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... because good research needs good data

Pinning It Down: Towards a Practical Definition of 'Research Data' for Creative Arts Institutions

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Digital Curation Centre

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IDCC13



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Funded by: **JISC**

8th International Digital Curation Conference, Amsterdam, 16th January 2013

- Begun in 2012, ongoing involvement in JISC Kaptur project
- Surveys/interviews of researchers
- UAL policy & RDM area on web site
- UAL data management planning template
- Funder requirements document
- Training & advocacy, clarification of roles
- Exploration of use of Datastage-eprints-Figshare
- Definition of 'research data' for creative arts institutions

Complementary Work

Kaptur	UAL Engagement
Funded by JISC MRD	Funded by HEFCE through UMF
Oct 2011 - March 2013	Summer 2011 - Spring 2013
Led by the Visual Arts Data Service (VADS)	Jointly initiated by DCC and UAL
Four partners: Glasgow School of Art; Goldsmiths, University of London; University for the Creative Arts; and University of the Arts London	Brings together staff from many support and research areas at UAL
Focused on visual arts	Focused on broader range of research and teaching areas

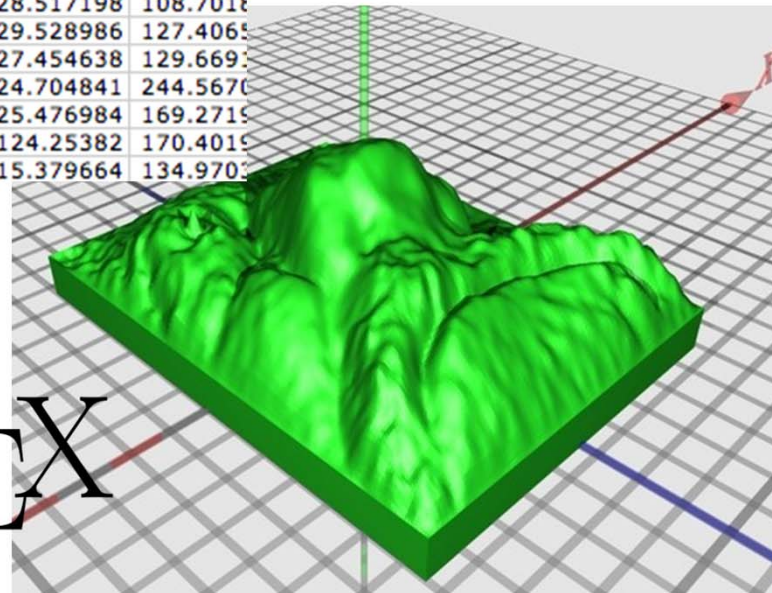
What is Scientific Research Data?

...whatever is produced in research or evidences its outputs

10/29/04	124.761606	129.27356	122.260995	209.6622
11/1/04	119.977679	129.534731	124.739135	176.3164
11/2/04	130.46875	135.839924	130.84732	168.2896
11/3/04	135.895502	149.510531	140.795689	120.6866
11/4/04	134.127052	140.495868	132.823819	206.1382
11/5/04	129.851598	137.880438	124.888856	189.6756
11/8/04	123.797241	131.84633	126.146789	202.4966
11/9/04	118.435374	130.691651	112.877008	140.3662
11/10/04	112.401212	121.561443	114.237637	125.2982
11/11/04	112.388488	128.496503	113.302591	192.2236
11/12/04	129.011813	138.880759	128.517198	108.7018
11/15/04	127.077465	139.289941	129.528986	127.4062
11/16/04	124.9785	135.363241	127.454638	129.6692
11/17/04	122.2253	124.704841	124.5670	125.476984
		125.476984	169.2715	124.25382
		124.25382	170.4015	115.379664
		115.379664	134.9702	



LATEX

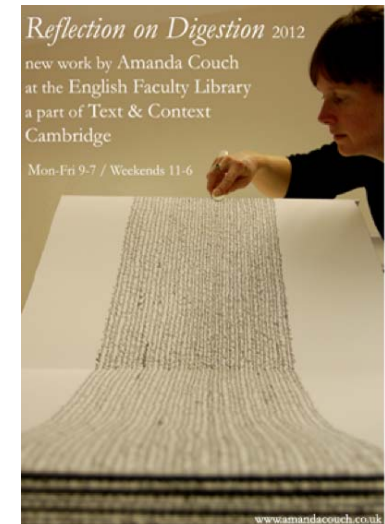


“highest priority research data is that which underpins a research output”

