particular type of direct experimentation and stimulates the imagination. In the *Treasure Boxes* project the evaluator notes:

There was also a huge amount of playfulness. Parents and children experimented with clay on their face and on their bodies as bracelets and moustaches. They made patterns and created clay worlds.

Jon Williams highlights the democratising nature of a material like clay and its ability to affect how people behave with each other. He finds materials are a great leveller, saying,

Participants soon realise that everyone can work at their own level, in their own way.

Working with materials is transformative, because, as Melanie Tomlinson explains, 'the outcome can't be imagined at the start of the process'. Turning a drawing into a 3D object 'has a real magic' and the possibilities of materials and processes using materials



1
Papaya study:
workshop participant's
work with Melanie
Tomlinson, Jitka
Palmer and Craftspace,
at the Birmingham
Community Integration
Partnership's 'Seeds
of Change' project,
2006
Photo: Melanie
Tomlinson, 2006

2
Papaya in pewter:
workshop participant's
work with Melanie
Tomlinson, Jitka
Palmer and Craftspace,
at the Birmingham
Community Integration
Partnership's 'Seeds
of Change' project,
2006
Photo: Melanie
Tomlinson, 2006



'make that journey more special'. It is also a source of enjoyment and surprise: 'People are amazed about the possibilities of making and joining things together' (Karen Whiterod).

Materials have their own specific qualities and invite manipulation. Jon explains:

Clay is a very honest material which reflects how you handle it. One of those primeval things we do with our hands is to squidge.

Barley Massey talks about the sensory qualities and tactile experience of working with felt, which 'gives that very warm, cosy, instant transformation from the fibre into a piece of fabric'; as McCullough (2006³³) notes, pleasure in the mastery of materials may be considered an innate human characteristic. In the context of social inclusion and impact, it is therefore important that people have access to and the opportunity to engage in this activity. Barley also notes the therapeutic value of constructing something, because of the emotive connections with materials, which hold memories, stories or associations.

Working with materials develops both craft skills (with a use beyond the projects themselves) and other practical skills. The young people deemed NEET who worked with Claire Harris learned techniques for using a sewing machine, sewing on buttons and fusing different materials. The Somali Sisters learned a range of craft skills they could use at home and also possibly in business or employment. Mary Butcher notes the development of more general skills of benefit to participants, such as using and developing manual skills, developing dexterity and improving hand eye co-ordination.

33 See Appendix I
Literature review page 110

Inclusion and social interaction

Making together is a powerful tool for inclusion, combating isolation, promoting social interaction and contributing to community cohesion. As Karen Whiterod says:

Sitting together and being creative and making has a value... people working together have strength.

In the *Treasure Boxes* project, parents really valued the importance of 'special time' with their children. Mary Butcher and Betty Pepper both profile the importance of 'chat' while making. For Betty, repetitive activity enables chat that creates a sense of community, while Mary believes the chat, or social, side of making is very important because it creates a sense of equity. People don't feel different or excluded and the making enables an ongoing conversation with people, as people.

The CIP craft projects were very successful in supporting women who were isolated and through shared activity, helped them learn how to interact with others. This was especially important for the newly arrived women as this helped to build their social network. Dally Panesar notes that issues around isolation, displacement and depression are key for the women with whom CIP works. The makers helped significantly to provide a relaxed environment and create connections and supportive friendships between women, many of whom now keep in touch outside of the programme.

Telling stories about and through materials can have a huge impact. Jon Williams reports that making clay narratives allowed one Korean parent to talk about her home and the things she missed.

One lady from Korea, a refugee, played with clay and made her homeland with mountains, rivers, boats. She was almost in tears whilst doing it, being able to communicate and talk about her country.

Barley Massey finds stories around textile traditions break down barriers between people: 'People start talking about family stories, connected through materials'. Melanie Tomlinson also finds that talking about, and through, objects and making, takes people beyond their current experiences and communities. The women who exhibited at Origin had not previously been out of their immediate community, but were able to communicate with makers from different backgrounds through their work and recognition of a shared skill, often through touching and exploring objects. The fact that their work was exhibited in a range of places meant the work was brought to a new audience, creating an understanding of refugees to the 'host' community and vice versa. Dally believes that this has helped to break down boundaries and barriers between the two groups.

Employment

One significant impact from the *Treasure Boxes* project was that one participant became employed by the Centre in the crèche, her first point of entry to the organisation being the clay project. At the CIP, many of the women on craft projects go on to participate in other projects or courses at the centre, some of these leading to vocational qualifications and some on into employment.

The CIP and Craftspace are now establishing a craft social enterprise as a direct result of the success of the craft projects, with the exhibition at Origin 2007 evidencing the public's desire to purchase the high quality work produced. The enterprise will involve the women from the start in its planning and management. The provision of opportunities to work alongside and shadow professional artists will build their creative, social and business skills, enabling some to take up roles within the enterprise in the longer term and others to improve their employability. The enterprise aims to support better integration into local communities, which will profit from the diversity and richness of the women's experience. Activity is already taking place, with women running creative workshops in community locations and recruiting new participants. Two children's centres have commissioned the delivery of arts workshops, particularly targeting newly arrived people who are not so well engaged with them – craft has been the mechanism to draw people in.

71 The makers we interviewed work in a wide range of community settings. They bring materials knowledge, with making and facilitation skills, to enable people to experience for themselves the creative and social benefits from participation in craft. The settings for work include community organisations, arts venues, environmental charities, youth groups, health projects and specialist centres, for example for children or for people with a disability. The people with whom makers work are often vulnerable or experiencing challenges because of exclusion from society and the opportunities it can offer, including access to creative activity. Makers' contribution to both individual and community development shares characteristics with other participatory arts practices, but social outcomes are achieved in particular ways because of the distinctive nature of the making process.

While specialist craft knowledges are core to their work in community settings, the makers also demonstrate particular attributes, skills and approaches that contribute to positive learning and development for participants. These include:

- Showing flexibility and the ability to adapt craft techniques to make them accessible to different community groups.
- Providing materials that invite exploration.
- Using demonstration and explanations about their own work to encourage interest and engagement.
- Building on people's existing skills, knowledge and experiences.
- Allowing freedom for experimentation and self expression.
- Demonstrating understanding and respect for participants' cultural backgrounds and contexts.
- Showing empathy and patience with participants.
- Enabling people to work at their own pace, alone or together as they want.
- Empowering participants to raise their aspirations.
- Creating a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

The following are key social impacts experienced by participants through the work of the makers in the projects featured:

- Development of focus and concentration: from sustained manipulation of materials.
- Experience of freedom and autonomy: from being allowed and supported to experiment without boundaries.
- Development of confidence, self-esteem and sense of value: from a focus on the quality work being produced, not the situation of the participant, with opportunities to display work and pass on newly acquired skills.
- Sense of achievement and ownership: from experiencing the immediacy and concreteness of materials and always being able to produce something that belongs to them, to be kept for themselves or shared with others.
- Experience of enjoyment and the development of imagination and skills: from engaging with the transformative nature of materials that hold meanings and developing manual skills, including the use of tools and equipment.
- Experience of inclusion and social interaction: from a shared activity that invites and enables conversations and connections.
- Development of employability: from newly acquired skills, confidence and abilities developed through making craft work.

These summary lists of makers' approaches and impacts on participants help us to situate the distinctiveness of craft within participatory arts practice and see how the notion of Sennett's 'sociable experts' (Sennett, 2009³⁴) evidences itself in community contexts. Makers are bringing participants new creative experiences, relevant to their situations and interests but also providing new ways to express themselves. Uniquely craft offers the opportunity for people to work with materials, make objects with meaning and permanence that they own while engaging in conversations that build individual worth and community value. In terms of craft and the social contribution of makers, the practice and the people give material voice to those who are often 'hard to hear'.

³⁴ See Appendix I Literature review page 110

1
Tin Flowers: workshop participants' work with Melanie Tomlinson during Routes to New Roots, 2009, Craftspace, and the Community Integration Partnership working together to develop a sustainable craft social enterprise
Photo: Ming de Nasty, 2009



2
Angharad October, Melanie Tomlinson, 2008
Photo: Bogdan Tanea, 2008

3
Meadow Installation: workshop participants' work with Melanie Tomlinson and Craftspace, at the Birmingham Community Integration Partnership's Routes to New Roots project, 2010
Photo: Melanie Tomlinson, 2010



Section four:

Making value in education settings

74 In this section, we turn to the value of making within formal statutory education settings, from early years to secondary school and including special education. We see maker educators bringing the unique qualities of materials-based learning to young person centred programmes including Creative Partnerships and 5x5x5, and we discover how craft can add value to cross-curricular learning. We also explore the specific benefits for children and young people with special needs, whose lives are usually entirely controlled, of being given the freedom to explore the material world and express themselves as they want. We also learn about the life lessons that can come from learning that 'things don't always go right' with ceramics or metal, but that with every mistake comes the potential for learning.

Just over a third of the makers within the in-depth interview group undertake participatory work within formal statutory education settings, and one maker has a formal teaching role within special needs further education.

Ofsted's *Drawing together: art, craft and design in schools* included a recommendation that:

... every child and teacher of the subject [ie, art, craft and design] [should] have the opportunity to work ... with an artist, craft worker or designer as part of their cultural entitlement (Ofsted, 2009).

35 See Appendix I Literature review page 106

This same report evidences inconsistency in quality provision across the schools surveyed and in particular notes the neglect of craft and design³⁵, so our focus here, albeit with a small number of makers, may be helpful in gathering together some craft specific examples. Of course the practice of artists working in schools has been well established for thirty years or so, and Caroline Sharp and Karen Dust's identification of the benefits of this in *Artists in Schools* (1997)³⁶ remains relevant today.

36 See Appendix I Literature review page 105

One maker is contributing to the major national initiative Creative Partnerships, originally established as one of the responses to the *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* report from the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (1999³⁷) and others also approach their education work from a broad cross-curriculum starting point.

37 See Appendix I Literature review page 105

Many of the impacts from participation in craft activities in educational settings are similar to those identified within community settings, such as increased confidence, learning from experimentation with materials and gaining a sense of achievement. The next part of this section therefore combines brief descriptions of the projects in which makers are involved with key points relating to their role and the impact of their work, focusing on learning and the education context.



Amy Houghton,
5x5x5=creativity,
Twerton Infant
School in Bath,
2010, Photo: Tas
Kyprianou

Early years/primary

Amy Houghton has been working for several years with 5x5x5=creativity, an independent, arts-based action research organisation which supports children in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them to develop creative skills for life. 5x5x5 is inspired by the Reggio Emilia educational approach in Northern Italy that respects children as strong, capable protagonists in their own learning. It recognises children's innate inquisitiveness, and affords them the space, time and individual adult attention to explore and learn from the world around them. 5x5x5's work centres on 'creative values, environment, relationships and disposition' and artists set up a creative environment with a distinct atmosphere in which children can follow their fascinations.

Amy is currently working with Year 1 in an infant school, developing a creative environment and resources, around a 'treasure, mapping and transformation interest', with themes of myths, maps, place, discovery and transformative materials. She observes children, listens to their voices and supports their interests. She also works with staff to support how they communicate their learning throughout the school and make learning visible. She explains that in 5x5x5, 'the process is the product'. She cites an example of a five year old Polish speaking boy who flitted around the classroom and wasn't communicating easily. Then, through interaction with open ended, explorative, outdoor creative opportunities he became focused, engaged for long periods, showed purposeful enjoyment and developed his speaking and language through a desire to share his excitement of his discoveries. He became valued as an inventor and instigator. He just needed to work physically: the right provocation can always extend learning. Another example was of a disruptive girl, who couldn't cope in the classroom. Through observations, the adults realised that she behaved in this way so she would be sent out. Alongside many other materials, Amy offered her masking tape, which the child gravitated to and became skilled in using. She made all sorts of textures on a frame which she could revisit at any time. It fulfilled her need for 'time out' and provided a focused creative outlet.



Pupils working with Amy Houghton at a 5x5x5=creativity session at Twerton Infant School, Bath, 2010
Photos: Tas Kyprianou, 2010



Primary

Betty Pepper worked with a class of seven year olds on the *Craftbox* project. Her approach was organic, to work with the skills they had, and to 'push without shoving'. Betty was very aware that her role as an artist was different from that of a teacher, and this enabled the children to find a different way of expressing themselves. She knew the 'naughty ones' might usually be 'sat on' by the teacher, but she was able to get them absorbed, achieving and paying attention. She worked to create an environment where the children did not feel pressured by others. Betty observed them gaining all sorts of skills – like coping with problems – which arose from the making process, but were transferable to everyday situations.

