

studio 41

project 41:

a collaborative platform on curatorial practice

19 June 2011

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Section 1: studio 41 and project 41

studio 41 is a space for contemporary curating and art in Glasgow, launched in January 2011, to develop resources and facilitate discussion on contemporary curating, and support the presentation of curatorial projects.

While the practice of curating has expanded research and practical opportunities for creative practitioners, there seemed to be limited resources, open and accessible to emerging creative practitioners to develop their practice in Scotland. It was against this backdrop that studio 41 sought to develop a curatorial training programme, which we gave a working title of "project 41".



Why a call for collaboration?

In the initial stages of planning, we had intended to create a seminar-style programme with talks by invited speakers on different aspects of curatorial practice. However, there was uneasiness about the definitive tone a seminar possessed, particularly since the practice of curating was fluid and challenging to define from a sole perspective.

We scrapped the seminar and decided to pursue a collaborative approach to develop project 41. Naturally, questions arose. What if there was no chemistry among the participants and conversation became stilted? What if disagreements prevented project 41 from being created?

The benefit of releasing control over the precise nature of project 41 opened a space for the programme to be responsive to the interests and needs of a small group of collaborators interested in dialogue and development of the practice of

curating. The element of the unexpected and bringing together of different perspectives was also, in our view, reflective of the spirit of curating.

Together with the launch of studio 41, we opened a call for collaborators to develop project 41, directed at final year students and creative practitioners within 2 years of graduation, as we were interested in focusing our initial efforts on emerging creative practitioners. Blair Cunningham (artist and lecturer at Glasgow University in 20th century art) and Marianne Greated (artist and lecturer at Glasgow School of Art) evaluated the applications. Through the call, collaborators Jac Mantle, Kate Martin, Louisa Preston and Noam Darom came onboard project 41 with Magdalen Chua, from studio 41.

The process... and how it changed

Each of the three workshops was structured with an agenda, reading material and questions, to enable discussion during the workshops. The agenda for the three workshops held on 16 February, 2 March and 16 March 2011 are available in Appendix B.

When we opened the call for collaboration, we had planned that the workshops would, sequentially, address three questions of the “why”, “what” and “how” of a curatorial training programme, in order to develop the objectives, content and format of project 41.

After the first workshop, two aspects arose which changed the course of the second and third workshops. The first was the importance of the format of project 41 in influencing the content; the second was using the interests of all the collaborators as starting points for project 41. With that in mind, the second and third workshops were angled towards generating ideas for project 41 based on the interests of the collaborators, and these discussions eventually shifted towards two distinct platforms, both based on the idea of creating dialogue on the process of curating.

In section 2, we share reflections on the process from some of the collaborators; and in section 3, an indication of how the outcome will lead towards a practice-led platform that we intend to present in September 2011.

Section 2: Collaborators

Some of the collaborators share their reflections from their involvement in project 41. Written reflections during the process are available in Appendix C.



JAC MANTLE. Jac is a Glasgow-based writer on contemporary art and culture. <http://arcadianow.wordpress.com>

What were your reasons for applying to collaborate on project 41?

I wanted to participate more in collaborative projects as I have mainly focused on critical art writing since graduating. The fact that studio 41 identified the call-out as a response to a lack of curating resources and discourse in the city appealed to me, as I'm particularly interested in observing and critiquing art practice in my local situation. I also wanted to get involved in more peer discussions.

How did your background inform your personal visions or interests for the project?

I'm interested in questioning and exploring the methods and approaches of art practice within Glasgow, and particularly in the state of critical engagement with art surrounding its making and reception. I felt that the strong DIY ethos among artists that informs the nature of this engagement is probably related to the lack of resources and discourse on curating. With the intention to develop a new curatorial platform/resource in relation to the local situation, I saw it as a potential site to increase discourse and questioning of art practices.

**What did you find interesting or learn from the process?
Were there any issues/anything you would have done differently?**

I found Mag's role as facilitator vital in keeping our workshops focused, as with only three 3hr workshops, there is no time for digressions. I think the preparation we did in advance – with Mag sending round the workshop schedule, and all of us sharing reading/links – was again vital in enabling us to move through the discussions at the pace that we did. However, I would have preferred to spread it across at least five workshops, as it sometimes felt like a distraction rather than an inspiration to read up on other projects for inspiration.

Will you take any aspects of project 41 to apply in your practice?

