

# RCAst Martin Newth (Final)

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## SPEAKERS

Benji Jeffrey, Martin Newth

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Hello and welcome to RCAST. A podcast from the Royal College of Art, home to the next generation of creative and the world's number one art and design University representing the largest concentration of postgraduate artists and designers on the planet. We'll be bringing you insight into the philosophy behind the programmes at the RCA by talking to staff, students and the wider RCA community about what we do here and how the work of architects, artists, communicators, designers and researchers affect the world at large. I'm Benji Jeffrey and today I'll be talking to Martin Knuth about how the arts and humanities can artfully highlight our own humanity. Martin is an artist working with photography, exploring the way it intersects with other kinds of practices and processes, such as filmmaking, sculpture, and installation. He's the assistant Dean in the School of Arts and Humanities here at the RCA, having previously been programme director for fine art at Chelsea College of Art and Design. Martin, thank you for joining us today.

01:00

Thank you. Pleasure to be here.

01:02

So I'm gonna start with a really big broad question, which is, what is the distinction between arts and humanities? And why are they so intrinsically tied?

01:12

Well, I'm not quite sure about the distinction between the two. But arts and humanities is kind of like a catch all term for the study of how the world operates. So both through making but also through a kind of an analysis. So I guess that's the distinction that arts kind of is about creating, work and solving, not necessarily solving problems exploring problems exploring challenges, through creation and, and humanities really looks at kind of analysing how the world operates, and how we how we are

in the world and how we think and how we make sense or not, of, of the world around us. So at the RCA, we have a particular kind of suite of Arts and Humanities programmes, which gives us a particular flavour to our particular approach to arts and humanities. And so for us here, we have interestingly, we have art courses, which are programmes which, you know, very discipline, focus, so like painting, sculpture, print, and we also have applied arts, which definitely see themselves as as making art and thinking through making but also kind of has that applied approach to, and relationship with craft. And then we have our suite of humanities courses, which are, like writing and curation. And interestingly, history of design, which makes it really kind of rich array of kind of programmes that people study and things that people study here. So that's a bit different from traditional universities, where arts and humanities might also include things like sociology, and history and English. So we don't have those in quite that way. But we definitely are interested in how we might use the kind of study and research that goes on in those areas to inform the way that we make and think about art and design.

03:01

And I guess, in the same way that arts and humanities is kind of a blurry header, kind of catch all people within those programmes, and within those categories are constantly pushing the distinction from within as well, right?

03:13

Yeah, absolutely. So I think we're particularly interested here, and I'm particularly interested generally in how all the boundaries between things are being blurred, as you've just mentioned. And so the people are finding the edges of discipline, but also crossing over into disciplines and ways of ways of working. That's particularly appropriate now in the world. I think those things are kind of being lots of orthodoxies are being challenged lots of approaches to how you how we think about the world are ripe for proper kind of interrogation. And for a bit of unpicking and a bit of unravelling. I think that's a really positive kind of force at the moment. So that's definitely something we're really interested in. But at the same time, we're also interested in what disciplinarity might mean for somebody. So, you know, you introduce me by saying by mentioning a, you know, craft, basically, I'm interested in photography. So I do come from a particular discipline, even though I, you know, when you say something like you are a photographer, people in the head thing he might do weddings and stuff that mean, that's not necessarily the case. But I am very interested in how you have how you could argue that you can only really have interdisciplinarity, or cross disciplinarity, if you've also got disciplinarity. So we're interested in, in the kind of that sort of paradox, I suppose, or that kind of contradiction. That messiness is exactly what some of the programmes that we're devising at the moment are trying to explore.

04:41

And I guess that's in some way, the importance of the distinctions is to be able to work against it. So we've got our making public moments for the students coming up. And I guess within painting, for example, there were people that aren't using any kind of paint, but thinking through what painting could be in a conceptual way.