Sarah Allen used her weaving skills and knowledge within a primary school's science week. The children could see cloth being made (they hadn't thought before about where cloth came from) and took part in stick weaving and made bracelets. They become so involved in this they all either stayed in, weaving, or took their work out with them at break time. Sarah was also able to explain all about weaving equipment and materials and make links to the local lace and textiles history, supporting learning across the curriculum. Sarah is keen to encourage people to realise that 'craft is not as hard as you think'. Her approach is to say, 'It's only wool, look what you can do with it'.

Yuli Somme worked in primary schools for many years with the Devon Guild of Craftsmen's *Big Hand, Little Hand* education programme, right from its inception. She sees great value in the sensory experience and appreciation of materials that comes from felting with your hands. The process makes children slow down – and also be excited at the same time to be producing something. As with weaving, the rhythm and repetitiveness, is a positive process (and relates to what McCullough (1996) writes about the calming effect of routine and what Csikszentmihalyi (1996) describes as 'flow'³⁸). The work also promotes awareness of the material and an understanding of where it comes from. Yuli has recently stopped working in schools but sells felt-making kits, with a DVD and regionally sourced wool, which continue to promote her ethos of sustainability, within an educational context.

³⁸ See Appendix I
Literature review page 110

Secondary

As part of her portfolio practice, Shelly Goldsmith is a Project Manager for the Creative Partnerships programme, looking after five schools in Kent. She sets up projects and sources artists to do anything but art classes/workshops, as Creative Partnerships is about creative learning more broadly, adopting creative methodologies in teaching and learning within subjects such as numeracy and geography etc. She works with staff to influence them in their creative approaches to learning, often helping them through the process of moving towards a facilitating, child-centred approach. In terms of craft, it is all about understanding that it's 'more than just knitting': making is an activity which can connect right across the curriculum.

When the pupils are involved in making, Shelly sees them grow in confidence: it gives them autonomy and a stronger voice. Sometimes they can hardly believe they are being given permission to make as they would like: they ask, 'Am I allowed to do that?' Shelly describes making as a journey: you don't look for end results. The Creative Partnership process is seen as a 'freedom to learn', away from the pressure of an end product. She cites one of their projects about recalling and recording life stories and memories on clothing: through this the teachers learned about major aspects of pupils' lives for the first time, because the students were given the opportunity really to express themselves. These sorts of projects also help pupils become more aware of the role of making and design in the world. Most of the Creative Partnership practitioners in Kent are makers, chosen for their understanding of, and skills in, supporting creative learning.

Marcus Clarke works in schools running puppet making and puppeteering workshops and has received funding to develop puppets suited to use in teaching. While he finds teachers want pupils to draw the puppet first, he gets them straight into making; as they build, they see the character come to life. He finds using puppets allows pupils to explore significant issues that they may otherwise be reluctant to talk about.

Karen Whiterod's workshops in schools link to her environmental concerns, and she runs projects using waste and recycled materials. She is one of the artists in the *Artists for Climate Change* programme and is developing proposals for promoting sustainability through creative activities in schools. Karen is always conscious of working as an artist, not a teacher. She feels she has complete freedom – unlike a teacher with boundaries and pathways to follow – and can draw on any resource, whether natural world structures, scientific things, electronics or film editing, for her work with pupils.

Special education

Jon Williams worked at Beaufort School, a school for children who experience severe, multiple and complex learning difficulties, over the course of a year. He notes that young people with special needs are given very limited opportunities to achieve, but that playing with materials gives them an opportunity to focus and to control their environment. He reports one of the teachers saying about a child with autism, that being with clay, 'Gives him a little bit of peace. He can just be there with the material and not think about anything', a very particular kind of quiet focus. Like Amy Houghton, Jon's work is based on the Reggio Emilia approach that places greater importance on process and experimentation than producing a finished outcome.

Jon vividly describes how the young people respond to the opportunity for sensory experience and exploration:

Some of them work very physically, rolling on the clay, having to feel it under feet. So I offer opportunities to do that. One really enjoys jumping on it, so I roll out a big slab for him to walk over and jump on. It's very cold! And slip feels very different to leather hard clay, very different to soft plastic clay, so there's a range of different consistencies and senses. I allow and value that experimentation, prodding and pushing the clay to explore and exact a response from them, and reflecting on that response and taking it further to set up other ways they can explore ... One girl was rolling in the clay in bursts of five minutes, that was her way of interacting with the material.

Jon works to make the young people feel safe and valued in what they do, encouraging the idea that there are no mistakes, endorsing what they've done, raising their self-esteem and encouraging them to share their success with others.

Jo Davis teaches an accredited course in Creative Craft, within a further education college, to a group of 15 – 16 year old boys with learning disabilities. Jo's approach to teaching is to work *with* the students, 'so we're seeing each other making and are involved in each other's work'. She aims to develop a shared excitement and motivation around seeing what materials can do, encouraging an eagerness to experiment with anything in pursuit of new and beautiful effects. The students learn what Jo calls 'life lessons', such as when the bottom blows off a vase, you learn that things don't always work out and that this doesn't matter. She encourages them to take risks in pushing things in their own direction, even if she doesn't know how it will turn out. Allowing them to explore and experiment is important as their lives are usually entirely controlled. The students really enjoy being allowed this freedom, especially being entrusted with dangerous materials such as glass and darkroom chemicals.

Jo believes that having the idea to make something and seeing it through to its end creates ownership: her students always treasure the objects they make, feeling a sense of pride and achievement. As Jo says:

It's feeling the joy of having an idea and realising it and holding it in your hands.

She finds this ownership motivates them and, coupled with the realisation that in order to get the most out of making you have to do your homework (ie use your sketch book), this instils a commitment and a discipline which most of them have not experienced before. Jo brings in her work to show them and a couple are now thinking of going on to more education, something that 'was never on the radar before'.

1 + 2
Pupil working with
Jon Williams on a
Creative Partnerships/
Craftspace project
with Anand Chhabra
and Harmeet Chagger,
Birmingham, 2006
Photos: Janette
Bushell, 2006



3
Pupils working with
Jon Williams and
Harmeet Chagger on
a Beaufort School/
Creative Partnerships/
Craftspace project
with Anand Chhabra
and Harmeet Chagger,
Birmingham, 2006
Photo: Harmeet
Chagger, 2006

80

This section shows makers realising the full potential of their role in education settings. Characteristics of this way of working include:

- Taking a focused, individual student centred approach (eg providing a creative environment in which pupils can follow their fascinations and can find a role in group activities; working with and from the skills students have; listening to their voices; working alongside students rather than 'teaching' them).
- Enabling sustained involvement and enhanced freedom of expression (eg by providing a different range of activities and materials that engage students who do not usually become absorbed in normal classroom work; allowing students to make as they would like to).
- Encouraging experimentation and risk taking (eg providing access to a wider range of materials and tools; supporting positive learning through 'trial and error'; focusing on processes rather than outcomes).
- Working cross curriculum (eg using weaving to teach science, mathematics and history; drawing in an unfettered way on resources and learning beyond the craft making activity itself).
- Supporting teacher development (eg encouraging creative approaches and enabling staff to feel confident in, and comfortable with, co-learning).
- Enabling participation in craft disciplines not normally found in school (eg making felt and weaving).
- Providing an insight into the world of professional making (eg makers showing their own work, talking about professional practice and educational opportunities).

As with craft participation in community settings, the impacts are that students gain in confidence through the processes of making and the sense of achievement provided by producing something. This increases their sense of autonomy and control, which can have positive impacts on their overall academic achievement (see Sigman (2008³⁹). Students learn specific craft skills, become more aware of the origination and characteristics of materials and also develop more general, transferable skills such as coping with problems and finding that 'things don't always go right', but that you can learn from this.

³⁹ See Appendix I
Literature review page 108

While teachers can also be in the position to apply some of these ways of working as listed above, our interviews evidenced significant differences between the maker's vote role and the teacher's. In Ofsted's review of the first phase of the Creative Partnerships programme, they noted that:

For many pupils, the high quality of the experience was directly related to the unpredictable approaches taken by creative practitioners working with teachers and the different relationships that developed (Ofsted, 2006⁴⁰).

⁴⁰ See Appendix I
Literature review page 106

Within our group of makers, the most distinctive aspect of their practice compared with teachers was having more freedom – to give the students more freedom, enabling them to follow different making paths to express themselves as they wanted.

82 Having looked at the distinctive economic and social contribution made by makers working in a range of sectors and settings, it seemed important to investigate how well makers considered themselves to have been prepared for portfolio working by their initial education or training and the ongoing role of continuing professional development (CPD) in shaping their portfolio careers. So in this section we look at what Handy calls 'study work', considering makers' views and experience of higher education and their access to CPD opportunities post graduation.

We find that CPD is an ongoing part of the creative mix for makers and that boundaries between learning, research and development, and making – in all its contexts – are fluid. We explore how makers invest in their businesses by making time for CPD as part of the portfolio and by actively seeking out opportunities for creative, commercial and personal development. We also identify specific CPD catalysts for portfolio working, indicating the value of finance for new collaborative ventures, and mentoring at key portfolio career crossroads and crisis points.

83

Makers' experience of their higher education course as one that prepared them for portfolio working is highly dependent on when they undertook their degree. Those who were at college or university some time ago do not feel they were prepared for the world of work at all and the portfolio career 'had not been invented' (Shelly Goldsmith). Indeed one maker talks about 'being thrown out of the door' at the end of their course. For this older group of makers, most value from their courses was found in learning technical skills. Where there was freedom to develop their own vision, and makers had a broad brief within which they negotiated what they did, this helped build the capacity to be self-sufficient.

Quite a number of makers recognise they themselves were not thinking about their next steps while studying, and even when professional development support was offered, they were not necessarily ready to engage with it, not seeing its relevance at the time. As Amy Houghton says:

You can provide advice through education, but people don't understand its application until they are doing the work.

Those who graduated more recently talk about the benefits of having practitioners as visiting lecturers – who can be significant influences, and are seen as 'bringing in real life'; working on live projects or professional placements; and undertaking professional development modules. These vary but for example, the Professional Portfolio module Jo Davis took during her BA Contemporary Applied Arts degree at University of Wolverhampton (representing a quarter of her final year) included researching paid and voluntary work opportunities, further education, training and business models; signing up to relevant newsletters and networks; and talking with makers working in ways she was thinking of for herself. She also designed a website and business cards. This helped her devise a plan for setting up a studio, running workshops, having apprentices and making work for exhibition and sale. While circumstances have delayed her putting this plan into operation, she now sees the work undertaken on the modules as a 'real blessing'.

The craft based courses at University College Falmouth offer just one example of how Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) incorporate placements and 'live' projects in the curriculum, building up ongoing relationships with local and regional organisations from which cohorts of students can benefit, exploring ways of applying their practice in a range of contexts from community projects, to interpretation in museums and site specific work.

A number of makers note that inter- and multi-disciplinary courses are beneficial in reflecting more accurately the contemporary practice of many portfolio makers. When an HEI has an actively outward looking approach to research, as in the examples in this study, academics are helpfully modelling portfolio working and engagement in a range of sectors and settings.

Continuing professional development experiences

Looking for learning

The makers are noticeably active in looking for learning, development and support opportunities in creative and business development, wherever these may be and whether they are formal or informal types of CPD. Many makers look for and find CPD opportunities within the teaching and projects they undertake, consciously benefitting from the interactions and opportunities to try out new things that these strands of work can provide, as part of their reflective practice. As Guy Mallinson says, 'As a maker you're learning for ever' and this sense of embedded and articulated learning is strong. Claire Harris says she is not missing anything in terms of CPD as it is 'the product of my own experience, hard work and tenacity'. Melanie Tomlinson explains she takes a proactive approach to seeking out relevant support at different points as her career progresses, and has been successful with securing start up grants, support for R&D and mentoring.

Development grants and support schemes

Receiving development grants or being accepted onto schemes such as the Crafts Council's sustained, national programmes is seen as beneficial by makers. This is not only for the direct support they provide or the opportunity to undertake R&D, but also for the validation they represent and the access they give to meeting and talking with other practitioners, from which much learning emerges.

Age doesn't always correlate with length of time in portfolio practice, so a maker like Betty Pepper is aware that, although she has only recently begun her self-employed business, she is not young enough to benefit from possible support from schemes for young entrepreneurs such as The Prince's Trust or Shell Livewire. She reflects that most of her graduate contemporaries have not gone forward in practice, and sees a need for long term support for practitioners, including better access to appropriate workshop and studio space.

