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HOW HAS THE ART EDUCATION THAT I HAVE RECIEVED IMPACTED ON MY
PRACTICE AS AN ART MAKER?

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a written account of my analysis of the art education that I received during my undergraduate Interdisciplinary Art and Design BA(hon)s degree and University Campus Barnsley. The investigation and written thesis were undertaken as part of a Practice led research degree at Huddersfield University. The aim of the research was twofold. First to develop an understanding of the History of Art Education in the area of South Yorkshire and secondly to return to analyse the art work I made as part of my undergraduate degree. This study then became the focus of the series of practical Paintings and drawings which were the main focal point of the Master degree.

The thesis is an account of my analysis of how my art practice developed in response to the practical type of education that I received. It identifies specific art makers and art movements that have had a direct impact on how my painting process matured and changed. The thesis goes on to identify the specific genre of literature that influenced my practical development and the use of metaphor in paintings and drawings. It then goes on to give a written account of the specific examples of visual metaphors in my practical Masters work and analyses their origins, continued development and what they represent.

The issue of class and social equality is identified and the metaphor clearly dissected and explained. The thesis then outlines the development of the class metaphor into an education metaphor which represents my belief that a university education can aid the act of social mobility. This theory is justified by my experience of having returned to full time higher education as a working class mature woman and having achieved a level of social mobility which was aided by my gaining a first class BA(hon)s degree which enabled me to apply for and complete a Masters Degree.

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Introduction.

Putting myself in the “picture” with Jo Spence.(Spence 1986)

In October 2013 I began a practice led research Masters Degree in the area of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Huddersfield. The proposed title of the academic study was *How has the art education that I have received impacted on my practice as an art maker?* The intention of the original question was twofold. Firstly I proposed to do a background literary review of the history of art education from 1950 onwards in Yorkshire and the West Riding, where I was born and educated, in an attempt to investigate and understand how art education was delivered to the working classes in the north of England. I then proposed to establish which, if any, of the academic teaching methods discovered through the research where implemented by art educators during my undergraduate Interdisciplinary Art and Design degree at Huddersfield University Campus Barnsley between 2010 and 2013. The aim was to analyse and discuss how I reacted to the specific teaching methods that I identified from the historical material as having been methods used during my three years of study and how these methods were either inscribed in, or rejected in the artwork I made during this time. The main body of practical work made for the MA degree began to take the form of a large scale painting representing my experience of re-entering higher art education as a mature, working class woman.

During the initial general back ground reading in the subject area of the history of art education in the counties of Yorkshire and the area that was previously called West Riding which has since been disbanded and incorporated into Yorkshire. It was whilst researching the Art History of Yorkshire and the West Ridings that I came across the writings of the Art Educator, Art Historian, Writer and Poet Sir Herbert Read. It was at this point that I began to focus more closely on the books he had written concerning his understandings and beliefs about the importance of the role that art education played in the lives of both adults and children and how he believed it was best delivered and cultivated within the two groups of people. Because I had returned to formal art education as a mature student of twenty-seven, I again narrowed my focus to include only Herbert Read’s writings on adult art education and the main focus of my research at this early stage were the two books *Education through Art* (Read 1945) and *The Redemption of the Robot*. (Read 1970) .

This initial research phase was important to the remainder of the study as it afforded the necessary overview needed to understand the origins of my art education. Through this study

I was able to identify similarities in teaching styles between how Herbert Read approached the topic of learning through art and how I developed my own learning style by first being introduced to self education through the act of art making. The research allowed me to make these connections when I returned to evaluate and analyse the practical and written work created during my time as an undergraduate BA(hon)s Interdisciplinary Art and Design student at Huddersfield University Campus Barnsley from September 2010 until July 2013, from the perspective of being an MA degree student. However it became apparent that the original plan to investigate the history of art education in Yorkshire was going to prove over ambitious for the one year of MA study which was practice-led. In light of this I made the decision to focus the thesis on the paintings I made during my postgraduate degree which were created in response to my analysis of my undergraduate education and practical work.

The next phase of the research, therefore, involved analysing the work I made during the three years as a BA undergraduate art student and aligning it with the art history that I was being taught in art history lectures. Through analysis I was able to begin the process of studying and understanding how the progression and development of the practical paintings, drawings and other art making activities reflected and were evidence of the art education I was receiving. Through this investigation I could identify the art makers, genres and art movements that had most impact on the development of my work.

This written thesis, which frames my practical body of work, has two aims. Firstly it is a written reflection on the body of paintings and drawings that I made during my time as a BA Interdisciplinary Art and Design Student. It serves as a written explanation of the literary influences on my development of visual metaphors and what they represented. Secondly the thesis analyses the body of practical paintings and drawings created during my MA degree, in which I create a visual representation of my analysis of my experience of returning to undergraduate Art Education in South Yorkshire as a mature working class student from a gendered perspective. With this in mind, I decided to research examples of other female artists from all disciplines in the hope that I would successfully locate some examples from a similar working class background to my own who had written accounts of their own experience with art education.

One of the most important discoveries was the photographer and artist Jo Spence. My initial intention was to use the realist way in which Jo Spence photographed her subject as a contrast to the metaphorical way in which I chose to paint and draw. However, it was through reading

her artistic autobiography *Putting Myself in the Picture* (Spence 1986) that my interest in her began to change. The book is based on the artist's *Review of Work*, a retrospective exhibition which was held in 1985 that charted her career from her initial introduction to photography in 1951 whilst working in a small, commercial photographers in London's Finchley Road, through her artistic development, education and career.

The sections of the book most relevant to my own subject and that echo my own experience are those that discuss her experiences of returning to formal art education as a mature student of forty in 1980. Prior to this in 1976, Jo Spence had begun working as a secretary for the Education Division of British Film Institute and was coming into regular contact with curriculum innovations and the merging area of film and media studies and found the experience of working in a free thinking environment stimulating. At the same time she was increasing her confidence by giving lectures in photography workshops that she ran. In 1980, after feeling frustrated and unsure about how to progress with her photography, Spence returned to full time education at the Polytechnic of Central London's photography course. It is her account of this period of her life that I found particularly useful when writing my own thesis.

The chapter titled *Mature Student* outlines both her negative and positive experiences of re-entering full time art education as a mature student before going on to outline three main projects she completed during this time. I found this chapter of particular interest and importance as I began to construct my thesis for three main reasons. Firstly Jo Spence manages to give an account of both the positive and negative things she experienced during her higher education. On the structure of the teaching she writes:

At the beginning it was a continual assault on preconceived ideas about what constitutes a photograph, who it is for, what it means, who valued it, who made it, who historicized...as students we were on the receiving end of interpenetrating theories of communication, culture, psychoanalysis, semiology, sensitometry, history, feminism, and social and political discourse....There was no simple 'taking a photograph'. (Spence 1986 . p135)

Although this initial phase was difficult, Jo Spence maintains a professional critique and understanding of the importance of these challenging questions and theories as she goes on to describe projects she completed during her education that were greatly influenced by the issues she was constantly being asked to consider. This mature critique is again evident when

she goes on to describe how her feelings and opinions towards her tutors changed upon closer examination and over time.

Tutors never ceased to be tutors even if they were political or personal allies. They still occupied a position of power, were still able to close doors on us, to choose not to explain the criteria used in setting up curricula, marking papers or examining pieces of work. Tutors made us very angry most of the time...Only with hindsight can I feel compassion for these unfortunate tutors as they struggled politically within the edifice of higher education to position their courses within a broader map of cultural struggle. (Spence 1986. pp.135-136)

The way in which Jo Spence was able to explain the frustrations she felt at the time of her education, but also evaluate and review these emotions at a later date, was to prove invaluable to my own writing process as I developed a way of explaining emotions and personal experiences with critical distance.

