This CD contains the papers accepted through the double blind review process to be given at the EKSIG2009: Experiential Knowledge, Method and Methodology held on 19th June 2009. The papers presented by the keynote speakers will be available on the conference website.

The conference was organised to provide a forum for debate about methods of research and other forms of practice in design, art, and related subject areas. Over the past two decades, new impetus has been given to debate about design research in the UK subsequent to the formal transformation of polytechnics and some schools of art and design into universities in the 1990’s (Durling, Friedman, and Gutherson, 2002), which meant that design has increasingly been conceived and framed in academic terms. Before then, most research relating to art and design had to be conducted in a recognised research discipline such as history, philosophy, education, or engineering (Niedderer 2009). This transformation of the context of much design education has brought two disparate sets of practices and beliefs into close proximity: on the one hand practices and cultures of research, characterised by debate about questions, methods and what counts as knowledge, and by requirements of communicable as well as generalisable and transferable results. On the other hand practices of creating, designing, inventing, and making, in which the experiences of the body are traditionally conceived as playing an important role. (Niedderer and Reilly 2007)

Negotiation between these two disparate sets of practices has generated new models of research to accommodate the particularities of design and related subject areas.

Several recent studies have been concerned with the development and use of art and design methods within and for art and design research. Publications by Cross (1984, 2001, 2003) have been seminal the field, and a number of PhD studies have set precedents for research in art and design by using the creative potential of drawing or designing to generate insights and/or new solutions (Whiteley 2000; Rust and Whiteley 1998, Wood 2004, Pedgley 2007, Niedderer 2007).

There is increasing interest in the development of methods and approaches that are designed for art and design research and that are developed to utilise and integrate experiential knowledge. This year’s conference is held in recognition and support of these developments, and to provide a forum that might stimulate research and debate in this area.
Conference Theme & Call

The aim of EKSIG 2009 has been to provide a forum for debate about methodology and methods for the inclusion and communication of knowledge in research and practice in the creative disciplines. The need to be more explicit about research methods, frameworks, and methodologies has arisen from the increasing use of creative and professional practices as part of the practice of research in recent years. While research guidelines and regulations have been either generic enough, or were adjusted, to accommodate the use of some creative and professional practices under certain conditions, the debate about the nature, aims, validity, evaluation, and necessity of such research has continued.

While all research has a method, and disciplines are characteristically driven by debates about the best methods for achieving their aims, that which constitutes a research method in design and related disciplines is still a matter of debate. The debates about research methods in design in many ways echo questions addressed in the design methods movement of the 1960s and 1970s, such as: 'What are design methods?' Now framed in terms of design research, questions address the conditions under which design methods might be used as research methods as well as the nature of discipline specific methodologies.

The developing understanding in this debate is that the inclusion of practice in the research process or as a research outcome helps to integrate and/or communicate those kinds or parts of knowledge that cannot easily be made explicit, such as the tacit part of experiential and procedural knowledge, commonly known as tacit knowledge. With this conference, we wish to explore the different ways in which tacit knowledge can be integrated and communicated within the framework of research.

Questions of interest are, for example:

• What are design methods and what are design research methods?
• How is knowledge/knowing created within the process of research?
• What frameworks are there to guide discipline specific methodologies?
• How can we integrate & utilise tacit knowledge in the process of research?
• Why is the use of tacit knowledge important in research?
• What contribution can the use of practice make to the inclusion of tacit knowledge in research?
• What contribution can the use of design practice make to the development of design research?
• What methods are there for the communication of tacit knowledge within research?
• Can we talk about the communication of tacit knowledge, or should we talk about a transfer?
• What means and methods do we have to transfer tacit knowledge?
Responses

The conference call received a great international response with submissions from over 20 countries including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Turkey, UK, USA. Submissions were interdisciplinary and from a variety of disciplines and discipline areas including fine art, applied art, architecture, product design, graphic & communication design, film, knowledge management, education, philosophy, and social sciences.

For the conference, contributions were selected in a two-stage process comprising abstract and full paper selection, through a double blind review process by an international review panel. From the contributions, five strands emerged, of which two could be seen as theoretical reflections, and three as contributions to debate about methods pertaining to applied research.

Strand 1: Methodologies & Experiential Knowledge
Strand 2: Communicating Experiential Knowledge
Strand 3: Social Practice
Strand 4: Design
Strand 5: Craft

Strand 1 examines the development and methods used in design research, and especially PhD research. Joyce S R Yee identifies and analyses “the methodological innovation that is occurring in the field, in order to inform future provision of research training for Design PhDs”. Mark Evans considers the conditions for the rigorous application of methods “within an appropriate and pre-defined methodology” while Peter Storkerson offers Brunswik’s lens model “as a way to operationalize a theoretical framework to systematically study experiential knowledge and knowing.”

Strand 2 is concerned with the role of creative practice and visual approaches for the communication of experiential knowledge. Lynn Butler-Kisber and Tiiu Poldma investigate “how collage making and concept mapping are useful visual approaches that can inform qualitative research.” Grant Ellmers, Ian Brown, and Sue Bennett, research “how reflection supports articulation of design knowledge by the tertiary graphic design student.” Finally, Kaye Shumack “describes ways in which the designer, understood as agency, may conduct productive and creative internal conversations through a journal writing practice”.