Sarah Allen, who established her portfolio practice quite a number of years after graduation, has benefitted from the *Nottinghamshire Creatives* scheme, run by Nottinghamshire County Council, which supports early career makers to learn about retail, exhibition and workshop paths. Sarah has especially appreciated the mentoring provided as it has helped her think about and manage the organisation of a currently part-time business that she wants to grow. She finds the ongoing support of the peer mentor group invaluable: as well as providing a pool of knowledge between themselves, they all feel relief in knowing they are 'not just on your own'. Sarah also attends seminars and events organised by the Nottinghamshire County Council supported wider creative industries *Creative Greenhouse* programme, finding the networking important for sharing information and contacts and combating isolation.

Cockpit Arts offers specific support for its tenants and general support more widely to others through its business support seminars. Arantza Vilas receives mentoring and participates in termly one to two day workshops, ranging from market research to employing people to creative thinking. She has found the business plan examples especially useful as they include non-traditional models. Barley Massey sees Hidden Arts' support as excellent, with their networking events on different issues such as running a business being an important source of information and advice from other makers who attend.

As an MA graduate of Central Saint Martins, Sarah Rhodes has been able to access University of the Arts London's seminar series for graduates which cover writing a CV, intellectual property and other business related topics. She also taps into Cockpit Arts' business support events programme and feels there is generally support available, but you need to look to find it. Some support is free or very low cost, such as Business Links' support for entrepreneurs.

Anecdotally, support offered by generic providers such as Business Link and its predecessor enterprise agencies is often seen as neither sector specific nor sector

sensitive enough for people working in the creative industries. However, most of our interviewee makers who had accessed support from such organisations were positive about their offer. While one says she 'shies away' from anything to do with Business Link, Barley Massey describes her experience with them as useful in a 'cold number crunching way'. She worked with an advisor to draw up an action plan: looking closely at income streams helped her make decisions about what was viable in her business. She appreciates the access to ongoing support and also attends free short courses such as in retail excellence. Melanie Tomlinson has also found Business Link helpful and easy to talk with; they have supported her in R&D for her work with industry.

Amy Twigger Holroyd participated in an innovation programme called *Net Infinity*, funded by Advantage West Midlands and aimed at businesses with high value added products, which comprised workshops and one-to-one sessions. Through a supported process of visioning and goal setting, she identified the importance of a central theme as a key priority for her business, and now acknowledges the identifying of this aim as key to her success. We also noted earlier (see page 49) how Cj O'Neill and Melanie Tomlinson benefited from support from the Design Initiative and the Manufacturing Advisory Service, respectively.

Mentoring

Mentoring is established as a potentially transforming experience for mid-career makers and is a form of support welcomed by many of the makers interviewed. Amy Houghton received support through the ArtsMatrix programme and says her mentor 'gave my voice back so I could hear it', an approach and process she now tries to use when being a mentor herself. An independent evaluation of the *Crafts Council Development Award Scheme* shows a strong need for mid-career mentoring opportunities (Be Curious, 2009⁴¹), a finding being taken forward by the *Crafts Council Collective* CPD programme.

41 See Appendix I Literature review page 99

Ptolemy Mann is being mentored on the *Crafted* project, developed in partnership between Arts & Business and Walpole (a non-profit-making organisation that furthers the interests of the British luxury industry). *Crafted* gives 12 craft entrepreneurs access to a year's mentoring from an experienced business person from the luxury industry; a series of workshops covering essential business skills with industry experts; and access to an advice bank of experts in intellectual property rights, finance, branding and employment law. The scheme in turn provides luxury businesses with access to a new generation of skilled craftspeople. After a long time with no CPD, Ptolemy says she was 'so surprised and pleased to be asked, "How can I help you?"' and is learning a great deal from her mentor Bill Amberg, who has developed a significant business and international brand, yet kept his 'craftsmanship'.

Ptolemy feels other support schemes for makers are not tailored enough to the individual or only provide support to new makers: there is a significant gap in appropriate provision for mid-career makers. This view is shared by other makers including Shelly Goldsmith, who sees the value of mentoring for people at this stage, as they need 'a fresh eye and an outside perspective' to help them open up opportunities. With Arts Council funding, she feels she has done the 'shifting' and 'mutating' in her practice, now using her skills in a broader way, and sees that other older makers could benefit from this way of working, but would need the support to explore this.

Mentoring is a form of CPD particularly effective for dealing with points of crisis or resolving direction. Jon Williams had a half day session with an advisor on a creative industries business support programme in Hertfordshire in the 1990s and says: 'One morning changed my whole view of what I did and of time management'. He retains contact with this person, not only for their business advice but also for the objective view they provide. Amy Twigger Holroyd would like this sort of support in the form of a 'creative peer', who could knowledgeably discuss her practice and business with her and give her confidence in taking a new direction.

As well as receiving mentoring at Cockpit Arts, Arantza Vilas has a business mentor through Crafts Central whom she sees once a month. When she finds things are tough, and is questioning herself, the mentor is there to remind her that her work is evolving and developing. He has in particular helped her classify her different projects into categories and is working with her on a new business plan. Melanie Tomlinson has recently received mentoring from Frances Lord through the Designer Maker West Midlands scheme and found it beneficial in defining her current focus (ie the narrative of her work), future direction and priorities. She has missed this type of 'robust critical discourse'.

Courses

Many makers look actively for more formal 'training type' CPD. For Karen Whiterod, this 'study work' is definitely part of the working year and she is very focused on meeting her business needs, having learned how to photograph her work; attended artists in schools training; been trained as an Arts Award Advisor to add to her portfolio offer; and attended computers for business and presentation skills courses, among other things. She feels it is important to 'feed myself with information and inspiration'. She also recognises CPD opportunities are good for meeting people. Mary Butcher focuses her CPD on learning about materials and skills new to her to feed back into her basketry. She is learning about bookmaking materials to understand working with them and attending jewellery classes to extend her making techniques. Someone like Jo Davis is able to take up formal training within their employment, so she has learned about kiln maintenance and repair.

Amy Houghton undertook a professional development qualification a couple of years after graduating and found the 'do and learn' approach of her BTEC Professional Diploma in Arts Practice and Management provided contextualised, practical learning and the opportunity to develop professional contacts. She also sees her MA as a CPD experience.

Rachel George has a clear idea about what training courses she wants to go on (eg prosthetics for film and specialist casting) but as a self-employed portfolio worker experiences the common 'time and cost' barrier: time spent training means time not earning; the timing of courses is not always fitting for freelance life; and the cost of training can be prohibitive.

Networking

As we have seen above, makers are keen to maximise formal CPD provision for networking purposes and some, such as Jo Davis, invest particular time and energy into building and sustaining their own networks to develop their practice. Jo explains all her close friends are involved in making and their communications together fuel her passion for materials discoveries. They share new discoveries online and meet up to make together. This has led to collaborative ranges, with one example being her working with a fine artist friend to embellish fashion maxi-dresses cut down to mini-dresses. Jo says, 'I work best with people in a creative hub. I want to bounce off others and make things together'. Melanie Tomlinson has established a small peer support network with other Midlands makers and Amy Twigger Holroyd also works within a network of makers, using this to gather information on a flexible, ad hoc way. The network of makers at Cockpit Arts provides Arantza Vilas with inspiration, collaborative possibilities and links to other support organisations.

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The preparation for the world of work – and portfolio working in particular – that HE provides, as a first step in the process, has improved a great deal over recent years. The use of makers as visiting lecturers, student involvement in live projects and the provision of professional practice modules are all effective ways of supporting students in the transition to professional practice. Research departments can actively model portfolio working through their own engagements with different sectors and settings.

Moving on post graduation, the makers interviewed show a high level of commitment to their CPD, searching out learning opportunities of different types and consciously making time to undertake CPD as part of their portfolio. This includes actively ‘taking learning’ from their work in different sectors and settings, as part of their reflective practice.

The other main forms of CPD, with some of the benefits and disadvantages associated with them by interviewees, are:

- Development grants and support schemes: these are valued for providing validation, access to key contacts and often peer support as well as the specifics of the particular scheme. Schemes may be age – rather than career point – related; non-national opportunities are provided by both generic and specialist craft or creative industries agencies and vary geographically.
- Mentoring: this is seen as the most highly effective form of support, but is often targeted just at early career makers; several makers described key moments when a mentoring process clarified creative focus and direction in a significant way.
- Courses: many makers take the time to attend courses which support, develop or extend their creative or business practice; freelance working can inhibit the take-up of courses because of the time and cost implications.
- Networking: makers maximise the networking potential of any CPD opportunity and also invest time in establishing networks, which are often the impetus for collaborative work.

‘As a maker you’re learning for ever’, says Guy Mallinson, and all our interviewees share this approach. This strong commitment to professional development supports other studies of portfolio workers in the wider creative sector and beyond. It is perhaps a distinguishing feature of a portfolio worker that what Handy calls ‘study’ work represents such a conscious investment of time. It is also perhaps critical to the sustainability of this way of working where, as Szabó and Négyesi (2005⁴²) note, the portfolio worker can collect knowledge in one working context which they can apply in another, broadening their own knowledge not only through formal learning but also through experience.

⁴² See Appendix I
Literature review page 96

Conclusions

Conclusions

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With other quantitative research studies showing portfolio working in the contemporary craft sector being undertaken by 65 – 70% of makers, this way of working ‘beyond the making, exhibition and sale of a craft object’ is a significant phenomenon to study. Of the 35 makers we interviewed, over three quarters work in other industry sectors; over half work in community settings; and just over a third work in education settings. Nearly a third work across both industry sectors and community/education settings. This research also shows makers working across a greater range of industry contexts and community and education settings than has previously been realised and recorded.

The makers’ stories have provided a rich and nuanced description of the economic and social contributions that they make. By drawing together these stories, contextualised with a literature review, we have been able to analyse the distinctive qualities of craft knowledges and craft thinking that they apply in their work with others. In this respect, we are reminded again that Richard Sennett talks about working with materials developing ‘sociable experts’ who show distinctive and valuable ways of collaborating with others:

The craft of making physical things provides insight into the techniques of experience that can shape our dealings with others ... Material challenges like working with resistance or managing ambiguity are instructive in understanding the resistances people harbour to one another or the uncertain boundaries between people (Sennett, 2009⁴³).

43 See Appendix I Literature review page 110

We know there are more narratives to tell, but this particular group of ‘sociable experts’ evidence that makers with portfolio careers are resourceful and resilient; keen to collaborate; motivated by making a difference; and entrepreneurial in sustaining a successful portfolio practice. They contribute to economic growth, within and beyond the creative and cultural industries, driving innovation through materials and processes and applying the expressive value which defines craft as a ‘core creative field’ within the creative economy. Within community and education settings, they support learning and development, giving material voice to those who are often ‘hard to hear’ and enabling a wide range of social and educational impacts through providing new and meaningful ways for people to express themselves.

We have noted good practice in the preparation for the world of portfolio careers and the support that is offered as makers develop and maintain this way of working. Makers have a strong commitment to their learning and development and see this as key to a sustainable practice.

We look forward to the exemplars and analysis of work in this report being used as advocacy and inspiration; to inform policy development; and to support agencies in developing partnerships and programmes which create new and relevant opportunities for makers, users of and participants in craft.

Appendices

I Literature review

91 The focus of this study, as explained in our **Background** section (page 10), is on the work of makers adopting portfolio and multi-track working business models as the basis for a career in craft, operating both in and beyond the sector itself.

In contextualising our understanding of the economic and social contribution of this way of working, and our analysis of the narratives investigated, we have reviewed the relevant literature, with a focus on the:

- Extent of portfolio and multi-track working in contemporary craft, to understand the significance of this way of working within the sector.
- Nature of portfolio working as experienced by makers, in the context of the wider creative industries and other sectors, to identify any craft specific characteristics.
- Range of sectors and settings within which portfolio working makers are operating and evidence of their influence and impact, to explore the breadth and depth of their engagement.
- Trends in creative business support such as the provision of CPD, to appraise whether this helps to develop and sustain portfolio working.
- Context in which to assess the economic contribution of portfolio working makers including how the size and impact of the sector is currently presented, to place our qualitative study within what is currently known in a quantitative context.
- Context in which to assess the social and educational contribution of portfolio working makers, including debates around evaluating impact, to identify specific contributions through craft.
- Established characteristics of making as a way of thinking and working which describe its distinctiveness, to enable us to analyse and interpret what makers bring to their work in other sectors and settings.