Another reason for having identified *Putting Myself in the Picture* as being a good example of the way in which I might structure my thesis was that Jo Spence chose to write her account in the first person. The reason I maintain this was important to the tone of the chapter and the larger book, was due to the book being a description of a personal experience. The education aided her to take the craft of photography, which she had originally gained knowledge of as part of her job, and develop it into an artistic medium for thinking critically. The first person narrative of this experience gave me permission to return to critically analyse my own undergraduate work and education and record my discoveries in a similar first person account.

As a woman who fits the three criteria I was desperate for access to someone who had experienced the same thing as I was in the process of going through. Being an introvert and a shy one at that, I found the process of verbal communication very difficult and would have benefited greatly from more written accounts that I could have engaged with and compared to my own. As it was Jo Spence was one of the few that I came across.

The one major difference, however, between my experience of returning to full time art education as a mature student and that of Jo Spence was the type of universities that we each attended. Jo Spence went to prestigious photography course at the prestigious Polytechnic of Central London (1970-1991). There she had access to highly influential thinkers such as Victor Burgin and to good quality technical equipment. My encounter with university education was quite different.

My first experience of a university education came when I enrolled on a History of Art and Architecture degree at Sheffield Hallam in 2002. Unfortunately, due to financial issues I was unable to afford the tuition fees at the time and so had to drop out at the end of the first year. During the following six years I decided to gain a personal licence to run pubs. My decision to return to full time education came after a violent incident at work, which left me suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and unable to continue in the line of work I had become qualified to do .

The nearest and cheapest option for gaining a University education was Huddersfield University Campus Barnsley. It was a tiny university building in my working class home town. Its history as a university was short-lived having first been affiliated with Leeds University from 1999 to 2005 when it was taken over by Huddersfield University, before being returned to college status the year of my graduation in 2013. It was a university with a short history, a small budget, a lack of up to date technology and equipment and had only three lecturers towards the end of my time there, all whom had spent their adult lives teaching further education art students at the local college.

Building on the example of *Putting Myself in the Picture* (Spence 1986) Chapter One of the thesis analyses and explains why I chose to use the visual representation of the window in a great deal of my undergraduate art work, and why I continue to use it today. It explains what the window originally represented to me, how I first became aware of it in the work of Edward Hopper, and what it came to represent as I continued to analyse my undergraduate work and make paintings during my MA degree that continued to responded to the window as a metaphor.

Chapter two frames the phase of research and art making which led to an analysis of a certain genre of literature that had influenced me during my undergraduate years. It analyses my developing concern with, and portrayal of the issue of class equalities through visual metaphor. It highlights and examines specific literary metaphors and my own visual metaphor that I went on to develop in a painting made during my Masters Degree named *Class Act*.

Chapter 3 discusses how I developed the class subject to include the issue of education within my paintings and explains the origins of how the topic of education developed in my undergraduate art work. By analysing the painting *Education Act* made during my MA

Degree, it further examines my literary influences before expanding on particular films, directors and art movements that influenced the development of the imagery and how the painting process occurred.

Finally Chapter 4 analyses the painting *Mind the Gap*, which is the largest painting made during my Masters Degree. It identifies the different metaphors within the painting and explains the topics they represent. It considers how my view the role of education has developed into an understanding of it as an aid to the achievement of social mobility, and discusses how this is represented in the painting.

Chapter five explains the reasons for the continual development of metaphors for class, and education and the window motif in a series of water colours on paper made in the final two months of my masters degree and which two female artists were most influential in their development.

Windows

I can recall first seeing an Edward Hopper painting during my secondary school education. It was the Painting *Night Hawks* (1942) figure 1. I think it was the atmosphere of solitude the art work created that initially drew me to it. As I began my independent art research during my first year as an undergraduate student, Edward Hoppers paintings became one of my main focal points.

During my undergraduate degree If anyone was to ask me what the windows represented within my art I would have said isolation. I would have gone on to explain that the glass of the window was an invisible barrier that was always around me, isolating me from others. However, upon returning to study the paintings during my Masters degree, I identified that rather than it being a visual metaphor which represented isolation , it actually represented keeping other people out and at a safe emotional distance that I felt comfortable with. I was not using the reference as a representation of a physical barrier but rather an emotional one. It was a representation of control.

For the MA Degree I created three main paintings/drawings and a considerable body of ware colours on paper. In all the paintings and drawings the visual metaphor of the window is central and the development is clear to see. In the two paintings *Education Act* (2013) figure 2 and *Class Act* (2013) figure 3 the window is in the foreground and is painted in a gradation of Payne's Grey. I chose this colour because that particular shade is often used to paint shadows and I liked the analogy of the inconsistency of the shadow and how it can change its form. To emphasise this idea of transition I added a glass door and painted my silhouette walking through it.

Within the painting *Mind the Gap* (2014) figure 4 I reduce the visual representation of the window to a series of lines. The intent behind this was again to represent the changing meaning of the window from my undergraduate work to my MA Degree work. These lines create three connecting squares in the foreground of the painting and a floor and a ceiling. In 'Mind the Gap' I left the representation of the window colour and varnish free. This reduced its capacity as a visual barrier even further and emphasized the point that the meaning of the window within the painting represented an emotional barrier as opposed to a physical one.

This chapter has discussed why I use the visual representation of the window in my paintings and what first inspired me to do so. The meaning I assigned to it during my undergraduate

years was that it representing a barrier that kept me isolated from the world and the people in it. It was only through re analysing the paintings made during that period as part of my MA degree research that I came to realise it had always signified my need for control.

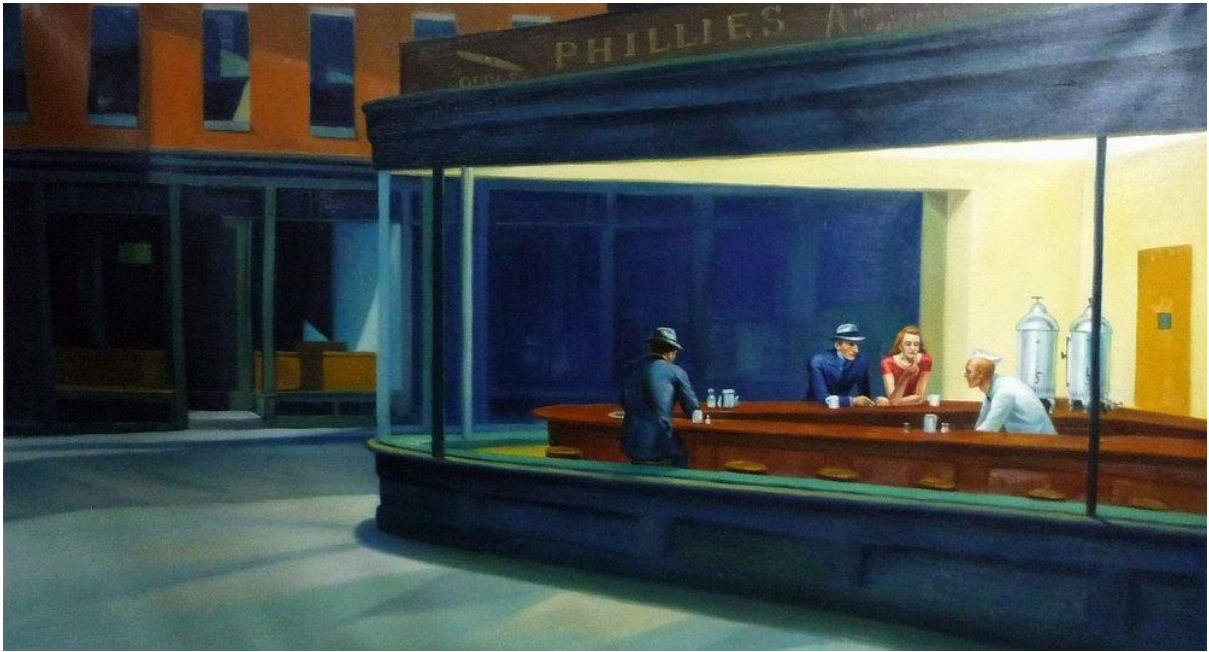


Figure 1 Night Hawks. (9141) Edward Hopper.