I will take the approach of exposing the process and making it more transparent. - This came up early in our discussions, and consisted of documenting everything (including recording our discussions) and making the material available on the studio 41 blog. However, I did at times feel as though we concentrated more on documenting our ideas than exploring them fully through discussion – so in future I would also be conscious to avoid this. The discursive exhibition project that we have decided to pursue focuses on the relations between writing and art; I think executing this will prompt me to undertake more writing collaborations in the future.

LOUISA PRESTON. Louisa's current practice investigates the relationship between physical and psychological experiences of urban space and a formal exploration of spatial concepts and materials. <http://www.louisapreston.net>

What were your reasons for applying to collaborate on project 41?

project 41 was created out of a response to a perceived lack in resources towards discussion and development of curating as a practice in Glasgow. I was interested in being involved in the kind of response studio 41 had in mind and offered, because I felt there was a similar lack of resources in Dundee. I had previously been on the committee of Generator Projects in Dundee, where I was involved in curating the programme there. This involved thinking about resources for artists mainly, who had recently graduated. I had also collaborated before on a project for the Young Artists Bucharest Biennial and found this to be fruitful and challenging. There had been a gap since then in my practice of collaboration and I was keen to be involved in instigating a further collaborative project with Magdalen of studio 41 and the other collaborators involved. During my studies on the Master of Fine Art course in Dundee, at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, I had been increasingly interested in the concepts of exhibition display and performative aspects of work under development. With these points in mind I applied to collaborate on project 41 to explore the possibilities for developing a project, which would aim to establish a dialogue and provide a critical engagement with artists and practitioners in Glasgow, and also develop my experience with curatorial practice and collaboration.

How did your background inform your personal visions or interests for the project?

I have focused on working as a practicing artist since graduation, and this has involved creating the opportunity to exhibit. From the point of view, of cultivating the opportunity, I have been interested in the artist role in the curating process. In addition I have been increasingly interested in exhibition display and museum and exhibition strategies for display. I wanted to bring to the collaboration an aim for me of challenging and developing current modes of engagement with art. I was keen to meet everyone involved in collaborating in the project to make new connections and have plenty of discussion around the topics of curators and artists practice. This kind of engagement can produce really interesting outcomes and opinions with which to reflect on, and that was a key interest for me with the project.

What did you find interesting or learn from the process?

The format that Magdalen devised of setting a text to read prior to meeting focused the beginning of each workshop. The process led to the group being able to get into fairly in depth conversations quite quickly. As with all collaborations I think egos are an important factor, and the character of the ego's involved soon becomes apparent as to whether things are going to work out or not. I found this aspect of the process interesting, especially when people have slightly different agendas. The aspect of communication also was extremely important. I found it interesting during our conversations, how we had to clarify our definitions and terminology when discussing curating, the roles of artists and curators, and creative practitioners. This in itself led to very interesting discussions. The process overall was very clear from the outset and the scheduled meetings had ambitious outcomes in relation to the time we had to meet. This I found interesting in terms of having to keep the focus and path of the discussions tightly in check.

Were there any issues/anything you would have done differently?

As is so often the case, there is never enough time. At the end of the third workshop, it was clear that we had not made a definite outcome for a desired project. We had two ideas, but we had not been able to work them both through to a clear plan. This led us to going away to think on it more individually with the plan to discuss further on Skype. Skype is a fantastic tool for joining people up who are in different countries. We had a discussion, on an evening through Skype, where Noam was in Prague, Magdalen was in Asia, and Kate, Jac and I were in Scotland. In theory this is a fantastic way to communicate, but it led to difficulties as without being able to see the people you are talking to, it's harder to see who wants to speak next, so at points there were two or three of us trying to talk at the same time.

I think the spacing out of the three workshops was the perfect amount of time. I wonder though if we could have benefited from having double the amount of meetings. If we had six meetings over the period of roughly twelve weeks this may have led to a stronger relationship built up within the group. It is difficult when you

have people living in different places at a distance to keep the momentum up, but I think we did well considering.

Will you take any aspects of project 41 to apply in your practice?

project 41 has opened me up to the possibilities of re addressing a development of a curatorial aspect to my practice, and I am keen to explore written work as another development to my work. There is a lot of scope with the Project outcomes to feed into my practice, and I'm looking forward to the upcoming Exhibition-in-Progress, the first experiment project we have planned for early September. The texts that we covered were really useful and I have hopes that the collaborations that take place will have a longevity, where future projects and outcomes can tie in and develop on this initial project.

MAGDALEN CHUA. Mag's practice examines how agency functions in artistic and social processes, and she is curatorial worker at studio 41.