Given the number of areas of investigation and the substantive nature of some these topics, our aim here is to provide a broad based context for our research focus, ‘pegging’ key concepts and developments and highlighting where there are gaps in knowledge, which *Making Value*, at least in part, seeks to address.

The extent of multi-track and portfolio working in contemporary craft

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In relation to craft, the terms 'portfolio lifestyle' and 'multi-track working' first appear in the 1998 study of craft graduate career paths, *New Lives in the Making* (Press and Cusworth, 1998), where they are employed – as by their originator Charles Handy – to describe all forms of work: paid, unpaid, employed, contracted, commissioned, creative and non-creative. Charles Handy first wrote about the portfolio approach to work in *The Future of Work* (1984) and in *The Age of Unreason*, first published in 1989, explains portfolio work as 'a way of describing how the different bits of work in our life fit together to form a balanced whole'. He describes five main categories of work as '**wage work** and **fee work**, which are both forms of **paid work**; **homework**, **gift work** and **study work**, which are all **free work**' (Handy: 2002: 146). Using Handy's definition, *New Lives in the Making* suggests that around half of all recent graduates have portfolio careers, and that three quarters are working in art and design related fields (Press and Cusworth, 1998: 53). Twelve years on, *Crafting Futures* (Hunt, Ball and Pollard, 2010) similarly identifies around half of all recent crafts graduates as portfolio workers.

In contrast to these surveys of recent graduates, the 2004 Crafts Council survey *Making it in the 21st Century* (McAuley and Finnis, 2004) provides a focus on currently practising makers at all career stages which is more representative of the sector as a whole. This study identifies 37% of its sample as portfolio workers, on the basis of part time working: all part-time makers – and no full-time makers – are assumed to be running multi-track careers.

Income generation data from *Making it in the 21st Century* – and a comparable 2006 study undertaken in Northern Ireland (McAuley and Finnis, 2006) – provides an alternative analysis. The two reports show 65% of makers in England and Wales and 71% of makers in Northern Ireland gaining income from sources other than 'selling craft work.' Clearly this figure excludes the 'free work' included by Handy in his definition of portfolio practice, and therefore may still be considered an underestimate. However, given the focus of the two studies on currently practising makers, and the usefulness of income diversity as an indicator compared to full-time or part-time status, we suggest that 65%–70% – or around 24,000⁴⁴ makers in the UK – is the best available estimate of the extent of portfolio and multi-track working in the contemporary craft sector.

⁴⁴ 22,584 – 24,321 represents 65% – 70% of the total UK base of 34,744

The nature of portfolio working as experienced by makers, in the context of the wider creative industries and other sectors

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While *New Lives in the Making* (1998) evidences the extent of multi-track and portfolio working it also provides some more qualitative data about the craft graduate respondents' experience of this way of working. In the study, craft graduates are found to be familiar with the portfolio approach, as during their degree they have to run concurrent projects and learn good time management skills in undertaking practical studio work alongside theoretical and contextual written work. They accept the need for part-time paid employment to support self-employment as a maker (as in Handy's 'wage' and 'fee' work). While recognising the financial imperatives, graduates also see this situation as an opportunity, whether to combat the isolation of making to get out and meet other people, or to employ skills (eg through teaching) that are not being used in their own work (Press and Cusworth, 1998: 56).

Voluntary (or 'gift') work was undertaken by 18% of respondents, and is viewed, among other reasons, as important as a source of relevant work experience and as a means to overcome isolation. Many respondents report a need to be engaged in craft activity for personal reasons of self-fulfilment; making is seen as important to quality of life and sense of identity. There is a trend among those in paid employment in other careers to maintain making as 'a parallel tack of minor economic significance – but which can evolve into a main track of income when necessary' (Op cit: 59). While reporting these multiple streams of work, *New Lives in the Making* does not, however, investigate the connections between them in terms of creative development.

Given the age of the respondents, there is little data about the issue of parenthood (one aspect of 'homework'), but findings indicate a portfolio approach helps enable the continuation of some craft practice during this period of life. The study finds there is a strong commitment to lifelong learning (or 'study' work), with 59% of respondents having at some point in their career taken some further course of education, including business skills (raising an issue for a supposedly vocationally biased craft education), craft skills development and courses in material areas other than their specialism (Op cit: 61).

While *Making It in the 21st Century* is primarily a quantitative study, it also contains a number of research findings in relation to the nature of portfolio working. First, in terms of craft identity, many respondents select several ways of describing themselves (McAuley and Fillis, 2004: 18), suggesting fluidity between different roles, for example of maker and designer. As noted above, this research defines portfolio working as a mixture of part-time craft and non-craft related jobs. In terms of the collaborative arrangements makers have, most are with other makers or manufacturing/production companies (ie still working within the craft sector), but a small percentage of respondents work with architects or design companies, and some with a range of community groups (local projects, church, clubs etc) (Op cit: 47). Research questions included a list of statements for makers to indicate how they feel about their work and the experience of working in the crafts, and although these included the topics of 'enjoying being your own boss' and the importance of developing creative and professional practice (with which the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed), overall these statements are geared towards the 'studio maker' and do not provide any particular learning about makers with a wider portfolio of practice (Op cit: 49 – 50). As in *New Lives in the Making*, there is a significant commitment to continuing professional development (CPD). Employing the same methodologies as *Making It in the 21st Century*, with some additional questions, the findings in *A Future in the Making* are broadly similar.

Crafting Futures (2010) describes the portfolio career patterns of craft graduates as:

The study reveals resourceful and entrepreneurial behaviour in the face of the complexities and challenges presented in finding work and earning a living by creative endeavour. Working patterns show high levels of self-employment and engagement in work of a creative nature, with many sustaining a living in portfolio careers. For creative graduates, a set of distinctive characteristics have emerged, with evidence of life-long learning a significant finding, in which graduates combine self-development and career building through work, creating opportunities, further learning and study (Hunt, Ball and Pollard 2010).

Overall, the evidence points to a sector in which business models are characterised by a number of mutually beneficial, craft-related activities, rather than by subsidy of creative practice through non-creative work. As illustration, the Crafts Council's 2004 survey of professional makers shows a minority (13%) of all makers engaging in 'non-craft' work, with a quarter (24%) undertaking 'craft related activity, eg selling materials, writing about crafts, crafts consultancy, guild and committee work' and almost a third (30%) 'teaching in schools or colleges'.

Studies suggest that the 'portfolio mix' develops over time, led by a confluence of opportunity, strategic planning and changing life circumstances (Press and Cusworth, 1998; Hunt, Ball and Pollard, 2010). For example, the portfolio is thought to be wider and to include more 'non-craft' work in the earlier years of business, with 72% of businesses in their first three years undertaking other paid work, compared with just 51% of businesses that have been trading for four years or more. As businesses mature, 'other' work is more likely to be focused on teaching or freelance design work, and to be perceived as a choice rather than a commercial necessity (Cockpit Arts, 2010).

It is also pertinent to draw on studies undertaken in a broader arts and creative industries context. Janet Summerton used Handy's portfolio concept as the starting point for qualitative research studies with artists (including makers) and arts workers.

In 'Kaleidoscopes and Chameleons: tailor made careers in the arts' (1997), Summerton reports on a pilot study undertaken in 1996 and describes the research participants as 'chameleon-like', due to the wide range of labels they give themselves, reflecting both professional and personal roles within their portfolio life. The concept of a kaleidoscopic career comes from the sense of 'overlap, blending and blurring between different aspects of [the participants'] work' and in particular one artist's comment:

In the prosaic meaning of portfolio an artist assembles all their previous work of note – it is therefore a linear map of what they have done. Artists' work patterns seem more of a kaleidoscope with much overlapping rather than an organised portfolio with clear pages and sections (Summerton, 1997).

All portfolio categories are represented in the experience of the participants. They report similar patterns in that 'time spent was rarely reflected in money earned' with many commenting on the 'fluid and changing nature of their working patterns' (Op cit). The majority are keen to develop their own creative work and aware of balancing this with the need to generate income. Summerton finds a strong sense of 'stimulation, challenge and excitement of the potential and actual cross-fertilisation from activity to another', with flexibility and personal control being seen as key advantages of portfolio working. Isolation is identified as an issue, as is the juggling of different work, alongside personal life, and financial insecurity.

In *Dimensions of Practice* (2003), Summerton again evidences research participants having many 'labels' for their work, with unpaid practices being added to the portfolio 'to explore applying or developing their creativity in new ways' (Summerton, 2003: 9). Many are engaged in educational activity, which some find enriching, but others the opposite, as in the artist quoted:

Regular teaching has a reductive quality to it which is a bigger drain on my imaginative energy than the more risky freelance work which challenges me to think more profoundly and widely about my subject and artform in order to deliver workshops effectively (Op cit: 15).

Participants are keen to achieve a satisfactory balance between strands of activity and many employ or contract others for services (eg fabrication, project management, specialist advice), economic activity which may often be overlooked. They undertake a range of continuing professional development activities, both formal and informal (eg including meeting with peers). Responses from those involved in an earlier study (*Artists at Work*, 1999) demonstrate a 'considerable shifting in the patterns of their work' (Op cit: 39) over the period.

Lisa Nolan, in 'Portfolio Careers across the Cultural Industries', *Planning the Future* (2000), identifies several common features of portfolio careers in cultural industries. There are varied modes of work with 'multi-tracking' and 'alternating between creative self employment and other non-creative employment ... a common pattern' (Nolan, in Dumelow, MacLennan and Stanley, 2000: 96). There are also varied roles and occupations which demand skills both for generating and managing a portfolio of flexible work, alongside core creative skills. Work experience and professional development, often in terms of specialised sector-specific learning, are important, as is accessing technology, understanding increasingly varied opportunities in arts education and community based work and developing entrepreneurial management skills (Op cit: 97). Portfolio cultural workers move in and out of other industry sectors and many practitioners engage with the voluntary sector, although recent graduates are not always aware of the range of opportunities open to them. Problems and weaknesses associated with a portfolio career model include isolation and lack of recognised career paths.

Creative and cultural industries workers, including one textile designer, are included in the interviewee group used by Clinton, Totterdell and Wood (2006) to explore how people experience portfolio working. 'A Grounded Theory of Portfolio Working' describes the key characteristics of portfolio working as: self-management of working life; independent generation of work/income; variety of work and employers/clients; and a work environment outside of a single organisation (Clinton et al., 2006: 186 – 187). Autonomy, in terms of responsibility (for the success or failure of their work and career) and control (over whether to take work, and how and when to complete it) is a key determinant of how work is experienced (Op cit: 187 – 8). Uncertainty about work and income creates anxiety, but for some, not knowing what the future may hold is an exciting challenge, and there is a recognition that having many clients provides some career security (Op cit: 188). Social isolation is experienced as a problem, as is the lack of professional support (Op cit: 190). Outcomes of portfolio working are identified as work intensity (with blurred boundaries between work and non-work and difficulties with 'switching off'); the difficulty of achieving the desired work-life balance; and wellbeing, with satisfaction derived from responsibility, control and variety (Op cit: 190 – 192). Factors influencing experience are personal characteristics (especially in respect of levels of self-confidence) and situational ones, in relation to financial imperatives, time in portfolio working, demand from clients and having a network of peers – which can provide opportunities for work as well as social interaction (Op cit: 192). The authors conclude that a successful portfolio worker needs 'to manage a portfolio of critical psychological processes as well as a portfolio of work' (Op cit: 198).

Other studies of portfolio working are focused in specific occupational areas, which include, among others, media workers (Storey, Salaman and Platman, 2005); freelance translators (Fraser and Gold, 2001); adult educators (Fenwick, 2003); and nurses, educators, organisation developers and new immigrants (Fenwick, 2005). Some studies are focused on the transition to portfolio working from employment eg freelance translators (Fraser and Gold, 2002); media workers (Platman, 2004); social workers (Kirkpatrick and Hoque, 2006); women from a range of sectors (Cohen and Mallon, 1999). Studies of self-employment consider the context of the positive conceptualisation of the portfolio and the negative reality of marginalised workers (eg Smeaton, 2003). There is also related research into different aspect of entrepreneurship which relates to portfolio working and/or the creative and cultural sectors, in general terms of the decline of the career (eg Flores and Gray, 2000), with women entrepreneurs (eg Fenwick, 2002), cultural entrepreneurs (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999) and the spread of contingent work in the knowledge-based economy (eg Szabó and Négyesi, 2005). Subjects addressed in these studies pertinent to looking for a deeper understanding of the experience of portfolio working makers include:

- **Sense of identity and self-determination:** eg the development of the enterprising self where 'aspirations, development of self as well as enterprise, meanings of success, relationships and ... work environments appeared to be tightly interconnected' (Fenwick, 2002: 705); 'the ability to 'name [your] own know-how' (Fenwick, 2002: 717).
- **Collaborative practice:** eg the combination of individualistic values with collaborative working 'cultural producers generally have a core discipline...skills

[which] are their central contribution to the creative process...these Independents accept collaborative team-working as the norm' (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999).