Figure 2. Education Act2013 Corinne White



Figure 3 Class Act 2013 Corinne White



Figure 4. Mind The Gap 2014 Corinne White

A metaphor for social class.

This chapter will discuss the origins of the painting *Class Act* (2013) and how I came to develop a visual metaphor to explore the issue of class structures and social equalities I still see in British society today. It will initially explain how I became interested of the use of the metaphor as I began reading dystopian novels, and will analyse some specific examples of how authors have used the technique to discuss the issue of class segregation in society. The chapter will then analyse how I developed my own visual metaphors to represent concerns I have with the issue of class discrimination.

The painting *Class Act* (2013) deals with the issue of class from my point of view as a woman born into a working class background, and having achieved a level of class mobility as the result of gaining a university education as a mature student. This first class BA(Hon)s degree helped me qualifying for Masters degree study, a further step in social mobility.

Behind the visual representation of the window and vertical blinds I have painted a three tiered landscape that supports a town and its population and is a metaphor for the three tiered British class system of working class, middle class and upper class Figure 5. The lowest level represents the industrial, working class of the pre-Thatcher years important because the closure of local mines and the miners' strike greatly affected the prosperity of the town and the living conditions of its inhabitants. It depicts a claustrophobic scene cluttered with various references to industries such as mining, and factory-like constructions surrounded by row upon row of terraced houses.

The tier above shadows the scene, enhancing the oppressive atmosphere, the intention being to create a feeling of inescapability and dominance by the ruling classes. The only hint of escape from the lowest level to the one above is an unstable and seemingly treacherous looking ladder that snakes upwards from the factory floor to the edge of the mid section. This is one of the earlier metaphors that I developed to represent education as being an aid to social mobility.

On the second level I have depicted a town in the mid 1990's. I use the vivid memories that I have of my home town from these years as a starting point in creating the painting. The new buildings, such as the shopping centre 'The Alhambra' and new American inspired chains such as McDonalds and KFC are represented alongside the old 1960's and 1970's concrete structures that, up until a few years ago, filled Barnsley's town centre. The intention was to

marry the two jarring styles in an uncomfortable and awkward style that unsettled the eye. It represents the coming together of the old and new ideals of the pre and post Thatcher years and the upheaval it causes the northern English towns and how it altered the identity of their inhabitants. My main objective when creating this section was to emphasise the impact of the loss of industry on a working class community. Without the main source of employment for the working classes, their life styles transformed dramatically and over the years when new industries such as call centres opened in place of the mines and became the new employers.

The top level of the construction depicts various famous London landmarks and is intended to represent the more prosperous class. I chose to represent this ruling class with iconic London features because I have spent time exploring the financial centre of Canary Warf in London. The experience allowed me to observe the enormity of the structures which were built with the purpose of housing companies and making money. It felt that I stood out from the majority of the business people whom were all dressed in suits and carrying brief cases and lap tops and the In order to recreate this sense of not belonging I painted the top section of the three-tiered landscape full of hard, impenetrable glass buildings. The area looks affluent and beautiful but uncomfortable, unfriendly and unwelcoming to outsiders.

The reason for depicting the landscape in the painting on three distinct levels originated from my interest in dystopian literature and the science fiction genres and the way in which class was represented such novels. I was becoming increasingly aware of how metaphor was used to discuss issues in an indirect way. Using visual metaphor in my paintings was an easier way to comment on the issue of class and social injustice because it was indirect and open to interpretation.

The two dystopian novels that most influenced the creation of *Class Act* were *1984* (Orwell 1948) and *The Handmaids Tale* (Atwood 1985). It was through re-reading these books during my Masters degree that began to understand more clearly how the authors used metaphor to represent ideas about class structures and oppression.

In the dystopian novel *1984* (Orwell 1948) George Orwell writes about a world that is a futuristic and dystopian version of the London of 1948. The world map as we know it has been re arranged into three official continents which are given the names Oceana, Eusasia, and Eastasia . The remaining land consist of areas between the three which are constantly fought over in a series of ever changing wars (Oceana vs Eurasia, Oceana vs East Asia). The

story *1984* is set in the area of Oceania, which had previously been London and follows the central Character of Winston Smith as he grows disillusioned with the strict social structure and rules that have been imposed by a totalitarian governing body. His frustrations eventually lead him into an illegal relationship with a female citizen and an attempt at a revolution against the ruling body named *Big Brother*. Ultimately he is arrested by the policing body (the thought police) and tortured until his spirit is broken and he once again complies and re joins society as an obedient follower of the ruling elite.

The social structure within the novel dictates what level of authority and respect each citizen is entitled to. The elite body are given the title of the Inner Party and they make up 2% of the population and were responsible for controlling the rest of the population under the rule of the invisible ruler named *Big Brother*. Below these Inner party members there is a class of citizens known as the outer party members and these make up 13% of the population. Below these there are the proles. This third class made up the remaining 85% of the population of Oceania and they existed in designated zones within the city boundaries and had little or no contact with the inner or outer party members. These social groupings create a three-tiered class system governed by the ultimate but invisible dictatorship of 'Big Brother'. This social hierarchy is represented and described throughout the literature as being a pyramid like structure. This three-grouped type of social organization initially influenced my own development of metaphors in painting to represent the three tiered class system

In *The Hand Maids Tail* (Atwood 1985) Margaret Atwood places her characters in a futuristic dystopian America that is under complete male, military control. The aim of the patriarchal society is to gain control of and increase the rate of reproduction because exposure to harmful radiation due to pollution and chemical spills has left much of the population infertile. In an attempt to repopulate the society, women were divided into fertile and none fertile groups and assigned specific roles to fulfil. As a result, the women who ranked lowest in the dystopian society were stripped of their human rights. They were not permitted to work or vote and had the option of conforming to their assigned roles or risk being sent to the Colonies where those political prisoners who were not executed were sent to live out the rest of their days.

The class positioning of the male inhabitants within the social structure was entirely dependent on their position within the military. The higher the military ranking of a man, the higher was his position in society. The females were identified and separated into four groups and their positions within society was dependent on either their relationships in relation to

men or their roles in serving them, the most elite being that of 'Wife' of a military member. These women did not need to be able to reproduce because they would be assigned other women whose role was to carry and give birth to a child. These women were given the title of 'Handmaid' and were the only females who were able to reproduce. Those women who were infertile and not married to a member of the ruling military were given the title of 'Martha' and worked as domestic help in the houses of the elite. It is never confirmed which of the two classes is considered superior but it is suggested that a Handmaid who successfully gives birth to a healthy baby is considered superior all others (apart from the wife). Finally, there was a group of infertile women called 'Aunts' who were responsible for indoctrinating captured women able to reproduce into the beliefs of the new society and prepare them to accept their fates. They worked at institutions named the Red Centres which, much like the *Ministry Of Truth* in 1984, were responsible for manipulating the minds of the characters and removing their sense of identity and individuality. Those who did not conform were viewed as being traitors and either killed or sent to the Colonies.