What were your reasons for applying to collaborate on Project 41?

While my involvement in project 41 stems from my role at studio 41, I was interested in project 41 simply because I found that there were few opportunities to engage in discussion about curating – from the history of exhibition-making, issues about curating as artistic practice, to debates regarding the authorial role of the curator, etc. Through this project, I was interested in connecting with different people open to sharing about their views about and experience with curating.

How did your background inform your personal visions or interests for the project?

I have been grappling with the concept of agency for sometime – from a sociological approach and thinking towards how it is understood within the curatorial process.

Before the call-for-collaboration, I had an idea for the outcome of project 41. By testing and seeing what happens when a concept enters a collaborative framework, I was hoping to reflect on the values that have been espoused by collaborative projects. At the same time, I was also keen to have a better grasp of the constraints that are imposed by a collaborative framework because of the interplay of the intentions and conversations between different individuals.

**What did you find interesting or learn from the process?
Were there any issues/anything you would have done differently?**

On hindsight, I realised that there were two big areas the workshops aimed to address. The first was the issue of curatorial practice and education; the second was more outcome-focused, of a curatorial training programme (ie. project 41). Due to the goal-oriented nature of the three workshops towards creating project 41, the first issue was skimmed through. There was great potential in further discussion on the first issue simply because of the currency of the topic and if this was done, I

think that the process by itself, would have been a stronger platform for peer-learning.

Will you take any aspects of project 41 to apply in your practice?

As my practice so far has involved both writing and curating, I hope that the exhibition in-progress idea will challenge my understanding of the relationships between objects, space and text.

I see another important outcome of project 41 as the beginnings of a network, which I hope will be a starting point for future joint projects.

The collaborative effort through the three workshops has also led to insights for my own research into agency.

NOAM DAROM. Noam is an inter-media conceptual artist who curates projects and creates situations involving the participation of guests.

<http://www.noamdarom.blogspot.com>

My reasons for participating in the workshop were primarily curiosity and the will to get involved in some framework that can create interesting moments for me and for my art. I realised that my expectations of seeing an immediate outcome should, perhaps be reduced and that the workshop might conclude as a thinking workshop only. I learnt that when it comes to practicalities, it's very hard to agree on something, but that is not a bad thing necessarily. Having said that, I do believe that there will be an outcome and that those meetings were beneficial for me. I think I will try to think and create, in my work, different platforms for meeting with different people. I intend on creating a reading group discussing art topics. I also hope to suggest and realise a project for studio 41 that continues some of the ideas that came up. I hope to continue influencing the content and the form of the project, but probably more as a silent partner, (or if you wish, unseen partner).

For the future, I would like to suggest few things I would do differently:

- Above all, I think longer sessions, perhaps an hour longer, would help achieving a clearer message. There were a lot of things to discuss and I think that some important things were not handled thoroughly. Since some of the stuff was heavy material I would suggest allowing more breaks in order to regenerate.
- I found working in couples was good, but it created some "camps". I think that the format of pairing up as couples is a good way to discuss things in detail, and is also a good way to break the format of the group. I would like to suggest that the format of forming couples changes, so that everyone can get to work with each other.
- I think that we spoke a lot about meeting people with similar interests but in a different place and I think that is something we could have done ourselves. I think we all came to meet people with mutual interests, but we

really only worked together. I think that the social surroundings are not unimportant, because they can allow a fresh thoughts and informal discussion that will oppose conservative heaviness. (In other words, it should be also fun, not only important).

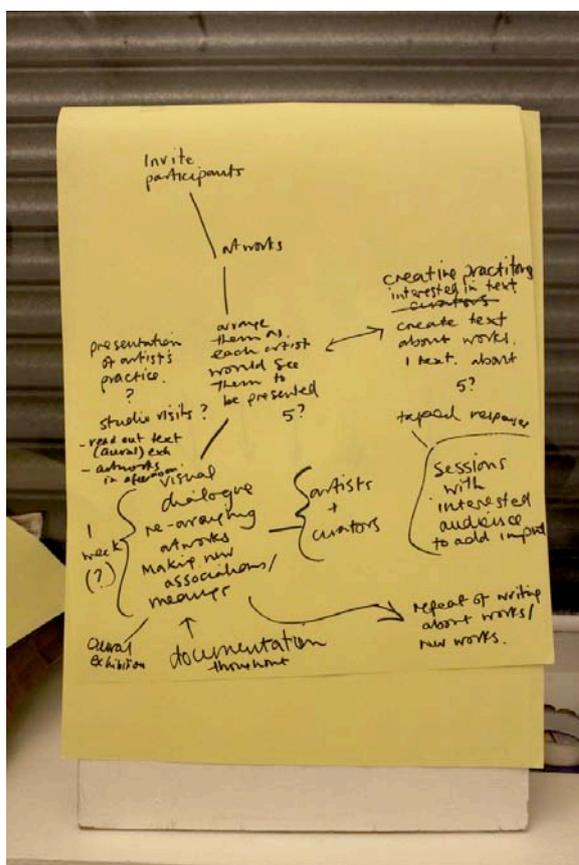
Many things can be done differently, but I think that all in all, it went well and I really admire Mag's persistency. Also I would like thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. It was a pleasure.