- **Commitment to and accumulation of learning:** eg how a 'nomad worker' (Szabó and Négyesi, 2005: 74) collects knowledge in one working context which they can apply in another, broadening their own knowledge not only through formal learning but through experience; and the importance of investment in learning (Op cit: 80); 'knowledge as something that emerged during the doing of a project' (Fenwick, 2002: 715).

It is also useful to review Handy's own development of his portfolio working concept in *The Age of Unreason* in later books such as *The Empty Raincoat* (1994) and *The Elephant and the Flea* (2001), as part of his ongoing exploration of the changing world of work, new organisational models and implications for individuals.

In *The Empty Raincoat*, he develops the notion of portfolio working providing the possibility of 'existentialist development', in his own case:

A part of that portfolio would be 'core', providing the essential wherewithal for life, but it would be balanced by work done purely for interest or for a cause, or because it would stretch me personally, or simply because it was fascinating or fun (Handy, 1994: 71).

He emphasises that the portfolio worker's fee includes not just a time element, but also a charge for 'the quality of the work, for reputation and reliability' (Op cit: 175) and discusses how people have more freedom to 'chunk their time' in different ways (Op cit: 177), pointing out that those who charge for their produce, rather than time, can make more money by working smarter, not longer. This paradigm does not sit easily with the reality of crafting objects per se, but is interesting to consider in relation to the wider range of work undertaken by portfolio working makers. Handy looks forward to the situation when portfolio workers, as independents, have an agent and clubs, and whereas these may not be realised as models within the crafts sector, the emphasis on realising 'that asset which is yourself can atrophy in isolation' (Op cit: 217) and the need to have 'colleagues' has strong resonance with creative industries related studies of portfolio working.

Much of the thinking about portfolio working in *The Empty Raincoat* is revisited and expanded by Handy in *The Elephant and the Flea*, the title of which refers to the role of the independent, or 'flea', in relation to a large organisation, or 'elephant'. The craft sector is characterised by sole traders and micro-businesses, and makers engage with larger organisations when they use manufacturers for the production of their work for exhibition and sale and when they are working into other sectors and settings. Part autobiographical, the book refers in more detail to Handy's own direct experiences of portfolio working, putting his theories into practice. Three key themes are identified as issues for portfolio workers. The first is a lack of community. In this respect, Handy talks of 'aleness' and 'the tension of wanting to belong and needing to be free' (Handy, 2001: 156). Second, is the need for an underlying purpose based on a passion, as:

...without that driving purpose I would be like many of the businesses I had encountered, planning only to survive, to get through the next year... not [] sufficient justification for a life (Op cit: 157).

Third, is the need 'to keep learning, growing, developing' (Op cit: 160), with a recognition that this has to be self-initiated, eclectic and feed back into your work.

Walk in other worlds, look, listen, inquire, then go back and turn it into a new way of looking at your world, fix the concept into your consciousness by using it.

Handy further explores ways of 'chunking' time for the different aspects of portfolio work (paid, home, gift and study work) and making a 'pattern' (Op cit: 180) of the paid work, even though it is done for a range of clients. He also writes about the necessity for portfolio workers to be a brand, to recognise that reputation is so important and to

97 be strong in self-belief. Handy believes that portfolio thinking will enter the world inside organisations.

Drawing on Handy's work, Max Comfort's *Portfolio People* (1997) focuses solely on portfolio work. He refers to portfolio working lifestyles of the past (although they weren't called this at the time) and situates the phenomenon in the changing work context where there is no longer a 'job for life' and where he feels we are following a need to 'allow more of our abilities and interests to be engaged in the process of work and to do what we do for more than a wage' (Comfort, 1997: 21). Although the bulk of the book comprises 'how to' support for portfolio working, encouraging a robust self-analysis for suitability for this kind of life and providing a step-by-step guide to starting and sustaining a portfolio career, it begins with a series of real life stories. These include an actor, who also became:

... a director, book, screen and speech-writer and communications consultant ... [which] all came out of what I thought was only one skill ... We all have untapped potentials. I know, as I continue to open my door even wider, there are potentials waiting to happen (Op cit: 26, 27).

The stories encompass the benefits of portfolio working as: freedom, self-expression, a fuller engagement with life, variety, excitement, independence, self-sufficiency, work that supports personal values, flexibility, balance and creativity. Downsides are: lack of time with family, overwork and burn out, lack of 'play' time, lack of a regular income and one activity disrupting another.

As we have seen, portfolio working is a well researched area and there are some studies in the creative sector. While providing some general reference points, the focus of much of this work has been to understand the patterns and psychologies of portfolio working. Our *Making Value* research offers not only a specific crafts perspective, but also an exploration of the relationship between different strands of a portfolio practice and the contribution these different strands make in economic and social terms.

The range of sectors and settings within which portfolio working makers are operating and evidence of their influence and impact

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Our literature review uncovered only a little research providing an account of where makers are using their skills and knowledges in non-craft sectors and settings. In *New Lives in the Making*, cases are cited of makers 'working as model makers for the film and animation industries, making retail displays and individually made bespoke "designer kitchens"'. (Press and Cusworth, 1998: 37). The report also notes a range of community settings within which makers work, albeit often on a voluntary basis (eg with a mental health group, at an adventure playground) (Press and Cusworth, 1998: 47). As we have seen in *Making it in the 21st Century* (2004), a small percentage of makers are identified in their work with architects or design companies, and some with a range of community groups.

Crafting Futures (2010) gives a comprehensive picture of the range of occupations of crafts graduates, evidencing work in non-craft sectors and settings. However, it is beyond the remit of the study to consider in what ways graduates may be working in these sectors and settings specifically 'as makers', ie directly employing their craft practice to contribute something distinctive. In this context, *Making Value* has a significant role to play in starting to explore the range of sectors and settings in which makers are operating and to appraise their impact.

Higher education (HE) is seen as having a key role both in preparing creative industries students, including craft students, for the world of work and also in supporting the continuing professional development (CPD) needs of practitioners post graduation. In terms of course and programme development, over recent years there has been a move from the concept of 'employability' (eg Ball, 2003) to an increased emphasis on entrepreneurship education which support the development of a portfolio practice. *Creating Entrepreneurship: entrepreneurship for the creative industries* (2007), explains entrepreneurship as being inherent to creative practice. This report calls for more appropriate definitions of entrepreneurship that have relevance to creative students; for more explicitness in the curriculum; and a rise in the status and value of entrepreneurship education.

Crafting Futures (2010) reports that graduates developed:

Independence, persistence, self-motivation and a strong work ethic ... on their courses and [had] taken them into their working lives....

....learning by doing through project-based enquiry [was] good preparation for working life, including: 'juggling projects' 'having to work independently', 'being well organised' and the 'pressure of working to deadlines' (Hunt, Ball and Pollard, 2010).

In terms of current specific crafts related programme developments, the University of Dundee's new MSc in Craft and Creative Business, is the UK's only multi-disciplinary postgraduate crafts programme focused on integrating contemporary craft practice and crafts business, acknowledging that 'craftspeople are exemplars of portfolio life and are naturally entrepreneurial' (see www.dundee.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/craft_creative_business_msc.htm).

In terms of HE's role in CPD provision, *Continuing Professional Development for the Creative Industries: A Review of Provision in the Higher Education Sector* (Shaw and Allen, 2002) highlights opportunities for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to maximise their potential as CPD providers, by providing a better match to demand, and by addressing a lack of appropriate infrastructure, industry links and marketing. The subsequent research commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Arts Council England (ACE) and Design Council, *Connections and Collaborations* (Falmouth College of Arts and Dartington College of Arts, 2005), cites many examples of good practice and makes recommendations in terms of: the importance of policy development in this area; adequate resourcing; appropriate design and delivery of provision, with a focus on non-accredited seminars and workshops offering intensive learning over one or two days as the mode most in demand; and targeted marketing to practitioners. Nottingham Trent University's HIVE incubator unit is just one current example of HE enterprise provision that supports students, graduates and others through mentoring, training and (for students) placements (www.ntu.ac.uk/hive).

In recent years generic business support providers have been increasingly developing targeted work with the creative industries and a review of regional Business Link services shows several examples of specialist or focused support for the creative industries (eg Creative Launchpad in the West Midlands www.creativelaunchpad.co.uk). Herefordshire Council's *Creative Industries in Herefordshire* support programme comprises a website, business training, guidance on working in schools, and selling opportunities among its services. (www.creativeherefordshire.co.uk).

There are many other examples of creative business support agencies providing a range of craft-specific CPD. For instance, Craft Northern Ireland's *Making It* business start-up programme is a two-year scheme offering professional business support, equipment, finance and marketing opportunities for emerging makers. Its *Business Support Programme* provides tailored half day workshops and one to one mentoring (see www.craftni.org). Arts and Business (www.aandb.org.uk), Hidden Art (www.hiddenart.com) and Craftspace (www.craftspace.co.uk) are amongst other organisations providing sector-specific CPD; whilst Cockpit Arts (www.cockpitarts.co.uk) runs an integrated incubation service and the Crafts Council Collective programme offers a sustained, national programme of CPD for makers at all career stages (www.craftscouncil.org.uk).

The context in which to assess the economic contribution of portfolio working makers

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Supporting our research exploring the contribution of makers working in industry contexts, our focus here is primarily on the evolving position of contemporary craft within the UK creative industries policy agenda, rather than with the perceived economic impact of craft overall.

The creative industries agenda developed an unprecedented political prominence during the Labour administration 1997 – 2010, emerging in the early years of the Blair government and maturing through the decade in response to new sector intelligence and economic change.

In 1998, craft was identified as one of 13 creative industries sectors recognised by the then Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in its first ‘mapping’ of the creative industries sector (DCMS, 1998). Alongside performing arts and ‘art and antiques’, craft was positioned, for the first time, as an industry sector identified as having high growth potential.

The 1998 mapping document was updated in 2001, to include a profile of each of the 13 creative industries sectors. The craft profile recognises a role for makers in public art, and in batch production for distribution through high street retailers, as an alternative business model. However, the work of makers is clearly understood to be focused on the ‘creation, production and exhibition of crafts,’ and specifically, textiles, ceramics, jewellery, metal and glass, subsidised where necessary by other work:

Crafts work is inherently labour intensive, which means that many craftspeople earn relatively modest financial rewards which hardly compensate for the hours spent creating and producing pieces and managing their businesses. This drives some craftspeople into multiple jobs, combining, for example, making with teaching (DCMS, 2001).

A more sophisticated understanding of the role of craft – and other sectors such as performing arts – within the creative economy, was developed through the Creative Economy Programme (CEP) established by the DCMS in 2005 with a remit to develop and implement a government strategy for the creative industries. At its heart was an independent, economic analysis of the creative economy in the UK, *Staying Ahead: the economic performance of the UK's creative industries* (Work Foundation, 2007): the Green Paper resulting from this, *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy* (2008) became the touchstone for Government creative industries policy.

Staying Ahead and *Creative Britain* recognise both the value and the limitations of the 13 sector model, and propose a model for interpreting and defining the sector which distinguishes between core creative fields, cultural industries and creative industries. Within this model, the value of core creative fields lay in their production of ‘expressive content’ which – in commercial terms – could not only benefit its producer, but also the creative and wider economy (Work Foundation 2007: 94). Adopting this model, the aesthetic, social, historical, symbolic and authenticity value of craft can be recognised in economic policy terms, and the role of makers in producing, utilising and exploiting this value explored.

The context in which to assess the social and educational contribution of portfolio working makers

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In the context of our research exploring the contribution of makers working in community and education settings, our focus is on the policy framework, evaluation and research relating to active participation in the arts and the creation of new work, not the social and educational impact of the arts more widely (eg in respect of people benefiting from the arts as audiences, viewers, readers etc). We review a relevant selection of policy documents, impact studies, evaluation reports and theoretical research to provide a broad context for our study.

