

Exercises 1 and 2: Introducing Your Practice and Seeking Collaborators

“Concept-led visual practitioner seeking like-minded creative collaborators”

Or more simply put... artist with ideas looking for like-minded collaborators to connect and mutually challenge, critique and expand each other's creative processes!

Are you a writer, musician, sculptor, printmaker, film-maker, photographer, or designer seeking someone to co-create with? Are you socially aware with strong personal values that have a major influence on your work? Do you explore your own lived experience as well as that of others through your work?

If any of those resonate with you, whether you have a sense of the direction you want to take with your work or you are beginning the search for ideas, I'd like to hear from you.

My name is Nik, and I'm seeking collaborators to work with to meet the challenges of BA(Hons) Fine Art 2.2 Experimental Encounters.

A little more about me. I see my creative practice as autoethnographic: it merges research and creative expression as a method of enquiry into my own lived experience. Through this reflexive exploration of my own life, I examine the dimensions that shape identity – the memories, feelings, beliefs and presence that coagulate, shift and bend over time to create individuality, and that influence our relationship with the different layers of the world around us.

My practice is not rooted in one particular material or specific process: I have worked with painting, drawing, printmaking, text, resin, found objects, computer generated content, video and sound to some degree. I like to explore the interplay of different materials and processes as I search for the most appropriate way to realise the ideas and themes that interest me. I want my work to invite viewers to contemplate, with curiosity and empathy, the complexities of their own identities, the influences those have on their relationship with the world around, and how those identities and relationships can and do impact the lives of others.

Examples of my work can be found on my website at www.nikolashead.co.uk – my most recent pieces are under **Chasing Thoughts** under **Artworks** in the menu, but please explore. In fact, start a collaboration of sorts – I'd be interested in your thoughts and feelings about what you see on the site – it will help me start to get to know you. My current learning log can be found at <https://experimentalencounters.nikolashead.co.uk/> but there's not much there yet – I've only just finished Project 1.

Pursuing a collaborative process for me is both an opportunity and a challenge. It offers possibilities for connection and community, valuable discourse and critique, new processes and ideas, expansion of my perspectives, a discarding of old patterns and overcoming edges and letting go of my ego. But it's also a space for which I feel resistance and fear – of letting go of control of the process, of facing the unknown, of being vulnerable, of being exposed to criticism, of not being heard, of my ego getting in the way, of not achieving my academic and creative goals because I don't have full responsibility. But, because I have these two contrasting perspectives, I also recognise the profound importance of collaborative working, especially in how it can contribute to the growth of my practice.

As for my ambitions for collaboration...for the moment it's just to overcome my fears and resistance and just begin, to work with people who are open to being creatively challenged and who, in return, will creatively challenge me. If you think that could be you, drop me a line at nicholas526110@oca.ac.uk.

I'm excited to see what we can conjure up together!