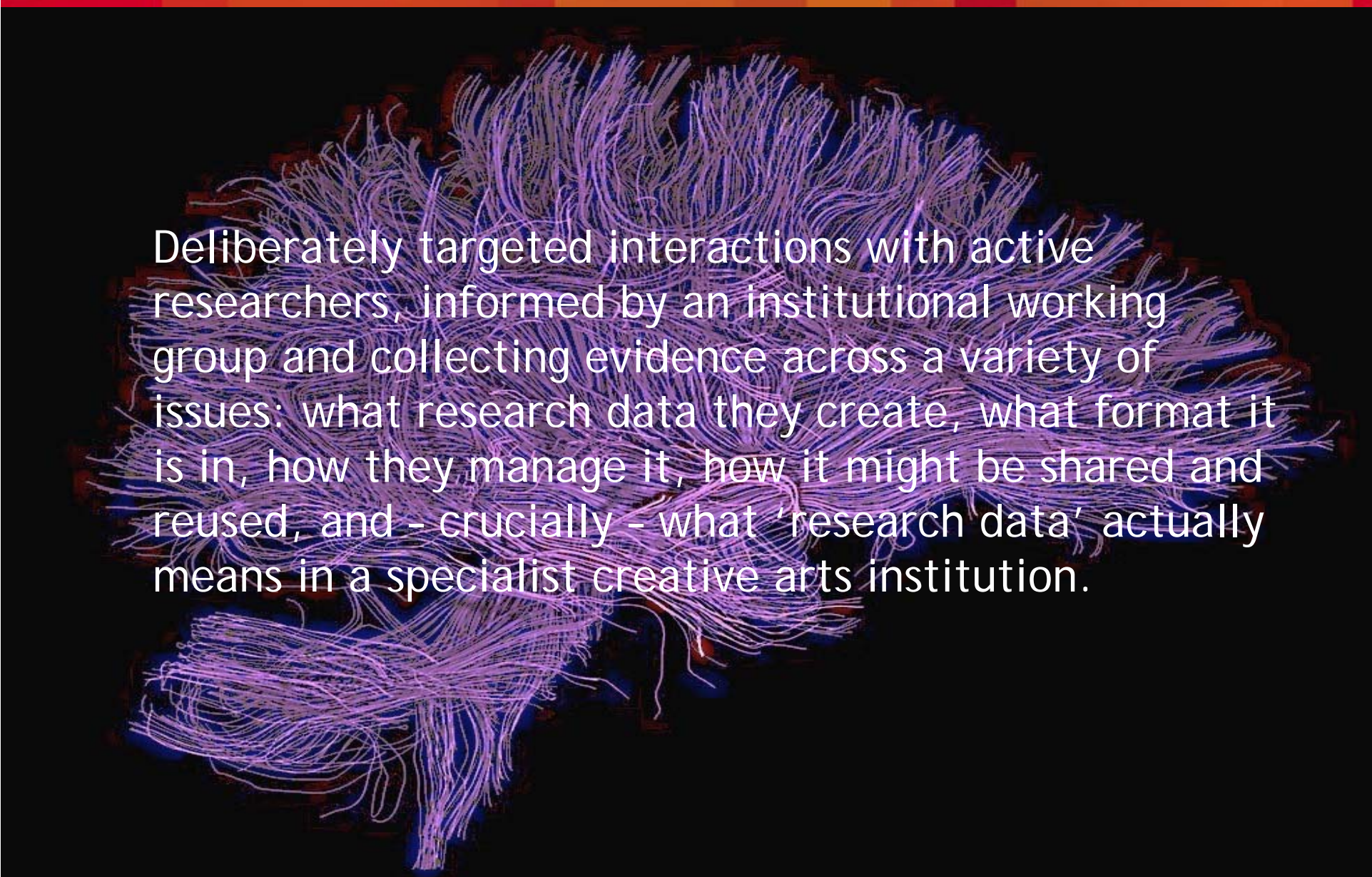
- Facts
- Statistics
- qualitative
- quantitative
- Not published research output
- Discipline specific

Definition Issues for Arts Institutions

- Kaptur project sees RD in the visual arts as:
- Tangible and intangible
- Heterogeneous and infinite
- Complex and complicated
- Digital and physical
- Scientific vs artistic/humanities research methods - evidence-based vs argument-based.
- “...no fundamental separation exist between theory and practice in the arts” Borgdorff et al



