

Curriculum Vita

Dr Helen McAllister

National College of Art & Design

Present Position: 2009 Head Fashion & Textiles Department

Studied: 1997 – 1999 **MA** Embroidered Textiles
National College of Art & Design
2002 – 2006 **PhD** practice-based Design
National College of Art & Design

Exhibitions: 2005 'Work in Progress' PhD Research Exhibition N.C.A.D. / L.C.F.
2006 'Containment' Final PhD presentation N.C.A.D.
2007 'SEMA' C.C.o I., Paris / Kilkenny
2007 'DIVA' Belfast / Ennis / Kilkenny
2007 '30 Something' Embroidery Artists Biannual Exhibition Dublin

International Papers Presented: 2006 'Common Threads Seminar' N.G.o A.A. Dublin (published)
2006 'E.S.A.I. Conference' N.C.A.D.
2006 'Wonderground' Design Research Society, Lisbon (published)
2007 'Arts / Humanities Research Systems' Baden-Baden (published)
2007 'Ars Textrina Conference' U.U. Belfast (published)
2008 'Love Objects; engaging material culture' D.R.G., N.C.A.D.
2009 'Communicating (by) Design' Sint – Lucas, Brussels (published)
2009 ' Art of Research' Univ. of Art & Design, Helsinki (on-line publ.)

Prizes: 2002 'Golden Fleece Award'
2007 'The Helen McCaffery Award'

Extern Examiner: 2005 - 2009 G.M.I.T. Degree Textiles
Committee Member: 2008 NCAD Gallery

Research Interests

'Binary Oppositions, what constitutes a pair?'

The Practice-based research PhD questioned the fundamental definition of what constitutes a pair, this was established through shoe-derived forms created by textiles processes. The research and my art production interprets visual sources of surfaces found and exploited in Venice, paired with the iconic form of the shoe to address philosophical preponderances of a pair.

My answer found components of the binary are not of passive equality of replication, instead they were about dialogues and interactions of tensions and torsions of forces united. There were many binary relationships that emerged within the practice-based methodology that ultimately needed these counter actions to define the critical question. The contrasts and dynamics of opposing tensions defined my outcomes that were metaphorical of my methodology as well as in the physical artwork. The 'language' of a pair in turn questioned shoe-derived forms as a series and being the vehicle for narrating.

The research mode has made some shifts, now being lead by my experience of practice-based methodology and pedagogy from the art / design specialist institute where knowledge comes from the experiential method of 'doing' and from the interpretation of the made 'thing' to determine critical framework and the critical question that needed to be answered.

This has lead to interrogate the use of ones art practice paired with the academia criteria to provide research outcomes and the conflicts that arise as art practitioner informs the research practitioner.

The art practice has continued with the embroidered shoe-derived forms from the individual model to series and multiples. Recent work no longer creates isolated forms but instead considers the surface on which they inhabit developing the narrative themes.