Community settings

In relation to participatory arts in community settings, there is a significant history of activity from the community arts movement of the 1960s onwards. In terms of key arts and social impact policy framework developments in the last decade or so, the establishment of the Policy Action Team for Arts and Sport (PAT 10) by the government in 1998, as part of their approach to neighbourhood renewal and social exclusion, brought this area of work firmly into focus. PAT 10 commissioned a literature review (Shaw, 1999) and the *Policy Action Team 10: Report to the Social Exclusion Unit – Arts and Sport* (DCMS, 1999) concludes that the arts (along with sport and other cultural activity) can:

contribute to neighbourhood renewal and make a real difference to health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities (DCMS, 1999:8).

It sets out recommendations for government departments and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) to integrate arts and sport in regeneration programmes and strategies dealing with social exclusion. The following *Building on the PAT 10 Report* (DCMS, 2001) identifies widespread acceptance of social inclusion as a genuine objective for culture programmes.

Social engagement has remained within the policy and funding framework of Arts Council England (ACE), currently framed under their mission of 'Great art for everyone' and the outcomes within its plan *Great art for everyone 2008 – 2011* of:

Reach – more people attending and taking part in the arts [and] **engagement** – more people feel that there are opportunities to enjoy and get actively involved in arts activities that are personally relevant to them (Arts Council England, 2008).

Their various programmes in respect of disability equality and race equality, while having a wider remit beyond individual and community development through arts participation, have also been contributing to the participation agenda. ACE will be producing a ten year strategic framework in 2010, following a three month consultation period that ended in April 2010. The consultation paper for *Achieving great art for everyone* notes that 'Artists work in many contexts and communities today and move fluidly across industries' and that:

Through the arts, common bonds among communities are built and opportunities are created for people of all backgrounds to participate, learn and progress (ACE, 2010).

Whilst the case for the social impact of participation in the arts has always been put forward by the community arts movement (for example see Kelly, 1984; Community Development Foundation, 1992 and Webster, 1997), as Michelle Reeves (2002) notes, there was little robust evaluation of this work until the 1990s. During this decade, research was undertaken in specific contexts eg in prisons (Peaker and Vincent, 1990) and health (Senior and Croall, 1993), and in 1993 Comedia produced a discussion document on the social impact of the arts (Landry et al, 1993) for the then Arts Council of Great Britain.

Following this, François Matarasso of Comedia led a major research project between 1995 and 1997 into the social impact of participation in the arts comprising 11 case studies. This resulted in the publication of *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* (Matarasso, 1997) along with a series of working papers and

two reports. The publication identifies 50 social impacts of participation in the arts, broadly grouped within the areas of: personal development; social cohesion; community empowerment and self-determination; local image and identity, imagination and vision; and health and wellbeing. One of the case studies is the Reedles Arts and Crafts Stables in Hounslow, London, although the publication does not give details of its crafts specific activities; however, it does cite the development of a young mothers' Crafty Thursdays group in Batley Carr, West Yorkshire as important in providing a new social network.

It is important to note that while Matarasso's *Use or Ornament?* (1997) was very influential at the time in terms of offering some social impact methodologies and bringing the whole area of work to the attention of policy makers, the research has subsequently been the subject of some investigation. Eleonora Belfiore (2002) questions the fitness for purpose of Matarasso's evaluation model which is based on gathering data at the end of projects and is therefore not able to capture longer term outcomes (Belfiore, 2002: 98). She also questions the robustness of the cause-effect link; ambiguity in some of the questions used; and the lack of comparative data to evidence Matarasso's conclusion that participatory projects produce impacts out of proportion (ie positively) to their cost (Op cit: 99). Belfiore also notes the tendency generally within Comedia's research that 'the importance attributed to social outcomes overshadows aesthetic considerations' (Op cit: 100). She expresses concern that the argument for the arts as a source of regeneration, with public subsidy an investment for measurable social returns, means the arts become entirely instrumental, and cautions that culture must be seen as an end in itself, not just a means to an end, among other means. Paola Merli (2002) questions even more closely the quality of Matarasso's research, in terms of appropriateness of methodologies; lack of internal and external validity; and imposition of cultural values against which outcomes are assessed. Matarasso's reply (2002) notes many instances of Merli misinterpreting the research context and process and failing to acknowledge the argument that it does make for the centrality of the arts (Matarasso, 2002: 342).

Reviewing the range of social impact assessment methods, Reeves (2002) draws out five broad methods or approaches: the multiple-method approach; social auditing; longitudinal research method; community based multi-method approach; and the survey method. Gerri Moriarty (2002) argues for the importance of the role of artists' self-evaluation in projects addressing social exclusion and notes how the reflective practice of creative work is a vital part of artists' engagement with participants.

Jermyn's *The Art of Inclusion* (2004) reports on project based research exploring different models of social inclusion work and offers 'good practice principles' for such work. As well as covering planning and co-ordination aspects, partnership development and issues of sustainability, the report identifies key characteristics of artists' practice, such as flexible and adaptable working methods; collaborative working with participants; quality in both process and outcome; and responsiveness to individuals' needs (Jermyn, 2004: 4–5). Jermyn's research also sought to test potential 'success indicators', and while recognising the problem of applying this approach to such a diversity of work, however identifies the following effects of participation in the arts: raised levels of self-esteem and confidence; a greater feeling of self-determination and sense of control; pleasure and enjoyment; developed arts and creative skills; and a greater appreciation of the arts.

Our literature review produced no evaluations of craft projects with a social impact, which does not necessarily mean there are none, but rather that such documents may not be easily accessible. We also need to recognise that many craft participation projects are run by multi-art form organisations and can be 'hidden' within this context. However our research call elicited evaluation reports of projects run by Craftspace, three of which are summarised below.

In the *Treasure Boxes* project, three designer makers (mixed media artist Ruth Spaak, ceramicist Jon Williams and jeweller Rita Patel) worked with three different groups of very young children and their parents and carers at the St Thomas Early Excellence

Centre, Birmingham, exploring materials. The makers then each created, from their experiences of their residency, a multi-sensory treasure box for touring to the broader network of early years providers. The evaluation of Jon's project can be found in the main text. During Rita's project, the children and parents gained in skills and confidence and the evaluator reports 'a genuine excitement at being able to transform materials'. The children showed 'a sophisticated and confident' use of tools and parents enjoyed the chance to use specialist equipment they had not experienced before. They also appreciated 'the opportunity to see concrete objects emerging'. It took time for them to build up trust and confidence but then greatly valued the times they could work on their own: as one parent said:

Anything that's on your mind before – it's gone. Your body relaxes and it empties your mind.

The project gave parents special time with their child, social interaction and learning and a new understanding of 'what is special about objects'. Ruth's project gave participants the opportunity to explore a range of plastic materials and develop skills in joining and tying. The children experimented, using all their senses, acting out narratives using the objects and pieces as prompts with great openness and inventiveness. They built confidence and concentration levels as they become more familiar with the materials. The evaluator notes:

The nature of the environment encouraged creativity to develop. It broke down the barriers between the skilled and the unskilled and the old and the young. A community of makers was formed (Craftspace, 2005).

Finding Spaces extended the exploration around materials and parents and children working together in *Treasure Boxes*. The project involved the St Thomas Centre again, plus another children's centre and a nursery. Participants worked with Laura Ellen Bacon, a willow artist, in their own settings and also visited a willow farm. Laura noted 'the children enjoyed the freedom of being able to use the materials in the ways that they wanted and being able to make their mark' and one parent reported she had seen her daughter in a new light, not having realised the extent of her capabilities before, and also felt much closer to her. The teachers noted an increase in concentration amongst the children ('working for one and a half hours uninterrupted on weaving the natural materials in and out'); development of language and literacy skills; a new awareness of willow as a material and energy source; and a sense of ownership.

The *Meeting of Hands and Hearts* project was run with Community Integration Partnership, Birmingham and involved a group of 10 – 15 women who had volunteered to take part. Activities included jewellery making, embroidery and photography. There were many social, as well as creative, outcomes. The women increased their confidence, building trust and understanding through the shared making process and in exhibiting their work at the end of the project. Self-assertiveness also developed as they were encouraged to make choices about materials. Participants learned new techniques and processes, were able to use existing knowledge in working with textiles and gained an understanding of professional practice through working so closely with artists. The project built group cohesion and the women, who did not know each other at the start, formed firm friendships which continued outside the project, so developing social networks. It also gave participants the opportunity to explore their identities as women, mothers, refugees, asylum seekers and makers, being in control of choosing 'how to be represented through the creation of individual and collective artefacts'. The artists had a key role in enabling the participants' voices and creativity 'to emerge through the art they had created'. The women also helped each other and shared skills; they recognised and shared in each other's achievements, creating a sense of inclusion.

While these evaluations describe and analyse the role of the maker in these community settings, there are no specific texts on the work of the 'community craft practitioner', as there are in areas such as community music, community theatre and community dance. However, it is useful to set the work within a more general frame of participatory

practice, and *The Art of the Animateur* (2003) is one useful reference point. Here, the role of the artist animateur is described and several qualities or 'types of positive interaction' of participatory artists identified, including: recognition, negotiation, collaboration, abstention (from power), play, celebration, validation, empathy and facilitation (Animarts, 2003: 14 – 15).

While other sectors have development agencies, with associated publications, specifically for community based practice (such as Sound Sense for community music and the Foundation for Community Dance), craft has no established infrastructure for this area of work and it is evident there is the opportunity for more comprehensive research and evaluation to be undertaken, shared and disseminated, within both craft specific and generic participatory arts platforms, to contribute to the sharing and development of practice.

Health settings

As a number of makers featured in our research work within the health field, it is useful to give a brief context here for that work. Arts and health projects have been developed over the last thirty years or so, and there is a growing body of evidence about the positive health and wellbeing outcomes that arise from the arts, whether they are integrated into the built environment, on display or offered as a participatory activity. The findings of the Department of Health's *Report of the Review of the Arts and Health Working Group* (2007) evidence 'well-established and widespread good practice' of such work that is making a valuable contribution in many ways, including:

... improving health, wellbeing and quality of life, to major health priorities, to improving clinical outcomes both from environments and direct treatment and therapy, supporting and training staff, and in promoting patient and public involvement and community cohesion in the creation of arts and as a way of improving understanding between staff and the recipients of their care (Department of Health, 2007: 6).

Among the examples of work featured in the report is a quilt making project with men at a post discharge stroke group set up in a Croydon hospital, where 'people meet and support one another, and develop fine motor skills, high levels of concentration and raised self-confidence' (Op cit, 2007: 8). The report recommends that arts become recognised as being 'integral to health, healthcare provision and healthcare environments' (Op cit, 2007: 6). It notes the significant amount of evidence demonstrating the value of the arts, including the citing of nearly 400 papers by Rosalia Staricoff in *Arts and health: a review of the medical literature* (2004) commissioned by Arts Council England. The findings of Staricoff's review include evidence of arts in mental healthcare improving patients' communication skills, enhancing their self-esteem and bringing about positive behavioural changes. It also references clinical outcomes achieved through arts intervention including reduction in blood pressure, heart rate, length of hospital stay and perception of pain. In respect of the latter, a craft specific example of pain management is the Stitchlinks project (www.stitchlinks.com) which is investigating the benefits of knitting and cross stitching beyond the therapeutic occupational benefits and exploring possible physiological, neurological, psychological, behavioural and social changes from participation.

Commissioned as a result of the Department of Health review, Arts Council England's *A prospectus for arts and health* (2007) includes numerous examples of arts and health projects in relation to a wide range of contexts, from architecture and the built environment to patient engagement and staff training, and with people from children to older people and those experiencing mental health problems. Three of the projects listed include craft activities (eg pottery, textiles and stained glass making) among workshops with patients with young-onset dementia at a Cambridge hospital, with older people in Sandwell and with members of the community at the Bromley by Bow Centre, the latter chosen as a particular example of enhancing the mental health of participants by raising self-esteem and reducing social isolation. The prospectus notes that arts participation contributes to community cohesion, regeneration and improving public health, as it

encourages people to participate, raising their self-esteem and making them more open to change, often an important factor in improving their health and lifestyle. Other benefits include the creation of high-quality environments that provide therapeutic benefits, reduce staff and patient stress as well as supporting staff development and improving retention and recruitment.

In reviewing research into arts in healthcare in the decade from 2000, Joanna Morland (2010) summarises the main impacts evidenced by this research. In terms of the arts' 'physical' contribution, well designed environments feel less institutional; improve the wellbeing of patients, staff and visitors; provide greater functionality; and contribute to a quality work environment. Alongside this, direct participation in the arts is beneficial to patient health and wellbeing. As stated above, there is a large amount of research in the arts and health field, and as we noted in relation to craft work in community settings, an opportunity to ensure that makers' contributions in this area are not 'hidden'.