04:57

There are examples of that. I mean, you've You've picked on an interesting examples because there are fewer examples of that than there were a few years ago actually. Right. And that's so these things ebb and flow and shift. So we have definitely, so if you go, for example, to printmaking, you definitely have people thinking in a very, very broad way about what the print might be, and about printed communication matter, as opposed as well as kind of traditional printmaking craft based activities. But there's a resurgence of some of these approaches. And they, you know, since I've been engaged in art, these, these have ebbed and flowed. And so actually, now if you go around the painting department, you you see far more figurative paint people, you know, picture people, then then, then I have done for many years, which is extremely interesting. And I think that's got something to do with a rise in interest in kind of positionality in identity. And that's meaning that kind of that kind of form is really sort of interesting students at the moment, so. But we're also interested in the Royal College in those practices, really being challenged by all the other kinds of practices and disciplines around it. And that's, that's a positive challenge that enables people to really have a kind of confidence in their own way of operating and a confidence in how it might fit into a broader array of what what art might be.

06:20

And what do you think that kind of broader sense is like, how do you feel like what's happening at the RCA fits into any kind of particular contemporary? I guess, movements or moments that are happening?

06:32

Yeah. Okay. That's, that's a really great question. And it's something I'm thinking about a lot at the moment. And I think the biggest difference between when I studied frankly, and now is that when I studied, there was an idea of the art world. And you would, we would sort of desperate to lock into that and understand what that might be. That was that was the goal to think about what the art world. And so we think about strategies to enter this kind of this, this feeling that it was a kind of gatekeeping group, who decided whether or not you're allowed to be involved, that has definitely changed in that way is changed is that now there are many art worlds. And I think we and that is a very exciting moment, because it means that students can align themselves with all kinds of different ways of operating. And I think they have agency in a way they might not have done before students might not have done before, in terms of creating the kind of their own art worlds. It's also quite bewildering, it's also quite unnerving somehow to think that there are all these different ways of operating, of course, there are crossovers, and there's still our fair share of kind of problematic gatekeeping, for various, you know, clicks from these clicks are very, very big. But, but I do think that's, you know, in terms of providing an education, that's something we really have to think about and understand, and unpick this idea of being able to engage in this moment where there are lots of different ways of operating and lots of different possibilities.

08:04

And it's so important to be aware of those different circles and worlds, right? Because there's a certain comfort in establishing or being part of one, but then when they brush up against each other, sometimes it can be kind of terrifying, you know, if you're someone that's working in an experimental

way, and going to experimental events, and then suddenly you find yourself tried to say this delicately, you know, kind of old school idea of what a private view should be, for example, it can be quite jarring.

08:30

Yeah, yeah. I mean, I think that's a really super important point. So my feeling is you really kind of have to be articulate or aware of lots of different possibilities for operating. And I think the, the goal is really to be quite be able to navigate different worlds and be able to move between them because you because you understand the context within which they operate. So as you know, we're developing, we're just about to launch this MFA in arts and humanities, which is specifically trying to interrogate all these different worlds, understand them sort of go get to the heart of how they might work so that students have confidence, even if it's not their art worlds to understand, you know, how they might align themselves with them or not. And I think all of us who might work coming I know you're, you're very good example of this often move between different kinds of groups and ways of operating and context and sometimes you want to subvert them and challenge them and sometimes you want to work with them and within them and I think it's yeah, it's a particularly kind of exciting moment for that.

09:33

Yeah, it's kinda like a micro macro kind of moving in and out of things.

09:36

Yeah, yeah.

09:37

And one thing I've noticed at the RCA particularly we've students during like contemporary art practice, it feels like there's a lot of kind of event based things happening now rather than kind of a move towards the long form gallery exhibition as an example. Things kind of popping up and being events where where works brush up against each other in a different way. Is that something you can come speak to?