Unlike the female characters, the male characters' positions within society are dependent only upon their military positioning and their fertility levels are not taken into consideration at any point. This gendered portrayal and interpretation of the class issue influenced me to make a reference to my own gender in the painting. In the foreground I painted the silhouette of a female figure 6. I created the figure from black and grey pastel and left it featureless because although it represents my own transition from working to full time education I didn't want the meaning to be too obvious.

Another influence behind the painting *Class Act* (2013) and the subjects it deals with came from works by William Hogarth (1697-1764) and, in particular, those works which commented on, or could be said to have been passing judgment on the class systems that existed in his life time. In a series of paintings called *A Rakes Progress* (Hogarth 1733). According to the documentary *Hogarth's Progress* first shown on the BBC in 1997 Hogarth later developed into etchings and prints in 1735. The documentary explains how the series of paintings and prints told the cautionary tale of a central character named Tom Rakewell as he ascends through the class system of Britain in the 1700s. The first plate depicts his inheriting a fortune with the last showing him dying in a mad house. The plates in between depict the ups and downs the character encounters as he squanders his fortune through gambling and living the good life and marries back into wealth before once again losing the fortune and ending up in prison, then in an insane asylum. The prints and paintings are full of references

to the habits of the members of society, particularly the bad ones of the upper classes. William Hogarth appears to be particularly scathing when portraying the lack of morals depicted by the wealthier characters within the scenes as they spend their time cavorting with one another, indulging in drink and expensive food and gambling away their time. At the same time, he depicts the poorer characters, such as Tom Rakewell's original wife whom he abandons to remarry into wealth, as being virtuous and loyal when she returns to care for him in the final etching.

My interest in these visual tales of morality and the social classes they depicted encouraged me to research further into the class structures from the past in an attempt to gain some understanding of the historical structure of the British class system.

When researching these findings I came across another theory of how the British class system should be organised. In a copy of *The Guardian* distributed on Wednesday 5th April, 2013 there was an article which reported the findings of that year's 'Great British Class Survey' (The Guardian 2013) which had re-formulated the three tier class system into seven tiers using economic, social and cultural indicators as opposed to the previous guides of occupation, wealth and education. What shocked and angered me about this restructuring was that the lowest class were assigned the name of 'Precariat' which owes its origins to the historical Russian term for peasant 'Proletariat'.

Although I found this relatively new class distinction system interesting, I decided to work with the three tiered class system as opposed to the newly devised seven class system when creating my visual metaphor. I believed that the three tiered system had more historical value and would be easier to represent as the form would be simpler. The issue of class is represented by multiples of the number three and triangles and pyramid structures that are repeated throughout the painting as well as in the three tiered landscape.

The checkerboard pathway was painted at a time when I was preoccupied with the prospect of achieving social mobility with the completion of my Master's degree and having anxieties about entering into a more middle-class life style. It represents an unknown future and the possibility of not fitting in. The give way sign, the red traffic light and the chequered stop sign are symbols of my discomfort with upward mobility. The chequer board is a reference to my 'playing the game'. By this I mean toning down my broad Yorkshire accent and dressing accordingly in order to better fit into a more academic environment.

This chapter has discussed the origins of my painting *Class Act* (2013) and explained the class themes that lay behind it. It has analysed different examples of literature in which the authors have developed metaphors to represent class structures and the strict divisions of society into social groups. It then explained how I came to appropriate this metaphorical way of representing the issue of class in the paintings. It also gave a brief explanation of the history of the three tiered British class system and explained why I chose to appropriate this as a main metaphor within that paintings that I created.



Figure 5. development of the three tiered landscape. Class Act.2013 Corinne White



Figure 6. close up of figure. Class Act. 2013 Corinne White

Metaphors for Education

The visual representation of the pipe, which had become a metaphor for education during my time as an undergraduate student has continued to develop as I made paintings and drawings for my Masters degree. The rigidity of the pipe structures began to change. I began to include solid, tube like pipe systems within my art as well as the original flexible, ventilation-like hoses. This chapter will analyse and discuss how I first came to develop the tube metaphor that I use to represent education and how it is depicted in the painting *Education Act* (2013). It will investigate where the original influences came from and the art makers who were influential as I continued to develop it.

By the time I came to start the painting *Education Act* (2013) I had spent the final year of my undergraduate education developing a metaphor for education. This is evident in the painting in the form of the flexible tube like hoses that are connected to the painted buildings to the right of the canvass figure 7. The appearance of hoses in the work grew out of my interest in metaphors representing methods of controlling the general population in *1984* (Orwell 1948) and *A Brave New World* (Huxley 1932). Both books use the metaphor of some kind of sedating substance that keeps the citizens compliant and docile. In *1984* it takes the form of an alcoholic drink called ‘Government Gin’ and in *A Brave New World* it is a mood-enhancing drug called ‘soma’. From these metaphors came my first example of a visual metaphor for education. In the original hose my intention was that the education be represented in the form of the gas which is being delivered through the tubes, and the hoses represented the institutions and schools controlled by the government. Evidence of these hoses can be seen on the right hand side of the painting.

One of the initial reasons behind my decision to further develop this flexible hose metaphor into a more structural form came about when I came across the film ‘Brazil’ (Gilliam 1985). The movie is a 1984 (Huxley 1948) inspired story following the central character Sam Lowry as he battles against the totalitarian government which seeks to dominate and control the general population. Terry Gilliam uses the metaphor of a governmentally controlled air conditioning system to represent this dictatorship and oppression. Without the ventilation system, the inhabitants in the film cannot survive. This ventilation was delivered to the sealed city and buildings through a complex system of flexible, corrugated hoses, similar to how I first depicted my pipe like structures. Although it was interesting to realise that another art maker had experienced a similar response to the metaphors in the original *1984* (Orwell

1948) story and had been influenced to reproduce their own version of the metaphor just as I had, I was concerned that the two appeared to be a little too similar and so began to experiment with ways in which to develop my pipe system.

Although I still wanted to discuss the differing standards and qualities of education that are available to the different classes in England, I also wanted to work with the idea that an education, particularly a university education, can enable social mobility, based on my experience having gone from working in a local pub to completing an undergraduate degree and under taking a Masters degree. Taking this into account I wanted to develop the pipe metaphor in the painting *Education Act* (2013). I decided to depict it as an inter-weaving, solid structure that looked as if that would represent a structure that one could climb up, similar to how a climbing frame would appear in a painting figure 8. I was no longer content with the flexible pipe representation as it did not represent the solid impression that I wanted to convey to the viewer. The purpose of the pipes metaphor became two fold. Not only did it represent a system of delivering education to a population, but was also scaffolding that enabled and supported the progression of the individual upwards through the class system.

When creating *Education Act* (2013) I developed a monologue to accompany the emerging image. It was a story that helped me shape and construct how the painting appeared. I decided to combine the themes and morals of the story 1984 (Orwell 1948) with a personal experience of having spent time working in a strictly controlled environment. This experience came when spending some time working in a call centre in 2006 where I was employed to sell different forms of insurance to The Royal Bank of Scotland credit card customers. It was interesting to experience firsthand how the organisation was structured and what techniques were employed by figures of authority to control the workers and maintain maximum levels of sales.