Survey and Interviews



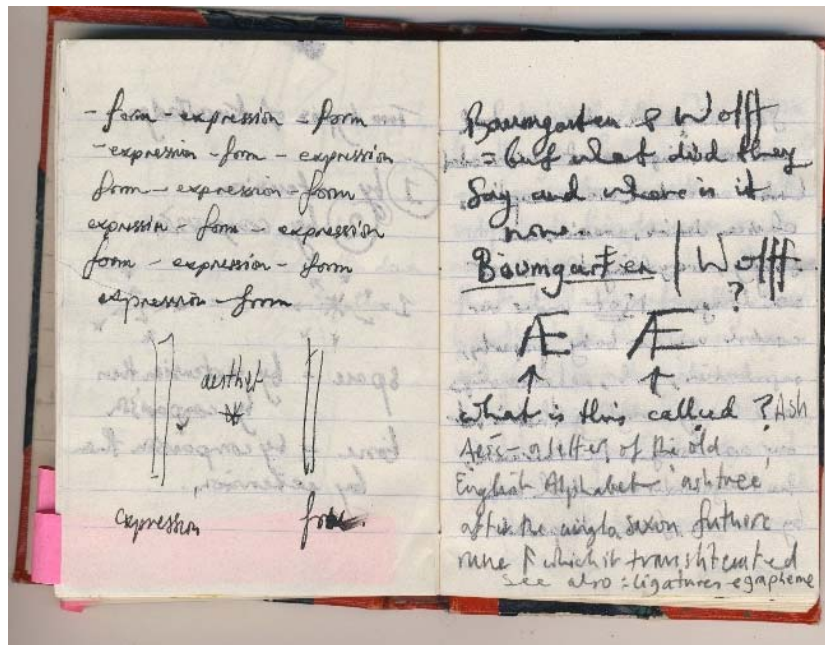
Deliberately targeted interactions with active researchers, informed by an institutional working group and collecting evidence across a variety of issues: what research data they create, what format it is in, how they manage it, how it might be shared and reused, and - crucially - what 'research data' actually means in a specialist creative arts institution.

Interview Results

- The term research data “doesn’t mean a lot”
- Many saw research data as publications or exhibitions, and not data per se
- Most recognised the importance of research data to themselves and to others
- Alternate approaches:
 - For Kaptur interviews expressions ‘documenting the research process’ & ‘visualisation and documentation’ were offered as alternatives to research data
 - Idea of ‘organisational moments’ or ‘trigger points for data creation or management activity’
 - Explanation by interviewer at start

Work with Practioner

- Paul Ryan - lecturer and arts researcher
- Symbolic data vs Iconic data
- Data is more valid if the position of interpretation from which it is presented is clarified



Thesis: Peirce's Semeiotic and the Implications for Æsthetics in the Visual Arts: a study of the sketchbook and its positions in the hierarchies of making, collecting and exhibiting