09:58

Yeah, so it you you picked on probably my favourite subject now. So, I'm really interested in the idea of what sort of phrase I use called events based curriculum. And I'm really interested in the idea that you might, you know, I've always been interested in learning through making, I think that's really important. And that can you know, that genuinely engaging with materials, but also interested in learning through making things happen. And actually, that idea of the best way to really interrogate challenge yourself, understand how you might work best is to is to do things and and to work out how you might engage your work and activate your work with with audiences or whether public or publics and think about what that might be, and not just think about what that might be, but actually do

things. So yeah, you're right on CAP, which is contemporary arts practice, they have a really events heavy curriculum. And so they have things like a cabaret, which is a CIP, like, wow, you get the pun, but the, where they will perform the kind of one minute performance sets and or films or readings, and it's really very experimental and very fast moving. And they did an amazing event at Tate at late at Tate last term, where they had all sorts of activities from kind of, you know, performance through to kind of inviting public to come and make things and make drawings and interact to kind of happenings to all kinds of interesting activities. So that's definitely one way of operating, which I think is particularly useful for for for kind of getting a really kind of intense and exciting idea of kind of understanding how you might activate your practice, you did mention though slowness, where you touched on it. And so I'm also very interested in that, because there's something about making sure that there's some space for a slightly slower pace of operating. And that's kind of tricky, in many ways, kind of tricky. In the world. At the moment, you might say, you know, this, this, this space for a kind of slower learning, and I'm really interested in being able to allow for students to operate at different paces, and acknowledge that you learn and you understand, and you might work at different paces. So you know, whilst that CAP situation, the contemporary practice situation that I just described is very fast moving within that I think there's still, you know, a real, a real kind of awareness and understanding and embracing the fact that you might work kind of a little bit more slowly and generatively, and still be the possibility to do that. And MA's a great chance to do that.

12:36

Yeah. And I guess it kind of foregrounds process within that and the idea that making public is a kind of coma rather than a full stop, you know, you're kind of working on an iteration of something rather than, some idea that there must be a final outcome.

12:53

Yeah, absolutely. So I mean, you know, if education does anything, it focuses on process, what you just described is actually helping you, you know, we're, you know, I'm not like speak for myself, I think, generally, we're not as interested in the final products as we are in equipping people with the ability to understand the process by which they operate best. I think, in my very traditional education, within art, I think there was perhaps too much focus on the product. And I think the moment for me, where I became really aware of kind of a process of operating both in terms of making work and in terms of how I wanted to develop my, myself as a practitioner, as artists and research, it happened after my education. So I think what I'm really interested in doing is providing that space, for really understanding the process by which you operate, we operate within the, within the programmes that we offer.

13:50

And so in the world at large, yeah, there is a kind of a sense of speed, right? There's, there's certain journeys and paths that we should, that we maybe feel like we should be on, and it's difficult to move out of that. So I'm talking quite an abstract term, but I suppose, you know, you kind of think BA, MA, PhD, gotta get in those galleries got to get in the new contemporaries got to get in the kind of like, under 30s, category bit for things, which is really difficult to to kind of work against. Do you have any kind of strategies for thinking through working against those kind of strict ideologies?

14:25

Yeah, I mean, that is really interesting that you say that now, in the world, in a way I feel, you know, I, I graduated in the 1990s. I think it was a bit worse then.