Section 3: project 41

From the discussions and reflections, some of the key words regarding the objective of project 41 which surfaced were “practice-led”, “dialogue”, “experimental” and “collaboration”. We identified the main audiences to be creative practitioners who fell between emerging and established levels, and wanted to explore other avenues beyond residencies that appeared to be the primary mode of development available.

There were two sets of ideas that surfaced from the workshop discussions. One was an exhibition to address some of the issues that were raised during the workshop – extending the exhibition process to incorporate discussions, exploring the relationships between objects in an exhibition space, as well as between objects and text. The other idea was creating a series of events to bring about informal discussions on concerns within curatorial practice, and grow a network of creative practitioners interested in curating. From the two ideas, we decided to focus on the exhibition to investigate the issues we had discussed, and a test that we could expand on in future.

Jac, Louisa and Mag will continue to develop project 41 from Scotland, and bring together others keen on collaborative practice to create the exhibition experiment; and Noam will be providing input virtually as he has returned to Prague. project 41 is intended to be presented in the first week of September 2011, and more information about other collaborators and the specific plans for the project will be shared closer to the date.



Appendix A: Resources

The following resources are suggested by studio 41 and project 41 collaborators. Additional weblinks to resources and opportunities are available at www.facebook.com/thestudio41

Websites on curatorial practice:

Website of Iain Irving, researcher of independent curatorial practices. His website includes a mapping of the current situation of curatorial practice in Scotland, opportunities, as well as a reading list: <http://iainirvingresearch.wordpress.com>

Alexandra Ross' website, Continuous Curatorial Conversations, a project that focuses on the process of dialogue when it is applied to curatorial practice:

http://www.vrc.dundee.ac.uk/cc/Continuous_Curatorial_Conversations/Home_.html

Michelle Kasprzak's views on contemporary art curating. Website includes news and opportunities: <http://www.curating.info/>

Articles related to curating:

The Office As Studio, A conversation between Oren Pinhassi to Doron Rabina (2009), Translated by Noam Arie Darom. Click [here](#) to download PDF.

Paul O'Neill on the centrality of discourse to contemporary curating:

<http://www.slashseconds.org/issues/001/003/articles/poneil/index.php>

Susannah Thompson's article on the critical state of Glasgow's artist-led scene.

Though not about curating, the article provides some context on practice in Glasgow: <http://www.a-n.co.uk/publications/shortcut/article/236007>

Programmes and conferences on curatorial practice:

Banff International Curatorial Institute Symposium: Art Curators Unprofessional?:

<http://www.banffcentre.ca/programs/program.aspx?id=1038&p=detail>

Review of the conference:

http://www.canadianart.ca/online/features/2010/11/18/are_curators_unprofessional/

Cultures of the Curatorial, postgraduate programme at Academy of Visual Arts, Leipzig: <http://www.kdk-leipzig.de/programm.html>

Some laughs while you are at it:

A surprise intervention: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-6678656432223399576#>

Rather amusing article looking at the terminology of 'curator':

<http://www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/wc/2556/>

Appendix B: Agenda from the 3 Workshops

PROPOSED OUTLINE OF WORKSHOP 1: WHY PROJECT 41? **4-7PM, WEDNESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2011, AT STUDIO 41**

The 1st workshop will be focused on thinking through the rationale and objectives of project 41. I would like to suggest that we discuss the following parts during the workshop, and have included some questions for us to think through.

For general reading, please find attached a PDF of an essay, "In the space of the curatorial: art, training, and negotiation" by Beatrice von Bismarck, which I found thought-provoking in the way connections were drawn between curatorial practice and education.

PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS (4-4.20pm)

A round of introductions, especially since it could be the first time some of us have met each other! Could we also share:

- a. An example of a curatorial project we had encountered in person or read about, which influenced our practice or made an impression on us.
- b. How do we understand curating / curatorial practice? Please bring along any definitions you have found useful.

PART 2: WHY PROJECT 41?

1. Personal perspectives (4.20-4.50pm)

Given that the call for collaborators draws together diverse views, I thought it would be good for us to share our personal views on the following two areas. This would also give us a chance to share what we hope to learn or look towards.

- a. Why do I want to participate in this collaborative process?
- b. Why am I interested in developing a curatorial training programme?

2. Place perspectives (4.50-5.20pm)

In the call for collaborators, I'd stated that project 41 is proposed because there seems to be limited resources in Glasgow. I was wondering if this is the case or if resources are under the radar and the issue is more of access. Among us, there are a number who aren't based in or from Glasgow, and we could also discuss broader issues of context-responsive practices. Some questions to think through:

- a. How should project 41 respond to art and curatorial practices in Glasgow, and in Scotland?
- b. Are there connections with what is occurring in cities or regions that you are familiar with?

4. Pedagogical perspectives (5.20-5.50pm)

In addition to perspectives informed by our personal interests and the place(s) that we intend to operate within or together with, are there views from within existing curatorial training programmes to consider? What do curatorial programmes within institutional or independent spaces reveal? Questions to think through:

- a. Are there valid or contentious rationales and objectives from some of the curatorial training programmes that you have come across? Please see link (http://www.flashartonline.com/interno.php?pagina=articolo_det&id_art=440&det=ok&title=CURATORIAL-SCHOOLS) which provides some information on curatorial schools, though some of the curatorial programmes have ceased to operate, eg in Konstfack, Sweden and LaSalle, Singapore.
- b. Are there implications to us functioning outside of the institution? Please see these links for some discussion on experimental pedagogy in Mexico (http://www.ici-exhibitions.org/index.php/dispatch/posts/experimental_pedagogy_and_art_practice_in_mexico/) and closer to where to are (<http://artschoolalternatives.tumblr.com/>)

5. Putting it all together – why project 41 and what are its objectives? (5.50-6.10pm)

PART 3: AUDIENCES (6.10-6.30pm)

Based on the objectives of project 41, are there specific audiences we should focus on?

PART 4: SOME OF THE LOGISTICS (6.30-7pm)

I'm hoping to discuss these 3 areas:

1. A review of the workshop format – what worked; what didn't; and whether there is anything we could do to improve or try out for subsequent workshops.
2. Outline of the process for the 2nd workshop
3. Based on the above two points, whether there any roles we would like to take on for the workshops.

PROJECT 41 COLLABORATION: PROPOSED OUTLINE OF WORKSHOP 2
4-7PM, WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2011, AT STUDIO 41

The original outline for the workshops was to discuss the content in workshop 2. In view of the direction of the discussions from workshop 1, it seemed that our emphasis was on a model which allowed for curators to “think” and “try”. Let’s shape this workshop towards a discussion on a suitable model for project 41.

For general reading, please find look through the links below. Questions to think through are listed below each link.

1. “in support of” – a text by Celine Condorelli (researcher in support structures for architecture and exhibition practices) on notions of support. I chose this text because I thought it would tease out a different way of approaching the issue of “support” or resources, especially given its poetic language.

<http://www.cascoprojects.org/?show=&entryid=132>

- Which are the definitions or methods of support in Condorelli’s text that you find relevant, in thinking about project 41?

2. Art and curatorial resource platforms related to “thinking” and “trying”:

a) wrong place – a project in Hong Kong encompassing 4 exhibition experiments, with presentation, discussion and open days for each experiment.

http://www.wrongplace.org/wp_about_exp.html

b) Doers and/of doings: a pop-up school – an ongoing art project at Sierra Metro, Edinburgh, where Travis Souza invites artists on a month-long peer-coaching commitment.<http://doersandofdoings.wordpress.com/>

- Which are the specific methods from these two examples you find meaningful, in the context of Condorelli’s notions of support?

PART 1: SETTLING DOWN (4 – 4.10pm)

Outline of this workshop, and our roles.

PART 2: IDEAS (4.10 – 5pm)

During workshop 1, we had spoken about how we wouldn’t be able to understand all the needs and wants of curators, but we could use ourselves as a basis. This could be a good starting point. Could all of us prepare an idea to share, based on either (a) or (b):

- a) Propose a curatorial project as part of project 41, detailing the kind of possible methods/platforms/resources you would find helpful to “think” through your project, and “try” it out.