Education settings

In relation to the education context, the particular contribution of artists working in schools has been recognised for some time. Caroline Sharp and Karen Dust's key work *Artists in Schools*, was first published in 1990 with a second, revised, edition in 1997. The eight identified benefits to children and young people of artists working in schools remain strong reference points for artists: providing young people with an insight to the professional arts world; developing their understanding of artistic processes; helping them try new approaches; developing their artistic skills; generating enthusiasm, engagement and confidence building; promoting positive relationships; and contributing to the arts and non-arts curriculum.

All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education (1999) has been a key contributor to new ways of thinking about the arts and broader creative and cultural curriculum in schools and has formed the basis for major policy and programme development. The report was commissioned to feed in to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) review of the national curriculum and argues that a national strategy for creative and cultural education is key to unlocking the potential of young people to contribute to economic prosperity and social cohesion. Creative education is described as 'forms of education that develop young people's capacities for original thought and action' and cultural education as 'forms of education that enable them to engage positively with the growing complexity and diversity of social values and ways of life' (NACCCE, 1999:5). The report makes a series of recommendations under three principal objectives:

- a. To ensure that the importance of creative and cultural education is explicitly recognised and provided for in schools' policies for the whole curriculum, and in government policy for the national curriculum.
- b. To ensure that teachers and other professionals are encouraged and trained to use methods and materials that facilitate the development of young people's creative abilities and cultural understanding.
- c. To promote the development of partnership between schools and outside agencies which are now essential to provide the kinds of creative and cultural education that young people need and deserve (NACCCE, 1999: 12–13).

Developments arising from *All Our Futures* have included: changes to the national curriculum including in relation to creativity and specific arts subjects; developments in teacher training; support for specialist Arts Colleges; the Artsmark scheme; specific developments in music education; and the establishment of Creative Partnerships. This was initially a programme to give young people in disadvantaged areas across England the opportunity to develop their creativity and ambition by building partnerships between schools and creative organisations, businesses and individuals. The Ofsted report (2006) evaluating the effectiveness of the first phase of Creative Partnerships notes that pupils benefited from working with creative practitioners, particularly in

terms of their personal and social development. Some of the attributes of creative people developed, such as an ability to improvise, show resilience, take risks and collaborate with others and there were changed attitudes and behaviours and the demonstration of creative approaches to work. For many pupils:

... the high quality of the experience was directly related to the unpredictable approaches taken by creative practitioners working with teachers and the different relationships that developed (Ofsted, 2006: 2).

Formerly an Arts Council England programme, Creative Partnerships is now managed by Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) – the national organisation created ‘to generate transformational cultural and creative programmes for children and young people across England to enhance their aspirations, achievements, skills and life chances’ – and delivered through regionally based organisations. CCE also manages *Find Your Talent*, the national pilot cultural offer for children and young people that aims to ensure they have access to the wide range of high quality and sustained cultural experiences they deserve, both in and out of school.

Focusing in on a craft specific education context, research in primary and secondary schools has been undertaken as part of the Crafts Council commissioned *Learning Through Making: A national enquiry into the value of creative practical education in Britain* (1998). The research team from Middlesex University looked at the results of learning through making and the ways in which human competence and capability may be enhanced by the experience, in the context of education for pupils aged 5 – 16, and how the general public and employers view these competencies and capabilities. The team from Loughborough University explored the experience of making in education and ‘the development of understanding of how materials, technologies, processes and wealth generation occur in human affairs’. The following findings are of particular relevance to our study. First, learning to make and learning through making are seen as key components of education for individual and community development, but are nevertheless not accorded appropriate status and time. Second, members of the public value their making experience at school and see how it feeds into later life. Third, making activities can enhance teachers’ enabling roles with pupils, as well as enhancing learning itself, in particular in relation to scientific and mathematical concepts.

The current National Curriculum describes the importance of art and design (which includes craft) at Key Stage 3 as follows:

In art, craft and design, pupils explore visual, tactile and other sensory experiences to communicate ideas and meanings. They work with traditional and new media, developing confidence, competence, imagination and creativity. They learn to appreciate and value images and artefacts across times and cultures, and to understand the contexts in which they were made. In art, craft and design, pupils reflect critically on their own and other people’s work, judging quality, value and meaning. They learn to think and act as artists, craftspeople and designers, working creatively and intelligently (from <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/>)

In the report *Drawing together: art, craft and design in schools* (2009), Ofsted evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of these subject areas in a sample of primary and secondary schools. The overall findings are as follows:

Although the survey found inspiring examples of good practice, these were rarely drawn together within or across schools to ensure that challenge, creative and cultural development were incremental and accessible to all. The quality, range and relevance of individual pupils’ experiences were inconsistent. Impressive art work often masked a neglect of craft and design (Ofsted, 2009:1).

Again in relation to the focus of our study, there is one finding with its associated recommendation of particular relevance, namely that:

... work with visiting artists played an important role and often had an immediate impact on pupils' aspirations and achievements, but such experiences were rarely available to all pupils (Ofsted 2009:6).

This leads Ofsted to make the following recommendation that the (then) Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCSF) and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) should:

Promote opportunities for every child and teacher of the subject to have the opportunity to work in an art gallery, or with an artist, craft worker or designer as part of their cultural entitlement. (Op cit: 6).

On achievement, the findings show that this is:

...often associated with students' ability to work independently, sustain interest, manage a range of tasks, pace their progress and meet deadlines – skills that are highly valued by employers (Op cit: 15).

Another characteristic of high achievement at GCSE is:

... students' grasp of the key concepts, including creativity, relevant to the practice of artists, craftworkers and designers. This was particularly evident in schools that engaged students with contemporary practice, moving them from a focus on the superficial aspects of artists' work to considering the contexts in which they had been produced (Op cit: 16).

The report notes that the impact of visiting artists is greatest when the role of the artist and the responsibility of the teacher are clearly demarcated (Op cit: 23). Visiting artists are seen as an important aspect of ensuring that pupils gain an understanding of contemporary practice and, for instance, how artists, craftworkers and designers move between the different disciplines.

Drawing together also highlights the wide gap in achievement between boys and girls, with boys falling behind. This was part of the context informing Craftspace's *Craft=Skills for Life* residency project, using three makers, each in a different education setting, to develop craft skills, explore craft's potential to deliver learning across the curriculum and identify how it might influence pupils' attitudes and achievements. The project report shows that jewellery making in metal in one residency helped pupils retain scientific learning, associating science and mathematics with practical processes that were repeated, which helped to confirm the relevance of these subjects. In another, pupils worked on a large felt piece based on different triangles, which linked with maths targets and also developed English and science skills. They delivered peer mentor sessions through which they demonstrated their understanding of the skills involved in felt making, developed their communication skills, strengthened their confidence and were introduced to leadership skills. Across the residencies, making taught participants about experimentation and learning through trial and error, a transferable skill. The project offered those who were quiet a channel through which to express their understanding; and those with a poor record of achievement developed their concentration from being complimented on their making and built their sense of self-esteem. In one setting, the residency helped pupils re-engage with school; they developed group work skills and attendance improved. In another, pupils showed themselves to be higher achievers, when engaging in craft activities, benefiting from the freedom to experiment.

Dr Aric Sigman's *Practically Minded: the benefits and mechanisms associated with a craft-based curriculum* (2008) is a theoretical study analysing the impact of making activities on the cognitive, neurological and social development of young people. It proposes that a practical and craft-based education develops transferable skills and that working with the hands – which are particularly sensitive to perceiving and transmitting information to the brain – in a 3D learning environment assists cognitive

and intellectual development. The positive effect of being in control of making activities can be generalised and can give students a sense of greater control in other aspects of their lives, and help to build their self-esteem. This greater 'internal locus of control' (Op cit: 5) is related to educational achievement. What Sigman calls 'start-to-finish learning' (Sigman, 2008: 5) 'cultivates greater sustained attention, self-regulation and deferred gratification vital to impulse control' (Op cit: 5) which can contribute to academic progress.

The think tank Demos is currently undertaking a piece of work entitled *The Character Inquiry*, exploring the importance of a certain set of personal attributes – in particular 'emotional control, empathy, application to task, personal agency, an ability to defer gratification' – which can be summarised as 'character' and which are seen as important predictors of a range of individual and collective aspirations and outcomes. Demos draws on research about the development of character capabilities, especially agency (or 'locus of control', as above), application, responsibility or empathy and self-regulation and will be investigating how learning and practising a craft contributes to these. While recognising how learning in early years builds the foundation of character, Demos is also interested in exploring how the brain's continuing 'plasticity' means it is receptive to further development and reshaping. Referring to Richard Sennett's work (see below), Demos indicates:

... the learning that comes through craft, or through practical and vocational activity, leads to more than just educational success. Ultimately, the self-esteem, personal fulfilment, and strength of character that comes from perfecting a craft helps people to take more control of their own lives (from www.demos.co.uk/projects/buildingcharacter).

The established characteristics of making as a way of thinking and working, which describe its distinctiveness

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In the context of our investigation into the distinctive value added by makers working in a range of industry sectors and community and education settings, we summarise here established characteristics of craft knowledges and craft thinking.

Craft knowledge

Craft knowledge is commonly described as an understanding or 'feel' for materials, bringing together an appreciation of objective properties including factors such as tensile stress, conductivity, elasticity (Pye, 1968: 47), the temper of metal and the grain of wood (McCullough, 1996: 96) with a recognition of subjective qualities such as mass, density, rigidity and warmth (Pye, 1968: 47).

It also concerns understanding of the reaction of materials to particular processes and the relationship between materials and an object's form, weight, balance and composition (Johnson, 1999: 96). As McCullough explains, working wood requires an understanding of the subtle differences in response between types of wood and individual objects (McCullough, 1996: 198):

Wood can be cut across the grain more readily than along the grain, and it can be cut only so thin and still remain rigid ... Harder woods afford more detailed forming processes, such as carving and sanding. Any wood can be carved more easily than stone. More resilient wood can be worked further than less resilient wood of equal hardness. Of course, no two pieces of one wood are alike.

McCullough goes on to describe how makers react to a 'dense continuum of possibilities', revealed as the material is worked and capable of being stretched within limits. As he explains (McCullough, 1996: 198),

Every material has tolerances, within which it is workable and outside of which it breaks down ... An experienced craftsman knows how to choose the right medium and to push it as far as it will go – and no further.

Craft knowledge is widely described as 'tacit' (Cooley in Thackara, 1988, Dormer, 1988: 14, Shreeve in Johnson, 1998: 42) – with reference to Polanyi's theory of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958) – and resistant to rationalisation (Dormer, 1988: 14, McCullough, 1996: 19, Fry, 1995: 209). In this sense, craft knowledge is considered unique: as Johnson explains (Johnson, 1997: 93):

[the crafts] are made out of a sense of touch, and invite a tactile response. What is offered is a particular kind of communication for both producer and consumer ... What is implied by craft production is an intimacy between producer/object, object/consumer, producer/consumer.

Craft thinking

The distinctive characteristics of craft – as a way of thinking and working – have been the subject of extensive critical discourse. Schön's theory of reflection-in-action, which describes a way of working through engagement with real world situations – rather than in reference to precedent or abstract principles – has exerted a strong influence here; and since the late 1990s the notion of craft as reflection-in-action has been well established in the craft literature (eg Dormer, 1998: 19, Butcher, 1998). In this sense, craft is described as 'a direct articulation between hand and mind' (Fry, 1995: 210) and as a process of exploring and engaging creatively with material affordances and constraints (McCullough, 1996: 220), where the senses – touch, hearing and smell as well as sight – bring tacit knowledge of the material environment into dialogue with the ideas and concepts (Johnson, 1998).

Reflection-in-action, as articulated by Schön, involves engaging with uncertainty and contradiction through an exploratory approach to problem solving which looks for new

questions through the action of attempting to solve them (Schön, 1983: 41). Similarly, craft – as described by theorists – emphasises active exploration and the ‘opening up’ of problems rather than quick progress towards an obvious or pre-determined outcome.

Sennett articulates this process closely, exploring both its origins and its influence on work in a range of professional settings, including surgery and orchestral conducting. According to his analysis, making is about ‘staying with’ the material and testing out different ways of transforming it, working with the material’s unique qualities and resistances rather than attempting to overcome them through force.

Working within affordances and innovating through engagement with resistance in this way has been shown to produce engineering and materials innovations as evidenced by the first Thames tunnels and the design of the Bilbao Guggenheim (Sennett, 2009: 228). It has also been shown capable of transforming the way that people work together, in the process producing organisational learning and creating a culture of materials-based innovation (Yair, Press and Tomes, 1999).