The majority of the workforce comprised of young adults and school leavers who were accustomed to the controlled school atmosphere and so adapted quickly to the constant surveillance of the call centre environment. The workers were separated into small groups of around ten and each group was assigned a 'team leader' who was responsible for motivating and controlling the staff. This 'team leader' was then answerable to a floor manager who was answerable to a department manager who was answerable to a site manager and so on and so on through a hierarchy.

Every minute of the individual's working day was dictated to them by an internal computer system that tracks the start, finish and every break that the worker is allowed. This system was connected to the phone of every member of staff and was able to identify what the individual was doing at any time due to which button was being pressed on the key pad. In order to motivate the workforce and maintain a productive level of insurance sales, team leaders offered incentives such as shopping tokens and extra break times. In order to control how staff behaved on sales calls a group of people were employed as invigilators whose job was to listen to recordings from successful insurance sales in order to identify whether false information or coercive language had been used, in which case the sale would be unwarranted and the staff member in question would lose all bonuses accumulated that month. There was also a strict referral process employed whereby any misdemeanour was handled first by a verbal warning, then by a first written warning, then a second written warning and finally a termination of contract and employment.

When I began studying the book *1984* (Orwell 1948) I was struck by how similar the fictional totalitarian government was to how the management of a call centre operated and how quickly the young working class workforce complied and was treated as one mass body as opposed to an individual. It was this realisation that inspired me to combine my experience with the themes from the book to create my own version as Terry Gilliam had in *Brazil* (1985).

The story line behind my painting *Education Act* (2013) was set in a town of working class people who grew up and worked in a hostile, inhabitable environment. The only way in which they could survive was to have oxygen rich air delivered to them through a complicated ventilation system. The governing body of this futuristic world created and delivered this life saving air and, in return for the breathable atmosphere provided through the pipe system by the elite members of society, they received a body of invisible, faceless individuals cultivated for one purpose only. To be used as a work force. These individuals do not appear in the painting as they are too busy doing the only thing they are supposed to do which is work.

The hand prints in the painting are intended to suggest evidence of one of the individual workers having been there observing the scene at some point before returning to work figure 9. They are a visible representation of what could happen to an individual without an education and a sad acknowledgment that for a long time I was under the impression that a

university education was not intended for the likes of me. For a long time after dropping out of Sheffield Hallam University in 2002, I considered myself a failure not cut out for Higher education. When I started my second attempt in 2010 I had to develop my own individual learning methods and struggled for a while with retaining knowledge. It was only when I developed a visual way of self education that suited my kinaesthetic learning style that I began to build up my art history knowledge. As my knowledge base increased I became more accustomed to the academic language and terms used in the arts and so became more familiar with the texts and more able to absorb information through the act of reading and so managed to earn a first class BA(Hon)s degree. Before this achievement I felt outside and excluded from the learning process and particularly the art history section of the course. It is this experience that the hand prints in the painting represent.

The meat on the window sill in the painting *Education Act* (2013) is a metaphor that represents the working classes being raised and educated in such a way as to prepare them for the call centre life style figure 10. It is a reference to the notion of being reared in a certain way as to produce a form that was intended to be merely a vessel for work. The meat represents a group of cells designed for an unimaginative life of menial employment where creative thinking and individuality is not necessary.

Next to the meat and connected to it by wires I have included the representation of the electrical current monitor. It is there to emphasise the point I am making about the working classes being designed and educated for the purpose of performing menial or manual work. The electrical current monitor represents just what percentage of energy can be extracted from a person for the purpose of these types of work. By attaching it to the meat I am likening the working classes to being viewed as battery cells .

The 1930 reference on the visual representation of the monitor is there to represent a statistic I discovered while researching. According to an article written by Nick Triggle, Health reporter for BBC News Health and published on the 23rd July 2010, the health inequality gap between the richest in British society and the poorest was greater in 2010 than during the great Depression and World War 1 slump of 1930.

In the foreground of the painting, just beyond the visual representation of the window I have painted a figure with its back to the audience figure 11. The figure is directly copied from the romantic Painter David Casper Friedrich's *Wanderer Above The Clouds* (1818) which I

chose partly because Friedrich's painting is easily recognisable by those who have been educated in the arts.

Casper David Friedrich's technique of painting figures with their back to the viewer interested me. There are differing views as to why he did this but I was principally interested in the feeling of exclusion it generated in me as a viewer. This, however, didn't feel like a negative or overpowering barrier between myself and the painting beyond the figure. Instead it seemed to invite me to interact more with the image. I liken the figure to being an avatar and something the audience can project themselves on to. I chose to place a figure in my painting to represent an overseer and figure of authority. Related both to my call centre working experience and my reading of dystopian literature with its totalitarian governing bodies.

Casper David Friedrich's practice of painting both from memory and from the imagination also gave me permission to experiment within my own work and allowed me to paint from my imagination and memory as opposed to painting from life. The narrator of a documentary on the artist give an example of a quote that Casper David Friedrich is said to have told one of his students that relates to this style of painting.

He advised young painters that they should close the bodily eye so that they could see with their spiritual eye. (Casper David Friedrich 2011)

In the same documentary Professor Vaughn of Berbek University explains that Casper David Friedrich was concerned that art taught during his life time was too concerned with copying previous artists and that it involved too much looking to art history and that he much preferred students to paint from their 'Inner Being' (Vaughn 2011)

I found that the vast panoramas the painter created where a model for my own sense of being in the world.

This chapter has analysed the metaphorical dimension of *Education Act (2013)*. It has traced the influences that science fiction literature and the film director Terry Gilliam had on the development of the pipe metaphor in the painting. It also discussed the influence of David Casper Friedrich had the work and why I chose to adapt the figure from *Wanderer above the Fog*(1818) in my painting.



Figure 7 Education Act in progress. 2013 Corinne White



Figure 8. Close up of solid pipes Education Act 2013 Corinne White

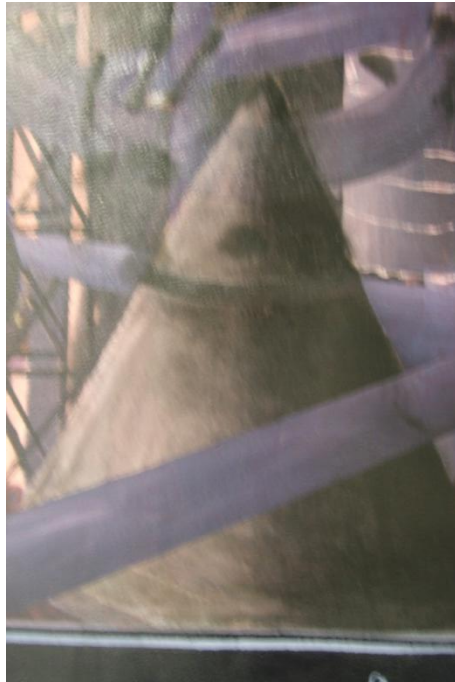


Figure 9. Close up of hand prints. Education act 2013. Corinne White



Figure 10. close up of Meat and electric meter. Education act. 2013. Corinne White



Figure 11 close up of figure. Education Act . 2013. Corinne White

Mind the gap

This chapter will analyse the painting *Mind the Gap*. It will discuss the formal resources used in the construction of the painting, and the importance of my interest in the dramatist and screenwriter Shelagh Delany for the development of the work.