- b) Specific formats or programmes for curators to “think” and “try”. This could be informed by some of the educational or curatorial models that you have experienced or read about.

Please feel free to bring materials to explain your idea, keeping to 10 minutes. I will have a projector and laptop available.

BREAK (5-5.10pm)

PART 3: DISCUSSION ON PITCHES (5.10 – 6pm)

- 1) Small group discussion (5.10 – 5.30pm)

We'll break into two groups, to discuss the ideas – what we found interesting, thought could be improved, etc.

The aim of the small group discussion would be to put together a joint-proposal, by adapting / distorting the ideas.

- 2) Joint-proposal presentation (5.30-6pm)

Each group to present their joint-proposal, for discussion. 15 minutes for each group.

BREAK (6-6.10pm)

PART 4: THINK (6.10 – 6.30pm)

I've set aside some time for each of us to individually think through what was presented and discussed.

At this stage, we would (possibly) have two joint-proposals from Part 3. Lets turn back to the objective of project 41, as a resource for curators to think critically on an issue and to obtain the resources to experiment.

Based on our insights from the general readings, how have we thought about platform for “thinking” and “trying”. Do the joint-proposals address these? If not, how could they be adapted?

PART 5: DISCUSSION ON MODEL (S) OF PROJECT 41 (6.30 – 6.50pm)

This part would be a group discussion to share our reflections, and to discuss whether we would like to pursue one or both joint-proposals for project 41 (or even a combination of both).

PART 6: SOME OF THE LOGISTICS (6.50-7pm)

A review of the workshop format and sharing of thoughts towards the third workshop.

PROJECT 41 COLLABORATION: PROPOSED OUTLINE OF WORKSHOP 3
4-7PM, WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2011, AT STUDIO 41

By the end of workshop 2, we had two exciting ideas for project 41 which I will broadly term as “exhibition process” and “school”. It would be great if you could communicate with each other before workshop 3 to refine the ideas so that we could discuss them in workshop 3.

The main objectives of workshop 3 are to reach a framework and implementation outline for these two areas:

- project 41, based on “exhibition process” and “school”
- documentation of the 3 workshops.

I’ve included links to some resources for us to look through as we refine our ideas.

1) Talking about Rotterdam: <http://www.talkingabout-rotterdam.blogspot.com/>

This is a peer-to-peer exchange based on a part-workshop and part-tour format. While this is in the context of an international exchange between Cameroonian and Dutch creative practitioners, it includes some useful areas for us to consider for each of our ideas. Eg, visits to art spaces with facilitated conversations, peer critique sessions, matching of practitioner with host, film screenings, etc. The context to this peer-to-peer exchange is described here:

<http://www.fuckinggoodart.nl/fga25.html>

2) Manifesta workbook: <http://www.manifestaworkbook.org/contents.html>

The Manifesta workload offers a series of downloadable chapters of ideas on art mediation. I thought it could provide some insight into specific methods we could incorporate for our ideas, and also in thinking about representing the content and visual structure for the PDF documentation of the 3 workshops.

I recall that one of the issues we spoke about was audience, text and exhibition, and I found this case study useful:

<http://www.manifestaworkbook.org/Liveencounter.pdf>

~

I hope to get your help for the following areas again:

- Kate: time-keeper
- Jac: note things left unsaid
- Noam and Louisa: photograph and email pictures from discussion and notes

PART 1: “EXHIBITION PROCESS” AND “SCHOOL” IDEAS (4 – 4.10pm)

I’ve catered about 10 minutes at the beginning, so that the two groups can run

through in person, what has been communicated via email.

If you need more time and would like to arrange to meet up earlier, studio 41 will be available from 3pm.

PART 2: SETTLING DOWN (4.10– 4.15pm)

Lets re-group to:

- have a brief recap of what was discussed in workshop 2
- outline the objectives of this workshop and what will be discussed

PART 3: THE TWO IDEAS (4.15– 5.15pm)

A discussion on the two ideas:

- a. Exhibition process (4.15 – 4.35pm)
- b. School (4.35 – 4.55pm)
- c. Integrating - how should we integrate both ideas together for project 41, or should they remain as separate programmes? (4.55 – 5.15pm)

BREAK (5.15-5.20)

PART 5: BRINGING IT TOGETHER (5.20-6.10pm)

- a. Team & partners – discussion on who would like to continue to be involved in implementing project 41, roles you would like to play, and whether there are other individuals or organizations you would like to suggest partnerships with.
- b. Scope of project 41 and budget – Here is where the constraints come into play. The team which implements project 41 will decide on the allocation of the budget and if additional sources of funds are required.
- c. Working process – platforms and frequency of communication for project 41 implementation team. We will likely arrive at only a sketch of how we could implement project 41. How often should we communicate on this, online or through face-to-face meetings?