14:36

Oh really

14:37

I think, there was an idea of a young artist, there was like, an absolute obsession with the notion of the young artists were people, you know, in in I remember the British art show, there was an artist who was 19 You know, I mean, this this was sort of thing that happened. I think there was a real you know, and with the with the YBAS when it's written into the, the young British artist, it was about youth it was a kind of obsession with that sort of moment. I I don't think that's quite the same now. I think there's there is definitely an understanding that you can be a kind of developing mid career artists well into, you know, later in life. And I think that's that's kind of positive. I think I've also always been really interested in making. Well, the the work I'm interested in is kind of serious, you know, and I don't mean serious in a doorway that's kind of you know, you know, super sort of browbeating, but has a kind of rigour to it, you know, I'm interested in stuff, which is, you know, seems like it's not just a one liner or a joke. And I do think there's more of that kind of practice being being developed. And yeah, and as I said, a sense of, of artists being acknowledged a little bit later on in their career. So, you know, I don't think there's quite quite that in the same way. That was. The other thing, though, you're touching on, which is a slightly if I can twist your question a little bit is yes, we are in a world now where there are real urgencies. And so there is a sense of urgency about how we need to operate we, you know, we kind of need to, you know, not necessarily a well, we do need to find answers as a as a species don't we, you know, we really need there are terrible things happening. And we, you know, there's an awful responsibility on the younger generations to sort of deal with this problem. There is no space for that to happen in a way that isn't absolutely knee jerk in there is definitely I mean, maybe one of Arts and Humanities roles here is to provide some perspective and distance and a kind of different kinds of interrogation of these problems than literally just trying to find problem solving, well solutions.

16:39

I guess it's about distinguishing where the urgency sets. Yeah. Because if within a practice, do you feel like the urgency sits in you having to simply make things for the sake of making that it's, it's a problem, but it's about finding where the urgencies are and working with them?

16:51

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And well, you know, one of the ways of dealing with an urgency of now is that thing I was talking about is kind of a slowness. I mean, perhaps we do need to return to slightly a different pace of engagement with each other, and with the world, you know, and actually, art can do that fantastically well, and craft can it you know, there's all sorts of examples, you know, if we look at, you

know, different kinds of ways of thinking indigenous cultures, and the way they kind of make and interact, you know, maybe there's a lot to be learned from some of those sorts of approaches at this moment. And I think, you know, arts and humanities are particularly good at interrogating, how that might help us.

17:29

And then kind of picking up on the idea of, I suppose, art doing things and being serious, not necessarily dough, but being serious? How then does that kind of I mean, this is a big question. You know, there's kind of art for art's sake and then a kind of Marxist socialist, opposite to that, which is the work should be politicised. How does work that isn't politicised sit within this conversation? Or is it even possible to work that isn't politicised?

17:59

That is a huge question. And I'm not I'm not going to come up with the exact answer to that now. I mean, I think I think it would be odd not to, to be making work and deny it has a political dynamic to it in sort of, in whatever you're doing, that would be a weird position to take, from my point of view. Yeah, that doesn't mean to say, work has to have a sort of aboutness in it all the time. You know, it doesn't have to be, I suppose. You know, from what you're suggesting, that the concern implied in the conversation is that artwork in its worst manifestation always just becomes illustrative of a problem, or kind of instrumental in terms of how it operates in the world. I think there's definitely a space for work to do things which we don't quite understand or able to articulate. But I do think there are, as I said, there's a sort of political dynamic to that. And I think part of being a student now, and being a college, which is really, you know, prides itself on its research is understanding how work might do that even when it's not overtly political.

19:09

And I guess it's about context, right? It's, I guess, it's kind of white, thinking of the opposite of that. It's kind of the white cube mentality that, you know, the, the white wall of the gallery can make you forget all your worries, and everything that exists outside of it. Like we're always gonna be brushing up against some kind of context.

19:23

Yeah, I mean, exactly. I mean, and I think we're becoming more and more aware of that. Yeah. And I think you're right, nothing's ever made context free, is it? Yeah. The white cube comes with its own huge amount of baggage. And it is such a powerful context in itself. It's weird not to, you know, at least a nice nod to it if you're making your work or acknowledge acknowledge that that's, that's a powerful context, just as much as political situation that moment might be.

19:50

Yeah, and also kind of a political ideology doesn't have to be something that is necessarily heavy all the time. You know, the hell heke talks about joy as a political act. You know, there's kind of ways of

the time. You know, the bell hooks talks about joy as a political act. You know, there's kind of ways of working with the political that isn't always sitting heavy on top of you, I guess.