Mind the Gap, measures 9 ft by 30ft and began as the central of three individual canvases which create the painting made up of separate panels. Starting the painting I was aware that I wanted to create something that could convey the enormity of the impact my experience of returning to full time higher education. The three things I was determined to make visible where, the fear and anxiety that accompanied it, the difficulties I experienced in developing an approach to education that best suited my kinaesthetic learning type, and the reward of social mobility and personal growth that education afforded. The title refers to my experience of having allowed myself to become disconnected from education at the age of twenty-one when I dropped out of Sheffield Hallam University and gave up on the idea that I could achieve a university education. The ‘gap’ referred to in the painting’s title is the six years I was out of full time further education.

I first got the idea for the name during a research trip to London in 2013. The message ‘Mind the gap’ is a warning to London commuters and visitors who use the underground system. When exiting the train carriages the warning is printed on the platform floors to remind passengers that there is enough space for them to fall between the train carriage and the platform edge and onto the tracks below if they do not take care. I thought this was a good metaphor for the risk that the young, working class people face as they move from the state school system, on to college or sixth form and then possibly on to university. A bad decision, life event or a lack of funds could easily interrupt the journey to university and so halt the education process. Once an individual is out of the education system, it can be difficult to re engage with it, whether this is due to the demands of work and life or financial circumstances. The individual then runs the risk of ‘falling through the gap’ and being left behind.

The painting places the viewer behind an empty pair of my shoes. The empty shoes represent the steps that can be taken through gaining a university education. The shoes are also a development of the Casper David Friedrich figure in the painting *Education Act* (2013).

Instead of representing an authority figure as in the previous painting the shoes invite the viewer to put themselves in to the painting and encourage a deeper level of interaction.

The viewer also sees the picture from behind a wall made of glass, which is a development and abstraction of the window motif. I further experimented with the window metaphor by extending the reference into the painting and creating the visual representation of glass boxes on which I wrote about lessons, memories and experiences that I had during my formal undergraduate education figure 12. I then painted over the words with washes of PVA glue and white paint until they were almost illegible and erased. My reason for doing so was to disguise the obvious references and so create an air of mystery around what had been written. The action of erasing the words was also a reference to the Abstract Expressionist movement whose style I had been encouraged to emulate by my painting tutor during my undergraduate course at Barnsley. My resistance to adopting the techniques used by some of the painters from that historical movement meant that eventually I developed a method of painting that suited me. It also, however, resulted in tensions and conflict with my tutor as I constantly battled against his advice. In order to include the importance of this experience in the painting the erasure of the words is a reference to the artwork *Erased de Kooning Drawing* (1953) created by Robert Rauschenberg when he rubbed out a pencil drawing given to him by Willem de Kooning.

Although I admire and appreciate a great number of abstract expressionist work, I had no desire to emulate it. What I wanted to do was find an autonomous painting style which, as it turns out, has very little in common with the abstract expressionism. The one thing that the art movement did give me, however, was the permission to work directly on a large scale. As I was developing *Mind the Gap* (2014) I realised that I wanted to create a life-size painting that the audience could stand in front of and imagine being part of. By making the painting life size I was making it easier for the viewer to merge into the image. This is similar to how a theatre set design can create a synthetic environment for actors, which helps the audience to become immersed in a stage production. I wanted to create a visual representation of my experience of having returned to full time education as a mature student and by making the painting on a large scale, I hoped that the audience could more easily intuit the enormity of the experience and its impact on me.

In order to enhance the idea of set design I chose to mount the canvasses on moveable stands which each displayed three canvasses one on top of the other. This means that the painting

can be displayed in different ways and the viewer can move in and out among its elements and interact with it up close figure 13. This offers a higher level of interaction and encourages the audience to physically walk in and around the sections of the painting. Having the painting displayed on separate panels also means they can be positioned so that the audience can see gaps between the segments, another reference to the title.

The rock and cliff filled landscape that I created with pastels and acrylic paint was initially the result of the many images created in my imagination whilst reading science fiction literature figure 14. My intention when creating the rocky landscape was to make it an unrecognizable place on to which an audience could project their own thoughts about the location. The blue and red colours that I used are not found that way in nature and so give the background an unnatural feel suggestive of another world. The intention was to create a landscape metaphor for the difficulties of access to education for the young working class people. I filled the canvas with razor sharp ridges and jagged mountains that suggest the terrain would be very difficult to navigate through without the correct equipment and direction.

During the creation of the terrain in *Mind the Gap* (2014) I would often paint references to the subjects of class and education on the canvas and then cover them with the pastel and paint. My reason for doing this was to keep a part of the painting firmly under my control. By hiding these references, I was appeasing my need for control over what I was painting and how much I allowed the audience to intuit.

The mass of blue pipes are painted in such a way as to distort the angles and create a deeper sense of depth. This technique encouraged the viewer to feel like they could almost step into the painting and become part of it.

I chose to paint the pipes the colour blue as the colour is associated with intelligence and deep thought. I painted the pipes so that they crossed one another and made a complicated network through which gaps would appear. My reason for this was that the spaces would represent the title and the idea of the 'gaps' within the education system that a working class student could fall through and out of education. The complex interwoven pipes also create a frame on which to climb to social mobility.

In contrast to the blue of the pipes I chose to paint the horizon yellow as the two colours are opposites in the colour wheel so they best complement one another. For the abstracted lines of the window in the foreground I decided to use white. I did this because the windows in both *Class Act* (2013) and *Education Act* (2013) are created using grey, which I used to suggest the presence of a shadow. In *Mind the Gap* (2014) I wanted to reduce the visual barrier created by the window in the foreground and by lightening the tone, the lines are less obvious. The white lines, which represent the outline of the windows separate the scene into three sections. This puts at the fore front of the painting the idea of the three tiered divisions of social class, although the viewer may not be aware of it.

Whilst creating *Mind the Gap* (2014) I was reading the work of play write and author Shelagh Delany (1938 – 2011). In her I found a literary version of Jo Spence. Like Spence she was born into a working class background and used her talent as a writer to make realist work about working class life as Spence had with photography. *A Taste of Honey* (Delany 1950) was written when Shelagh Delany was just eighteen. The play, originally intended to be a novel, tells the story of a fifteen year old girl named Jo who lived with her mother in Shelagh Delany's home town of Salford. The story follows the character of Jo as she leaves school at the age of fifteen after receiving a basic and state school education and, in a bid for independence, gains employment in a local shoe shop and moves into her own place along with a local gay textiles student named Geoffrey. It was whilst researching Shelagh Delany's work that I came across her account of her own education experience.

In a *Monitor* documentary by Ken Russell, filmed in 1960 for the BBC, Shelagh Delany explains that one of her main issues with growing up as a member of the working classes was the type of education available to her and her contemporaries. She explains that between the ages of five and nine years old, she attended five different schools and was unsuccessful at passing her 11+. She then attended a secondary modern school until the age of 15 when she was transferred to a Grammar school. She gives no reason for this sudden transfer, instead she describes the anxiety of starting at the new and more prestigious school and how she had worried that she wouldn't be intelligent enough to cope with the standard of work, which turned out not to be an issues. Upon starting at the grammar school, Shelagh Delany found that she actually knew as much, if not more, than most of the other students. Not only this but she goes as far as to state that half of the boys and girls at her previous secondary modern school would have been more than capable of managing the work load and academic

demands required to attend a grammar school. It seems to me that it was this experience of realizing that she was, in fact, as capable and intelligent as the archetypal grammar school students that first made her question whether people were educated differently depending on their class standing. By experiencing both standards of the post war British education system, Shelagh Delaney was able to make the judgement that she believed there was no intellectual difference between the two groups of students, and that the major difference was one of class as opposed to intellectual ability. She goes on to discuss this realisation and how it made her feel about the children who were not as fortunate as herself and her fellow grammar school students.