PART 6: PDF PUBLICATION (6.10 - 6.45pm)

a. Audiences, structure and topics (6.10 – 6.35pm)

We spoke about documenting the on-goings of the 3 workshops through a PDF publication as it would be a simple format to create and forward to our contacts.

Could we think about the following areas to discuss during the workshop?

- How would this document be used and who do we want to circulate it to?

- How has our thinking towards curatorial practice evolved? What were recurring themes or issues? What areas were left unexplored but important to delve into in future? How do you think these could be represented in the documentation? Some possible ways to get us thinking – interviews with collaborators, thematic, chronological, anti-chronological (ie. starting with the outline of project 41 and moving backwards to how it came about), etc.
- If you have come across documentation of other workshops which you think would be useful to share, please feel free to bring those along.

Note: I'm planning to either upload on a password-protected site or send CDs to all, the video from the first workshop, as well as the audiotaped recordings from the three workshops.

b. Responsibilities and next steps (6.35 – 6.45pm)

A discussion on our involvement for the different parts of the documentation. Some of the possible areas are writing and editing, design, and compilation.

When do we want to complete the document?

PART 6: WRAP-UP (6.45-7pm)

Any thoughts to share on the 3 workshops.

Appendix C: Reflections from Workshop 1 and 2

Workshop 1

After workshop 1, reflections were provided based on three questions, on the most important rationale/objective, the most interesting idea for format/content, and the desired immediate outcome from the 3 workshops.

The reflections are included beneath each question.

1. Your view on the most important rationale and objective for project 41, based on our discussion.

"To develop some kind of platform for discussion and collaboration around curating, with a flexible, experimental approach and not rigidly structured. The rationale seems quite simple – there seems to be an absence in the region of any kind of inclusive space for discussion and practice-based examination of curating."

~

"The most relevant objective for me is captured in the phrase "think and try", where project 41 aims to be a platform for curators to think critically on an issue and to obtain the resources to experiment. While we had spoken of "think and do", on reflection, I understand the idea of "do" as experimentation, and thought of rephrasing it to "think and try". I see the objective of "platform for think and try" as responding to two issues we spoke of, the lack of critical discussion and a gap in resources specifically for those in the path between emergent to established curators, for whom residencies currently appear to be the dominant form of learning."

~

"I propose the most important rationale for project 41, should cover the following points;

- Be a fluid and critical response to current curatorial and artist practice
- Establish and maintain a visual and theoretical dialogue
- Collaboration to share, propose and develop alternative modes of engagement with art and the curating process
- Creating knowledge through active practice

Establish, develop and maintain a dialogue, and critically engage with current curator and artist situations and contexts, in Scotland, UK and Europe. Selecting our common ground of interest with one example type of project could be a starting point. From this I think it would be pertinent to develop new strategies for engagement with art and the curator/artist relationship/process, and for the engagement to be both critical, thinking and then active, practical doing to test theories and concepts developed in a project 41 outcome.

Collaboration, with a focus on the process of curating, with a practical testing out of concepts and fostering of dialogue in visual form is key from my point of view, which aim to explore and develop new strategies for engagement."

2. From what arose during the discussions, what is the most interesting idea for content and/or format?

"A space for groups to meet regularly and discuss issues around contemporary curating, with a focus on practice; also, the opportunity for people to curate projects, either within or outside Studio 41. Although there's a perceived need in Glasgow for information on resources etc, I feel this is something that individuals can research themselves (whereas discussion can't happen on one's own), and also, from our discussion at the workshop it seems as though we are all more interested in pursuing something experimental – a "laboratory" model, rather than a "business" model. This also seems to me what would be most appropriate to practitioners and the nature of practice in Glasgow.

If there were to be a practical curating component to it, I would suggest this could dictate or provide a focus for the content of the discussions – practice-led as opposed to theory-led."

~

"My main takeaway from just the 1st workshop was that the project 41 could follow a flexible format which allows for (1) thinking and trying, and (2) is based on our individual interests. The second part about basing project 41 on our individual interests arose from the question we posed ourselves, regarding what curators want, and the understanding that while we will not be able to cater to all the needs of curators, we can use our curatorial interests as starting points. In a sense, it could be explored through the question "what would enable me to think critically about x, and how should I test it out?" Turning this question into project 41 (or one aspect of project 41) would then require that each step is open to public access (or at least access beyond myself), in order for other practitioners to also benefit from it.