The application of craft thinking – defined as reflection-in-action – to digital environments and tools has been the subject of practice-based and theoretical research by academics including McCullough (1996) and members of the Autonomous Research Cluster at University College Falmouth. Marshall, Unver and Atkinson (2006) suggest that ‘many makers and craft practitioners approach the use of technologies, not with a rigid predefined aim to achieve a particular result, but to explore the possibilities the technology affords’ in a way which directly parallels definitions of reflection-in-action. Other Autonomous Research Cluster members identify the need to get beyond the user interface into the coding, in order to begin a craft-like dialogue with the digital environment (Masterton, 2005) and identify a dynamic between knowledge and control of digital coding, and increased creative potential (Bunnell and Marshall, 2009).

Taking a broad perspective on ‘craftsmanship’, Sennett points to co-operation as a means of ‘getting good work done’ and proposes that the ability to work within and stretch material affordances develops ‘sociable experts,’ capable of collaborating with others in distinctive and valuable ways:

The craft of making physical things provides insight into the techniques of experience that can shape our dealings with others ... Material challenges like working with resistance or managing ambiguity are instructive in understanding the resistances people harbour to one another or the uncertain boundaries between people (Sennett, 2009: 289).

The value of ‘craft’ in contemporary economy and society is not limited to the value produced by those identifying themselves as makers, or solely held within the objects they produce. In craft discourse, craft is increasingly understood as a distinctive set of knowledges, skills and aptitudes, centred around a process of reflective engagement with the material and digital worlds.

Fulfilment through making

The distinctive characteristics of the making process – in terms of personal fulfilment – have been the subject of considerable critical discourse. Pye (1968: 4) describes a ‘deep spiritual value’ whilst for McCullough (1996: 32), ‘reflection finds harmony in the steady flow of hand, eye, tool and material’.

As McCullough states, the pleasure of handling materials, the concentration required not to ruin the piece, the intricacies of solving a problem, whether technical or conceptual, and the anticipation of a finished product all contribute to the maker’s sense of satisfaction (McCullough, 1996: 32). McCullough also describes the calming effect of routine, ‘based on soothing motions, habitual expertise, and a sustaining commitment to practice’, which has the capacity to engage the practitioner to the point where both real-life concerns and the passing of time appear irrelevant. This state of deep engagement has been aligned with Csikszentmihalyi’s notion of ‘flow’ (by Fisher and Gibbon, 1998),

and is considered to fulfil inner needs for relaxation, skill development and self-awareness (McCullough, 1996: 222).

Metcalf suggests that, because the opportunities for such activity are rare in a society where skill and sensory perception have been de-valued, many individuals experience it for the first time when learning a craft (Metcalf in Dormer, 1997: 76). Drawing on his experience as an educator, Metcalf argues that the potent response of many students to this experience represents an intuitive recognition that the latent bodily intelligences have been awakened. The satisfaction experienced in developing and applying this bodily intelligence to meaningful work often becomes a life-long source of motivation, propelling students through years of training and instilling an unshakeable commitment to their practice (Metcalf, 1993).

This view is substantiated by McCullough (1996: 7), who suggests that the unique, individualistic nature of knowledge characterising activities which integrate mental and physical activity also constitutes a source of motivation: the value attributed by most practitioners to their skill surpasses that of the objects that it produces (McCullough 1996: 7). Anthropologists suggest that this pleasure in the mastery of materials may be considered an innate human characteristic (McCullough 1996: 61), perhaps derived from the need to adapt the physical environment in order to meet fundamental needs of food, warmth and shelter.

The decision to practice a craft can reflect the maker's search for individual freedom within the confines of society, with making becoming a process of exploring and communicating personal values (Dormer, 1995: 18) or one of regaining control and confidence through self-representation (Margolin in Buchanan and Margolin, 1995:131). The human need to engage with and transform the physical world (Margolin, 1995 in Margolin and Buchanan, 1995: 131, Sennett, 2009: 120), to capture part of it (Dormer, 1997: 50) or to embody and explore aspects of it which are otherwise inaccessible (Holder in Johnson, 1998: 79) has also been highlighted.

Sennett suggests that people become 'particularly interested in the things we can change' through metamorphosis (ie devising new material innovations), presence (making our mark) and anthropomorphosis (investing human qualities into materials, for example imbuing spirits into objects or describing them as 'modest', 'generous' etc). For Johnson however, making reflects our essential nature as sensate beings, which creates a need to transform the physical world and articulate the experience of existing within it (Johnson in Harrod, 1997). Dormer (1997: 151) suggests that this need instills in practitioners both a love of the making process, and a passion for the objects produced by it. As he states,

Objects communicate to some people as powerfully as written texts or musical scores or mathematical equations do for others ... [making is a way of] gaining the understanding of and possessing the objects of one's desire.

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Craft in Northern Ireland
www.craftni.org

Creative Industries in Herefordshire
www.creativeherefordshire.co.uk

Creative Launchpad
www.creativelaunchpad.co.uk

Demos
www.demos.co.uk

Nottingham Trent, The Hive
www.ntu.ac.uk/hive

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency
www.qcda.gov.uk

Stitchlinks
www.stitchlinks.com

Appendices

II Research timescale, scope and methodology

Research timescale and scope

This research study was undertaken by Mary Schwarz, freelance research consultant and Dr Karen Yair, Research and Information Manager at the Crafts Council, over a five month period from January to May 2010. In the study we feature a range of makers from those who responded to our research call, chosen to give a breadth in terms of type of – and time in – professional craft practice, geographical base and working contexts. However, it is important to note that these makers present particular examples of pluralistic practice in action, rather than provide a representative sample of people or work: we know there are more narratives to tell.

Research methodology

The research is based on Grounded Theory, a systematic qualitative research methodology that emphasises the generation of theory from data in the process of conducting research³⁹. With this methodology, instead of starting with a hypothesis (ie a proposed explanation for the phenomenon to be explored), a variety of data is collected and taken through a four stage analysis. First, codes (or key points) are identified; second, collections of codes are grouped into concepts; third, broad groups of similar concepts are formed into categories; fourth, these categories are used as the basis for the creation of a theory (ie explanations of the research subject).

We have employed three key elements from Grounded Theory. First, we have used a variety of data comprising interviews, discussions and literature (including academic, policy, survey and evaluation documents) as our data set. We undertook the literature review as an integral part of data gathering, not as a pre-research exercise, giving it the same status as the other data. Second, we have not made transcripts of interviews and discussions, but taken 'field notes' and soon after generated concepts that fit with the data, are relevant and work in explaining the interviewees' experiences. Third, we have taken an iterative approach to comparing data and conceptualising findings within the research process itself.

Research timetable and tasks

January 2010: call to participate posted on Crafts Council website, sent to relevant mailing lists, specialist press and mailed direct to over 900 contacts. These comprised known contacts and those researched specifically for this study. As well as makers, the types of contacts included:

- 2012 Creative Programmers
- Architecture Centres
- Arts Council England national and regional offices
- Arts festivals
- Carnival and circus organisations
- Creative business support agencies
- Craft organisations
- Creative education and learning organisations
- Film companies
- Government departments and regional offices (in relation to culture, young people)
- Health and arts agencies
- Higher Education Institutions
- Local authority arts officers (through nalgaio, the National Association of Local Government Arts Officers)
- Open studios networks
- Prop makers/agencies
- Public art agencies
- Rural arts organisations
- Screen agencies
- Sector skills councils (for the creative & cultural, film and fashion sectors)
- Theatre agencies

³⁹ Grounded Theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) although they subsequently disagreed about its implementation which resulted in a split in the theory between their two approaches

- Trade associations
- Tourism bodies
- Youth and youth arts agencies

There were 197 responses to the call, comprising makers offering to be interviewed, people sending relevant documentation (evaluation reports, surveys, examples of creative business support schemes etc) and others suggesting makers to be interviewed or notifying us they would circulate the information amongst their contacts (see **Appendix III**).

February 2010: initial short (approximately 20 minutes) semi-structured interviews held with 35 makers by telephone, following piloting. Questions covered:

- Age, higher education experience, nature of practice and years working as a professional maker.
- Years working in a portfolio practice, starting point, nature of work and clients, skills/knowledge applied, challenges and opportunities, earnings and time spent related to different aspects of the portfolio.
- Relevance of higher education experience and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities accessed.

March 2010: longer (approximately 1.5 hours) semi-structured interviews held with 27 of the above makers, mostly face-to-face and by telephone in two cases. These interviews explored the questions above in more detail, with a particular focus on:

- Makers' distinctive skills, knowledge and attributes and their contribution in the contexts in which they work.
- The creative and commercial development aspects of portfolio working.
- Learning and continuing professional development.

March 2010: research workshop held at Bovey Tracey, Devon organised by the Crafts Council in partnership with the Devon Guild of Craftsmen, as part of the first of a series of Craft Regional Network events.

January – April 2010: other discussions held with interested parties (eg colleagues from Higher Education Institutions, crafts development and creative industries support agencies) and literature review undertaken.

April 2010: interviews held with key contacts/clients of seven makers (by telephone and email).

April – May 2010: analysis and writing up.

Appendices

III Research participants and respondents

Research participants and respondents

Below are listed the 117 people who participated in the research through interview, discussion, the workshop session at Bovey Tracey or submitting information. Many thanks to all these – and also to the fifty other makers who offered to take part in interviews, and the thirty people who either posted our research call on their website, passed on information or suggested interviewees (or a combination of these).

Key:

- * initial interview
- ** in depth interview
- ≈ discussion
- + Bovey Tracey session
- ~ submitted information

Shain Akhtar~
 Sarah Allen**
 Duncan Ayscough*
 Nick Baumber~
 Alison Best*
 Tim Bolton+
 Alma Boyes~
 Amanda Briggs-Goode~
 Stuart Britland**
 Dr Katie Bunnell+
 Hilary Burns+
 Mary Butcher**
 Carol Carey+
 Helen Carnac+
 Professor Paul Chamberlain**
 Betty Ching*
 Andy Christian+
 Alice Cicolini~
 Marcus Clarke**
 Jason Cleverly~
 Deborah Cook~
 Liz Cooper+
 Dale Copley~
 John Couthard~
 Claire Crompton+
 Jo Davis**
 Andy Dawson~
 Kate Day~
 Philippa de Burlet~
 Jan De Schynkel~
 Venu Dhupa~
 Jo Donovan~
 Gillian Fernyhough+
 Malcolm Ferris+
 Deidre Figueiredo~
 Ros Fry~
 Clare Gage~
 Jonathan Garratt*
 Rachel George**
 Shelly Goldsmith**
 Lesley Greene~
 Janet Haigh~+

Paul Harper+
 Claire Harris**
 Dr Jane Harris**
 Julia Harris+
 Fiona Haser+
 Trevor Hedger~
 Cathy Hembury~
 Ros Hills+
 Shellie Holden~
 Laura Hollis-Ryan~
 Sue Hope*~
 Amy Houghton**
 Claire Hudson~
 Sandra Inskip~
 Sarah James+
 Kate Jones*
 Tavs Jorgenson+
 Joe Kelly~
 Alice Kettle*
 Susan Kinley**
 Danielle Knight*
 Lisa Krigel~
 Christine Lawry+
 Katie Lloyd-Nunn~
 Polly Macpherson+
 Barley Massey**
 Dawn Mason+
 Guy Mallinson**
 Beatrice Mayfield~
 Sue McGillivray~ +
 Sarah McNichol~
 Sarah-Jane Meredith~
 Cj O'Neill**
 Ptolemy Mann**
 Dr Justin Marshall~
 Andrea Nixon~
 Ellen O'Hara~
 Professor Patrick Oliver~
 Dally Panesar~
 Diana Pasek-Atkinson~
 Alison Plumridge+
 Katherine Pogson*
 Betty Pepper**

Sally-Ann Provan~
 Sarah Rhodes**
 Isabel Risner+
 Professor Jim Roddis**
 Ali Russell+
 Helen Sayers~
 Nik Schofield~
 Lynn Settringham*
 Melanie Shee~
 Dr Ann Marie Shillito~
 Professor Norma Starszakowna~
 Erica Steer~+
 Yuli Somme**
 Joanne South~
 Andrew Tanner~
 Carl Taylor**
 Sheila Teague**
 Jeremy Theophilus~
 Simon Thompson~+
 Jayne Thornhill~
 Melanie Tomlinson**
 Cathy Treadaway~+
 Amy Twigger Holroyd**
 Arantza Vilas**
 Dr Jayne Wallace**
 Dr Lois Walpole**
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