...It seemed a terrible shame to me that they should be left there with the prospect of leaving school at fifteen and ...going into an office or anything...and ...what do they do?...they actually have three alternatives. They stay where they are and come to a compromise with the situation or they fight it. Or they get away from it and a lot of them get away and they move and they travel and they come down from the provinces and they finish up in London or any other big city.(
Delany 1960)

Delany goes on to explain what she believes happens to these students who have been educated in the state schools as opposed to the Grammar schools as they leave full time education and begin to enter the adult world.

...and to me they are just as lost, and they shouldn't be lost but they are. They are left and they don't know what to do. I mean I didn't know what to do. When I was seventeen I was in a terrible mess and didn't know what to do with myself. I knew that I wanted to do something but what I couldn't find out. I was lucky, I thought that I could write, I had that to deal with and I was lucky. I was dead lucky, but so many aren't lucky and this is the tragedy. This is the terrible tragedy.(Delany 1960)

Shelagh Delany articulates how a lack of opportunity can have lasting effects on the young as they leave school and enter the world of work. I am aware that it is possible for people who have not grown up with or experienced an education of this kind to argue that it is up to the individual to take responsibility for their own lives and the direction they take. Shelagh Delany too recognises this when she remarks that one of the three ways to escape a certain kind of life style is to leave. However, the self-confidence and self-assured attitude that is required, as an adult, to take this step can be affected by a lack of encouragement in earlier schooling. If little importance is placed on subjects that are not so academic, such as the arts then the students who excel or show promise in these areas may feel disheartened as they are not seen as a way of making a living. A lack of encouragement or acknowledgement during

these early years can risk instilling a lack of self-belief in a child that could then possibly be carried through to adulthood and effect the ability to make life changing decisions. This is obviously not true of all children but I am speaking on behalf of those introverted individuals who lack self-esteem to begin with and are intelligent but not necessarily academic.

I found Shelagh Delany's view that one is awarded more opportunities when one receives a grammar school education as opposed to a state school one important because they gave support to my approaching similar issues in my paintings. The play *A Taste of Honey* is a fictional work that is influenced by Delany's experiences growing up in working class Salford, while my paintings were influenced by my experience of being born and educated in the working class town of Barnsley.

To conclude: this Chapter has discussed the origins of the painting *Mind the Gap* and analysed the visual metaphors that I developed to represent my belief that education aids social mobility. It has explained the artists upon which I drew to support the construction of the painting, and presented the important role that Shelagh Delany played in supporting my views in particular in relation to her experience of both a State and Grammar school education.



Figure 12. Close up of boxes and writing. Mind The Gap.2014 Corinne White



Figure 13 sections of Mind The Gap 2014. Corinne White



Figure 14 close up of landscape. Mind The Gap. 2014. Corinne White

The Vorticists.

This chapter will analyse the series of paintings on paper made during the final two months of my master's degree. It will introduce the two Vorticist painters Jessica Dismorr (1885-1939) and Helen Saunders (1885-1963) and explain why I chose to make paintings that were influenced by the techniques and styles used by both of them. It will analyse specific paintings by the two artists and describe examples of my own paintings made under the influence of their work, as well as explaining how I continued to develop the class, education and window metaphors.

At the time of completion of *Mind The Gap* (2014) I decided to continue my development of the education and class metaphor of the pipe and the visual representation of the window by drawing upon the example of work by two women painters Helen Saunders and Jessica Dismorr, both members of the Vorticist group. Vorticism was an English art and literary movement that officially lasted for two years and was based in London. It was launched in the summer of 1914 by British artist Percy Wyndham Lewis, with the aim of going beyond Cubism and Futurism to create an art that was responsive to the modern world in Britain. A typical characteristic of work made by artists of the movement includes strong lines and angles. The mouth piece of the Vorticist movement was *Blast* was a literary magazine of which only two editions were published, the first on the 2 July 1914 and the second on the 15 July 1915. The First magazine contained the Vorticist manifesto which had been signed by all the group members and introduced the public to reproductions of the artists' paintings. The Second edition, published a year later, contained creative writing and more images of further paintings.

Whilst researching Vorticism I first came across a painting by William Roberts (1895-1980) titled *The Vorticists' at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel: Spring 1961-2* Figure 15. According to Bridget Peppin the artist, art historian and first cousin twice removed of the Vorticist painter Helen Saunders (1885 – 1963), the painting depicts the eight members whom William Roberts claimed were the key to the group, and responsible for the ideas behind the Vorticist movement. As well as himself, William Roberts painted Cuthbert Hamilton (1885 – 1959), Ezra Pound (1885 – 1972), Percy Wyndham Lewis, Frederick Etchells (1886 – 1973) and Edward Wadsworth (1889 – 1949) all seated around a table seemingly enjoying dessert and champagne after finishing a meal. Two women are shown to be entering the room, one carrying a copy of *Blast* magazine and the other a purse. In an article for the twenty second

issue of Tate Etc titled *Women the a movement forgot*, Brigid Peppin (2011) claims that these women were the two key female members of the movement Helen Saunders and Jessica Dismorr (1985-1939).

Only two of Jessica Dismorr's paintings from the Vorticist period are known to have survived to this day. *Abstract Composition* (1915) Figure 16 is one of them. It differs from the appearance of some of the other Vorticist group member's paintings, because it seems to deal with space more than line and angle. The architectural shapes that Jessica Dismorr has painted are angled and positioned so as to emphasise the spaces between them and create the illusion of depth. The largest and most prominent of the lines in *Abstract Composition* 1915 are curved. These curves cut through the centre of the painting and dominate the space.

These curves are also evident in the only other of Jessica Dismorr's vorticist paintings to have survived. In *Edinburgh Castle* (1914-1915) Figure 17, Jessica Dismorr again uses the curved line when representing an abstracted castle shape. The curved edges of the drawing are the largest and so dominate the image and round off the top of the abstract castle. Jessica Dismorr further emphasizes the bend of the shapes by shading the outer edges of some, thus creating the impression that the shapes are not flat but dome like. She again uses shading and crosshatching to create shadows amongst the shapes and create fields of depth, as well as points of detail. I experimented with creating my own abstract version of *Edinburgh Castle* Figure 18 by abstracting and reducing an imagined building to basic form. I used cylinder and tube like shapes to represent the pipe metaphor that I was developing and adopted Jessica Dismorr's technique of using pen and ink over acrylic paint and water colour to create the shadows which gives the shapes a three dimensional appearance.

I experimented a great deal with the techniques that Jessica Dismorr used and made a series of watercolours on paper. These included developments of the pipe and window metaphor but also allowed me to develop and experiment more with colour and light and how to suggest a sense of space on the flat surface of paper. The experiments developed in two separate directions. One being of abstracted shapes and space, the other of intricate pen and ink drawings on paint that began as drip paintings. I would flick and pour paint on to a primed canvass, stapled to the studio wall, and work into the drips that formed with paint, ink and pastel. These paintings developed into various images, which gave the impression of instability. Some evolved into planes of land propped up by thin, unstable structures. Others became buildings that were suspended from above by thin chords.