Through our discussions, I realised that our interests centered on curating as a process, and was frequently mentioned in relation to and within other disciplines. Some of our interests involved education as curating, art as curating / curating as art, curatorial models and methods, and practice of and issues with collaboration, exposing of curatorial decisions, etc.

While learning from experienced curators would be beneficial, there was some consensus that the model we envisioned was less of a teacher-student format or one where we were being taught by experts.

An interesting point I wanted to note down was that rather than seeing curators and artists in their individual capacities, it could be more relevant to see curating as a competency or function (eg, "someone who curates", instead of "a curator"), given that an individual today often takes on different roles in different situations.

Related to this was a point regarding the performative nature of curating, manifested in situations where one has to take on the curatorial role in projects."

~

"The space for support for curators and resources I think could be satisfied partly with the material produced from our discussions. Additionally however I think a practical example test project would be really valuable as a focal point or framework to investigate our proposals and to act as a basis or forum for further interest and the fostering of meetings and discussions to happen between practitioners and curators.

A project I propose is for the current group members to collaboratively propose a set of questions or one question which aims to be addressed through a dialogue between practitioners in the form of an exhibition / installation. The group could participate with artworks or invite artists to participate in a collaborative dialogue with the artworks with the aim to create new artwork over a set period of time. The outcome would be a closing event where the documentation in the form of visual work, writing and photographs are displayed or disseminated. The closing event would also perhaps have a forum for discussion with the audience who we have built interest with in the process of the exhibition dialogue and development."

3. Any output you would like from these three workshops, apart from project 41.

"All the reflections etc to be archived on the blog, possibly with edited transcriptions of the workshop discussions. It seems as though there is limited time to produce any additional outcome, but I would be very interested to get involved with the programme beyond the workshops if there is the opportunity."

~

"I hope that a blog which shares our discussions and reflections, and is able to obtain online responses from other practitioners would be an immediate output from the 3 workshops. A longer-term output I am interested in is the creation of collaborations amongst ourselves, and / or with other art spaces or creative practitioners to develop project 41."

~

"An output which I think would be a valuable resource for curators and practitioners interested in this project would be a collection of the edited transcripts or sound recording / video of the dialogues we have in the three workshops, along with documentation of our meetings, the reading list and links to the essays we have been referring to in our discussions. Given the timescale I think this would be the most simplest published on the current Studio 41 website. I would be very interested to participate in producing other outcomes after the workshops and beyond the project 41."

Workshop 2

The following is a reflection from workshop 2.

“The second workshop focused on using our interests to develop different models for project 41. Some of the circulated examples provided us with ideas on methods to use, or principles to consider. The use of doubts and questions in the project [wrong place](#) could be starting points for project 41 and future participants. The text, [“in support of”](#) by Celine Condorelli on support structures was useful in drawing out some principles of project 41, in particular, the emphasis on the temporal and invisible nature of dependency, and the creation of symbiotic relationships.

It seemed that we naturally gravitated towards two different models for project 41 based on our interests.

One model was driven towards creating collaborative opportunities and programmes within the exhibition process. This involved bringing together practitioners involved in making art and curating to engage in discussions, to experiment with text and space, and to invite resource persons to speak or facilitate dialogues. The value of this model would be that direct connections could be made between discussion and practice, with focused attention on a small group of practitioners for peer learning. Some of the challenges and questions to be addressed involved broadening the process to involve audiences and other practitioners, and determining a suitable process to sustain participation over an intensive period.

The other model centered on events hosted by different individuals, to address curating from cross-disciplinary perspectives and to serve as a springboard for subsequent collaborations undertaken based on the initiative of participants. Some of the events suggested included reading groups and facilitated discussions on thorny issues such as power and roles of artists and curators.

Thinking about both models, the first one, being project-driven, has the advantage of ensuring that the practice-led component would be integrated. The second one, being outward-centered considers a broader group of audiences and might allow for diverse range of collaborations. We spoke about how the different models could relate to each other. For example, the first model could influence the theme and type of events in the second model.

On a separate note, I learnt about [Collective Gallery](#)’s support for writing, and found out that their New Work Scotland Programme contains a writing strand to promote creative writing about the visual arts. This [newsletter](#) publishes some of the writing developed under this programme.”