20:04

Yeah. beautifully put. I mean, absolutely. You know, and yeah, I suppose tying this in with your conversation about what we do it on courses and for MA student is really understanding that or interrogates sharing how we might be doing that, you know, sometimes it, you know, there's there's moments of self realisation that this thing you were doing, which sort of felt right. And that seemed like it was worthwhile, you start to be able to understand and articulate with the help of others and you with your peers, and it's something we're all probably still doing is actually working out actually why it's such it's worthwhile. And what gives it its traction in the world.

20:41

Yeah. What's the point? And does it need a point? Yeah, if it doesn't have a point, does it matter? So other we've got the like, we said, before, we've got the kind of making public moment coming up for students, is there anything happening on the programmes that you think is particularly kind of exciting within the context of this conversation?

20:58

I mean, there's, there's too many things that are really exciting within the context of this conversation to mention, but I think what what you will get is a amazing moment, to see this vast array of positions of practices of approaches, it's really surprising. That's, that's what I would say. And having been involved in a kind of few assessments recently, the range of ways people are operating is genuinely challenging. For me, it's genuine, you know, for for, for a viewer for anybody coming to see you have worked all the way from people working in kind of auto theory and thinking about their own family archives, and how they make sense of those all the way through to people working with kind of AI and wondering what that means for us at the moment and how we're gonna, how we're going to navigate this strange world of kind of post truth and the rest of it. So you'll see all sorts of ways of operating something I'm really interested in, is the fact that we were starting to see more and more students work together, either collaboratively or collectively. I feel there's a there's more space for that, to be developed here at the Royal College. And some of the things we're, we're trying to work with on this, this new programme we're working is really finding ways of making that possible. Because, you know, a lot of the things that we're talking about, are really emphasising what you get from being involved in a community, you know, working these things, these problems through with others working alongside each other. And I think in the world, I mean, this is your first question, you asked about what's happening at the moment in the world. There are interesting examples of more collaborative and collective practice, which you really do are operating against the tide of individualism in the world. And I think, you know, on the program's I think there's even more space for that. So I'm particularly interested in where those are developing.

22:48

I'm just trying to think was, Do you feel that that's something that has come together kind of post the, the height of the pandemic? Or because when was the Turner Prize had an all collective shortlist,



didn't it? Was that pre or post pandemic lock down

23:01

That was mid wasn't it?

23:03

Mid lock downs, yeah. Because that felt like a real kind of pinpoint in terms of an acknowledgement of this collective working being something that is more prevalent than it was before.

23:13

Yeah, I mean, I think that's right, I think. Yeah, I mean, I think that this has been developing at colleges for quite a while, and particularly, you know, for all sorts of really amazing, really interesting reasons students have been working together, understanding the networks they build, whilst they're on courses can be really great networks to develop, once they leave. And I think the term press sort of caught up with that little bit, actually, and I think that's been going on for a while. You know, at the same time, one of the things lockdowns did though, is they sort of they might have, they might have made us realise how important our communities were. But it also drove and drove us literally to our individual spaces. So you know, and you know, it's one of the challenges of a university have any kind of place which assesses students, therefore, that sort of suggestion there, that's about assessing an individual one individual has learned. So, you know, we might not in our structures help actually develop collaborative and collective practice. So I'm really interested in finding ways to work at work around those kinds of processes, which, which can often be correctly described as being a little bit individual or hanging out. So I think that's a, as I said, there's a particularly interesting space for us a moment.

24:31

Yeah. And within these these collective works, there's a sense of finding knowledge in alternative ways. And you mentioned before about works from the show that were that were about family memories and AI and obviously chat GPT is a big thing at the moment. How do you feel like contemporary making arts and humanities is responding to these new forms of knowledge and also this kind of questioning of the knowledge that we see as the canon? So that's an absolutely enormous question.