I continued to experiment with Jessica Dismorr's techniques and began abstracting sections of the paintings *Mind the Gap* (2014), *Class Act* (2013) and *Education Act* (2013). I reduced buildings to simplified blocks and cylinders and the pipe structures to lines and angles. I lightened my colour palette to resemble the pastel shades used by Jessica Dismorr and experimented with the idea of space and leaving areas of paper free from paint.

There are twenty two paintings on paper by Helen Saunders that are known to have survived from the Vorticist movement. In the second edition of *Blast* on page fifty seven there is a reproduction of A painting titled *Atlantic City* (1915) Figure 19. Helen Saunders has arranged the composition of the painting in such a way as to create an X like shape of white shards, which cut across the centre of the painting. This use of shape, shade and line encourages the eye to travel to the centre of the image. The lines of the X are echoed in a white building like structure. There are hints of windows and suggestions of structural shapes at various sections within the painting, but they are subtle enough to encourage longer study on the part of the audience. These suggestions of form are intermingled and semi obscured by areas of more complex detail, such as repetitive zig zags and multiple lines. These busy areas could be a symbol for the activity and pace of the city. The contrast between the sharp white angles and the highly detailed areas give the painting an energy and velocity, which I found very inspiring.

Atlantic City (1915) became the point of reference for a series of black and white acrylic paintings on paper. I utilized Helen Saunders techniques of creating angles and lines which give the impression of distorted perspective and used this technique to further develop the appearance of the pipe and window metaphors.

Many of the black and white reproductions of paintings in the second addition of *Blast* magazine can be attributed to Helen Saunders, but she also worked in colour. *Dance* (Saunders 1915) Figure 20 is an example of how Helen Saunders used colour in her paintings. As the name suggests, the painting depicts two abstracted forms in mid dance. Both figures contain suggestions of limbs. The shape in the foreground is the most human like as Helen Saunders has painted an extended right leg and an impression of a raised arm in dark and light pink. The figure behind is somewhat obstructed by the other but there is a suggestion of a head, shoulder and stretched arm, out lined in pastel pink. Other sections of the human like shapes are painted in pale and dark blue, green and turquoise, which create the impression of shadows. These shadows are emphasised by being outlined in black and an

actual representation of a shadow having been painted behind the forms. The shading contrasts a vivid triangle of yellow that cuts across the canvass diagonally behind the pair. This could be an abstracted representation of a light source. A small black distorted rectangular shape is on the bottom left hand corner of the painting and instantly made me think of a door in the distance.

Like the painting *Atlantic City, Dance* gives an impression of movement and activity. A carefully painted line of blue, black, pale pink and dark pink cuts across the painting, first from left to right, then right to left and separates the painting into three sections. This line begins behind the dancing forms and then cuts across in front of the left hand figure but not the right. This creates a sense of depth, which is mirrored in the distant doorway.

I experimented with my own way of using the solid pipe like metaphor in just black and white. I began by making fluid landscapes that consisted of mountains and cliffs before developing into a version of Helen Saunders technique of only using the straight line. The rigidity of this style worked well and complimented the straight pipe line network. As I continued to produce images inspired by both Jessica Dismorr and Helen Saunders I began to combine techniques used by the two artists into single images. The experiments show a wide range of different ways in which I experimented with line, angle, space, colour in the mediums of water colour, acrylic and pen and ink.

This chapter has analysed how I continued to develop the education, class and window metaphors using the vorticist artworks by the artists Jessica Dismorr and Helen Saunders as the main influence. It has discussed how I appropriated techniques and mediums used by the artists in experiments before combining them and making series of paintings.



Figure 15 The Vorticists at the restaurant de le tour Eiffel: Spring 1915. William Roberts 1961-2



Figure 16 Abstract Composition. Jessica Dismorr. 1915

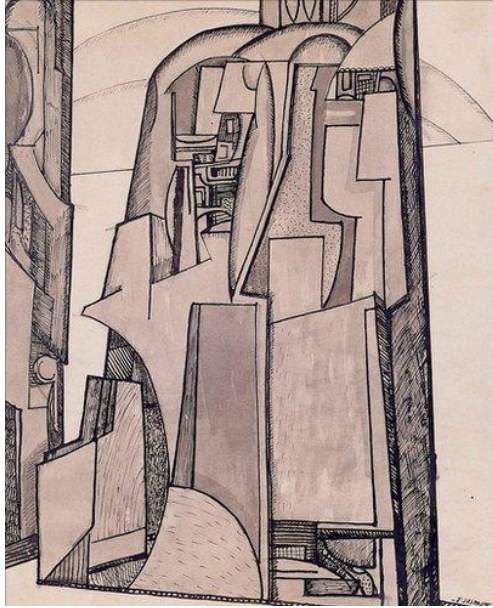


Figure 17. Edinburgh Castel. Jessica Dismorr 1915-16



Figure 18. Edinburgh Castel 2014. Corinne White.



Figure 19 Atlantic City. Helen Saunders 1915



Figure 20 Dance Helen Saunders 1915

Conclusion

Analysing the art made during my Undergraduate BA(Hon)s degree means that I now have a better understanding of how my art practice was developing and what influenced it.

Returning to study the literature that I was reading at the time was important as it allowed me to recognize where some of the central ideas behind my paintings and drawings originated. This research also aided me in identifying some of the influences that impacted the way my art work looked and developed. Most importantly this literary research helped me realize the way certain authors used metaphor greatly influenced my own development of using visual metaphor in paintings and drawings.

Undertaking a chronological investigation into my three year undergraduate art education I was able to identify which artists and art movements most impacted my art making. The study enabled me to consider why specific art examples most influenced the way in which I chose to make art. This then allowed me to further identify artists who were from the same movements or who painted in similar styles who proved to be important influences when I developed Paintings and drawings during my MA degree.

The original issues of class and education were key factors when I came to research other artists. Because I am from a working class background and returned to higher education as a mature student I wanted to find other artists from similar circumstances. The fact that I am a woman encouraged me to focus on female art makers which led me to the discovery of the photographer Jo Spence. Her autobiography *Putting myself in the picture* (Spence 1986) became the example that I modelled my thesis on and her first person narrative justified my own.

The second significant female art maker I became aware of through this research was the writer Shelagh Delany. Her experience of having attended both a state school and a Grammar school and her opinions about the differing standards of education gave me permission to approach similar issues in my practical work. This discovery was also central in my development of the education metaphor in my paintings.

The analysis of these two working class women art makers has been fundamental in my changing attitude towards the issues of class and more importantly education. The understanding that the social class one is born into does not necessarily dictate what one can

achieve in ones lifetime has been important. More specifically I have come to realise that education, and more precisely a university education, can aid the act of social mobility.

The role that I believe art plays in this process has also developed through the MA. I no longer view the making of art as being a purely self serving activity. It has a deeper purpose. It is both a tool that aids my kinaesthetic learning type and a method of communication in which I can discuss issues and opinions. The fact that my own University education was in the arts means that it has become a key factor in my own social mobility.

How I view the development of my practice has also changed and matured. I have come to realise that my developing art making style is a result of a great many influences from art history and that understanding and learning about the this history is essential if one is to become an artist. The paintings and drawings that are at the centre of my MA degree show clear progression from my undergraduate work and are a testament to the knowledge I have gained through the research I have done. The better understanding that I have gained about the development of my art practice has enabled me to further mature as an art maker

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