Strands 1 and 2 are preceded by the keynote of Prof John Onians BA, PhD, FSA who is Emeritus Professor in the School of World Art Studies at the University of East Anglia. His reflections on the central role of experience in the process of creative ideation neatly frame both strands explaining some of the underlying mechanisms of artistic and design practice and knowledge. He says:

Artists and designers have long been aware that many of their best ideas are not the product of conscious reflection but surface spontaneously as they work. Today neuroscience helps us to understand some of the sources of this phenomenon. This talk will offer a view of the neural mechanisms involved and present various examples of their operation taken from different periods and different fields of art and design. (Abstract)
The afternoon is preceded by Prof Angie Titchen who is Clinical Chair at the Knowledge Centre for Evidence-Based Practice, Fontys University of Applied Science (NL), Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland, Adjunct Professor, Charles Stuart University, Sydney, Australia and Associate Fellow of the School of Health and Social Studies at the University of Warwick. Her work is concerned with the role and relationship of tacit knowledge and research for the benefit of professional practice. She says:

In this keynote, I would like to share something of my current work about professional artistry which appears to be core to professional practice, whatever the discipline or field. This artistry sits within new philosophical, theoretical and methodological frameworks for transformational practice development and research that I am developing with my colleague, Brendan McCormack. Professional artistry seems to be central to expertise, whether it is expertise in practice, research, development or education. Critical companionship, as a facilitation strategy within our new methodological framework, appears successful in enabling embodied, tacit knowledge to be revealed through the body, creative imagination and critical reflection. Moreover, the critical companion facilitates artistic and cognitive critique of the dimensions and processes of professional artistry, used in a particular context, to help uncover for the practitioner/researcher/ developer/educator how they blend this embodied, experiential knowledge with other kinds of knowledge and use this blended knowledge in their practice.

Titchen’s research sets the scene for strands three, four, and five, which are concerned with practice-led research in the areas of social practice, craft and design. Within strand 3, Sally McLaughlin is concerned with how the practices of praxeological enquiry, that is study of human action or conduct, can apply to the use of design in research. Mel Gray and Leanne Schubert report on a research project conducted jointly by social workers and artists, which discusses “the importance of practice wisdom in creative social work practice” and pursues the question “Is art an effective medium for achieving attitudinal change in the community?”

Strand 4 features two contributions from design. Anne Louise Bang introduces an exploratory approach that enables end-users to contribute with their real life experience, and in which “the textile designer with her repertoire of (experiential, implicit and tacit) textile design knowledge should facilitate the articulation process.” Marianella Chamorro-Koc and Vesna Popovic are concerned with the ways individual designer’s inform the usability design process. Finally, Strand 5 offers two contributions from the crafts. Karen Wuytens and Bert Willems investigate strategies for the increasingly complex design process in jewellery design. Flemming Tvede Hansen explores from the perspective of a ceramicist how experimental design practice in a research context can be “a fruitful way to produce knowledge that supports the interplay between designer, material and technique in design practice.”
In Summary

The conference had the aim to share different views and developments on methods and methodologies concerning the inclusion and communication of experiential knowledge in art and design research. The excellent response to the call for papers has brought together theoretical perspectives and case studies as well as emerging models and practices regarding research methods and methodologies in art and design.

The response has shown the strong interest and development concerning these issues. It demonstrates a consolidation in the understanding of methodologies that use creative practice as part of research and combine it with a variety of mixed methods approaches as well as an increasing awareness of and confidence in the use of methods for the integration and communication of experiential and tacit knowledge in research.

These are important developments for the field because they demonstrate that after nearly two decades of research in the creative disciplines, discipline specific approaches and methods have started to gain momentum, signalling maturing practice and increasing confidence as well as quality and equity with other fields.

The EKSIG conference 2009

EKSIG 2009: Experiential Knowledge, Method and Methodology, International Conference 2009 of the DRS Special Interest Group on Experiential Knowledge (EKSIG) is hosted by London Metropolitan University, Visual Arts Practice Group of the Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design.

EKSIG is part of a program of Special Interest Groups set up by the Design Research Society (DRS) to facilitate international exchange and advance in relevant areas of design. EKSIG is concerned with the understanding and management of knowledge in research and professional practice in design and design related disciplines in order to clarify fundamental principles and practices of using practice within research, both with regard to research regulations and requirements, and research methodology.

The EKSIG conferences are part of a regular programme of the EKSIG group. They serve to bring together researchers and practitioners from different disciplines and to promote understanding and best practice concerning the integration of different forms of knowledge within design research and practice. EKSIG promotes a multidisciplinary approach to engender multi-vocal debates and cross-fertilisation between the creative disciplines and other practice-led disciplines, including contributions from the design disciplines (design, engineering, craft, media etc), philosophy, education, health and knowledge management that are concerned with methods and methodology in research and in creative and professional practice; with the nature, role, and management of knowledge within research; and with the role and use of creative practice (both as process and outcome) as a means by which to develop and manage experiential/tacit knowledge within research.

The Visual Arts Practice Research Group of the Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design London Metropolitan University has long been engaged in debate about the nature of research pertaining to visual arts practices. From earlier concerns with the epistemological basis of competing models of research and visual arts practices, the group has recently turned its
attention to the development of methods for the recovery of tacit knowledge; and the question of whether a clear research aim is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for research in the arts.

References