24:57

I'll have to do that in twos parts, I think I get to the canons things. And really that's brilliant. That's a great question. But I suppose what arts and humanities have always done amazingly well, is to be able to take technologies that exist. And to kind of break them a little bit, or use them in the wrong way slightly, and therefore find out how they can be used. So this may be too long an anecdote for a podcast, but I'll tell you anyway, there's a fantastic thing about the first Sony video camera that Sony made before and they made it because they had the technology to do it the handycam, but they

didn't really know what it was for. So their early adverts, which show people kind of sitting around a pool, kind of doing like family plays, as though that would be the use of it. That turned out not to be the use of it at all. And what happened is that very quickly, feminist filmmakers and kind of performance filmmakers started using that camera and so did groups like the Black Panthers and various other kind of activist groups, because it was a way of filmmaking, which wasn't tied into a kind of craft that was actually pretty much, you know, the the mastery literally of a bunch of men basically. So he got completely reimagined and taken by artists and activists and worked out how it might be deployed in the world. That's a really good example I think of, well, if you transpose that now to AI, I think people are working in a similar way they work how can we slightly unpick this use this in a different way kind of think about differently, how it might describe and help us understand our humanity, as we're talking about today? You know, and rather than kind of just plugging into chat be GBT to get you to write an essay, which is the least interesting thing that is going to do I think.

26:46

I yeah, I guess it comes back to as well like idiosyncratic ways of working with things. So for example, people who are working with paint might be thinking about their own way of working with paint, rather than the correct way of working with paint, which I guess it differs from a kind of art historical way of education being of the great master who teaches their craft.

27:05

Yeah, that's that exactly. So this is the perfect example of this idea of challenging the canon, which is absolutely right. So, you know, as I mentioned earlier, at the Royal College, we still we do have discipline courses, you know, and there is a suggestion there that, you know, learning high level to do painting, or printmaking does suggest a little bit of that, following the master, you know, quite a ways of doing it. But actually, you know, from my point of view, what I want students to become as experts in their own work, as opposed to experts in anybody else's, you know, that's the point. And so it could be you're an expert in manipulating blue tack, or, you know, whatever it might be, but yeah, you're absolutely right. It's about finding your finding the confidence, and the and having that sense of experimentation, to be able to you know use use anything in the way that you think is appropriate.

27:47

And I think, I mean, you might have a different way of thinking about this, I always think that MA, in particular, is the space to finding that confidence to be an expert, because I suppose on your BA, you're figuring stuff out, right? And then I mean, it's not an exact science, but on your video, you're figuring things out, and then in your MA like, right, I'm coming here to become the expert in this one very particular blue tack way of working.

28:18

Yeah, I mean, that's right, I think that's a nice way of putting it, I think, though, you know, you could suggest as the opposite of that, as well, rationally, you know, which is, can be a moment to really, you know, really blow things apart a little bit. And actually, the confidence is actually in not knowing every day. So not really being an expert, you know, you can almost do the opposite. So I'm sort of

disagreeing with myself, like, I do see that as a very interesting range, the area I mean, last week, I went to a presented at a conference in Glasgow called On Not Knowing How Artists Teach and that idea of not knowing being something that actually you can, you can run with as a sort of strategy and approach actually, that sort of sense of, of not being an expert, is something also extremely interesting, in a way that requires more confidence, perhaps than than mastery.

28:36

Yeah And how does that kind of fit into the PhD work that's happening here? Because I guess that is, well, I guess this is, again, is a two fold question. How does research fit into this kind of thought on alternative forms of knowledge? And how does the sense of mastery I guess, come through in a PhD or in a sense of experiment, experimenting towards becoming a master?

29:31

Okay. So the way I'll answer that is by picking on that word experimentation, because I think an art school context is such an interesting word. And I think it's so often used in the wrong way.

29:42

Right.

29:42

And I probably already done it myself in this conversation. But there's, there's an idea that experimentation an art school means that you're going to do something like Chuck a TV out the window, and that's experimentation. That's not experimentation that we know what's going to happen that it's going to smash on the floor. That's not you know, that is sort of about behaving in a way that we imagined might be experimentation experimental, for me experimentation has rigour involved in it. So if you think about it in a scientific context, you test something out. If it doesn't fully work, you adjust something minutely and you test out again and you do it again. And there's a sort of rigour, you still don't know exactly what you're you're getting, you know, you have a goal in mind, but you're, you're constantly finding out. I think, applying that idea to PhD is exactly how it operates in its best way is that is it has this this layer of experimentation in that no one's quite explored this area, but it does it with real rigour. And it's about kind of a testing and adjusting.