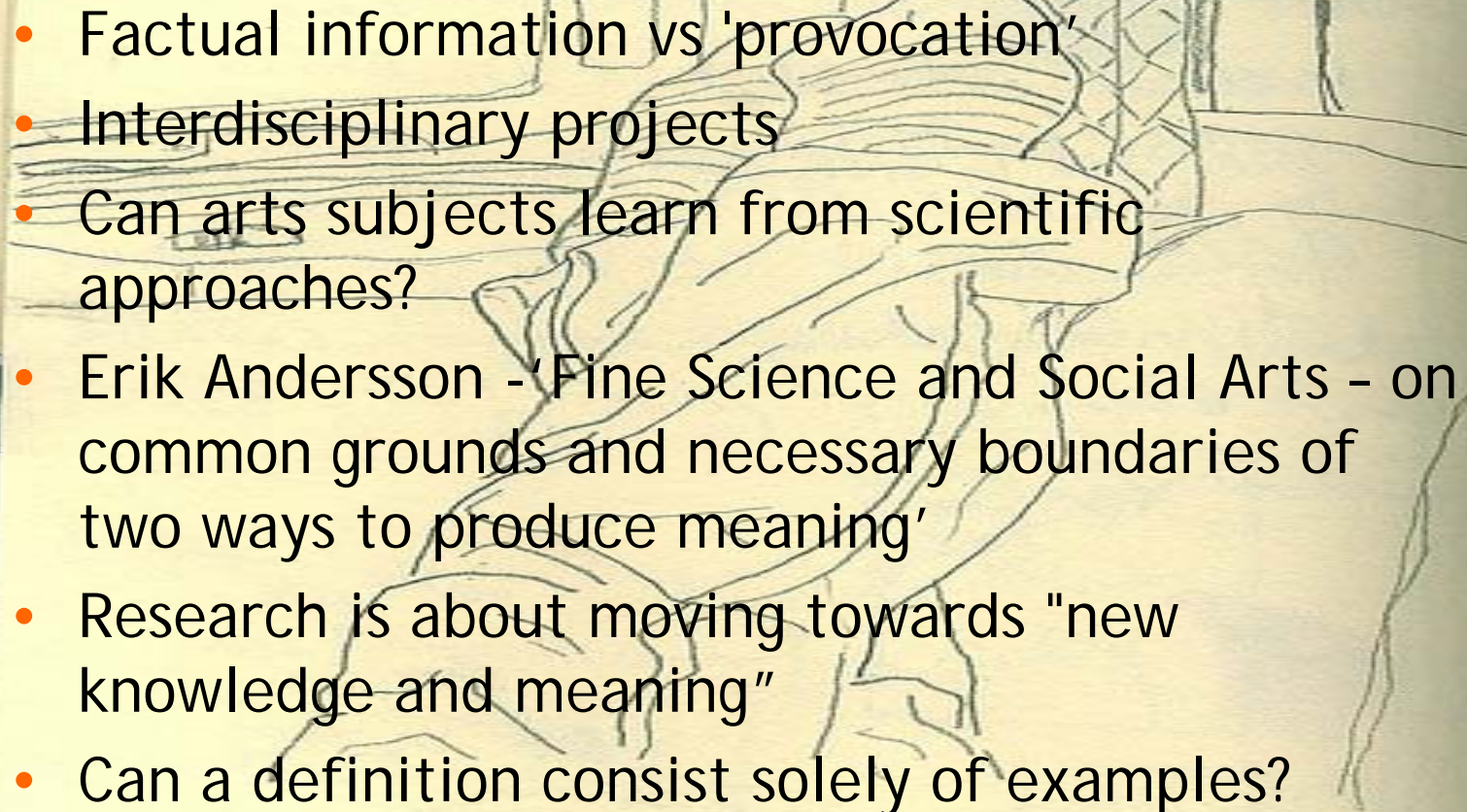
An A7 sketchbook double page spread made by Paul Ryan during his PhD

Workshop: Managing the Material

- Kaptur Workshop - Managing the Material: Tackling Visual Arts as Research Data, 14 September 2012
- Attempt to identifying the research data that might be arise out of the research process

Supporting work - storyboards, mood boards, sketch book pages, notes, architectural models, reflection journals. Recordings of activities/conversations. Video/audio. Raw data - digital photographs, video recordings, interviews. Interdisciplinarily needs - computer algorithms, interactive physical art, installation, interactive experience of the art work (for neuro-psychology) Exhibition records, catalogues, preview invitations, correspondence with venue/curators.

Issues and Observations

- 
- Factual information vs 'provocation'
 - Interdisciplinary projects
 - Can arts subjects learn from scientific approaches?
 - Erik Andersson - 'Fine Science and Social Arts - on common grounds and necessary boundaries of two ways to produce meaning'
 - Research is about moving towards "new knowledge and meaning"
 - Can a definition consist solely of examples?

UAL RDM Policy

“Research data in the Arts is not so easily defined as in STEM subjects. The data types cited in this policy are not intended to be exhaustive, and definitions of what constitutes research data will vary from funder to funder. Generally, research data can be considered anything created, captured or collected as an output of funded research work in its original state.

In essence, this policy covers raw materials and finished outputs, but not necessarily the stages in between. It applies primarily to externally funded, digital research data, although non-digital data (such as sketchbooks) may also be covered, and requests from researchers to digitise existing analogue research data will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Where data exists in a non-digital form, appropriate effort to manage this to meet the expectations is also likely to be required. No reasonable external request to access analogue research data resulting from externally funded research will be refused, and access should be arranged between the principal investigator and the department of Research Management and Administration (RMA).”

Lessons Learnt

- A definition *is* useful
- Some creative arts researchers may feel threatened by definitions and “performing artistic research in this demystified way “
- Clarifying position of interpretation/inquiry is useful for arts *and* sciences
- Examples are helpful
- Terminology is tricky
- There is a lot more interesting discussion to be had!

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Any questions?

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