30:43

I think it comes back again to this kind of idea of speed and slowness, because I guess the reason sometimes people don't engage meaningfully with experimentation is a fear of failure. Because perhaps there's a sense that you need to get to a certain point by a certain time, which is paradoxically not going to be very useful.

21.01

31:01

Yeah. Yeah. I couldn't agree more with that. But I don't know what the I don't know what the answer is really. But yeah, so I mean, there is a fear of failure. We all have it, of course. But, you know, we're trying to create a space where we don't really talk about failure, because something not working is miles away from a failure, because you've learned loads in working out how it's not going to, it didn't quite work. So it's a very, you know, it's a very odd thing. I mean, at the Royal College we have we don't give people grades in assessment, for example, so we could talk about it being pass/fail. I mean, is, you know, that's not that helpful, either. It's kind of pass pass. Yeah. You know, but because, yeah, I, you know, I think failures, perhaps, perhaps try and avoid using that as a term.

31:48

I always think that failure is something that we should we need to kind of reconsider something that sits next to success, rather than the opposite of success. Because it's, yeah, it's such a useful, maybe not a useful term, but a useful thing to be able to be willing to do.

32:04

Yeah, I mean, you know, and I think lots of people completely engaged with in a side to side way that you've just described, you know, understanding that they, you know, the thing that they're set out to do won't succeed. And that, you know, that's sort of a success in itself, you know, because it's opened up another set of ways of approaching So, ways of working. So yeah.

32:23

great. Gonna start wrapping up now. But I just wondered if you had any advice for people who want to engage with arts and humanities as kind of contemporary topics, whether there's any particular artists you think people should be looking at? Or any texts or anything like that?

32:36

Yeah, I mean, again, that kind of ties in with what we talked about earlier, which was, you know, 20 years ago, I think I would have given a list, and I would think this is my way of doing things. So, it's, it's a really interesting question, because, you know, in our unit specifications that we write for various units we, we write, we have to write a reading, and we have kind of essential texts and recommended texts, that's the format. I'm interested in slightly breaking that, because why would you want to read what I've read? Yeah, you know, I am A level I'm interested in knowing what you as a student, what you bring, you know, particularly with this MFA to of developing, we're really interested in this idea of partnership, and CO authorship have an experience and the students bringing their histories knowledges cultures, approaches, previous education experience and bringing that to interrogate that, share that. So that's one thing specifically on this list that we provide students now, we are also interested in slightly mixing that up. So now we have suggested texts, things that you should listen to things that you might watch, and places that you might visit. And again, that is a slight challenge of a cannon in itself by acknowledging that all sorts of different people work, learn in all sorts of different ways. And I think that's really important to acknowledge. So my advice is to, to not seek out one thing to try and see as much as possible and get a broader kind

of array of influences, you know, as you possibly can. You know, having said that, even places where I'm very familiar of going to, you know, as I said, like, 20 years ago, I would have said, I've definitely look at art monthly every month. It's fantastic. Actually, if you do look at art monthly now you will see it has also really broadened its scope of what it's writing about what's interrogating, so that the whole world's doing this, and that's super exciting. But yeah so.

34:35

Build your own cannon, basically.

34:37

Build your own cannon

34:37

Yeah, if you're, if you're obsessed with love Island and want to interrogate it as a kind of contemporary example of socialising, then like, be confident to do so.

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Yeah. And what you will find is loads of people writing about it and interrogating it at a very serious level, you know, and then that's a big shift because

34:54

then I guess that's the question is, where do you find that if you ask them on that's doing that kind of thing. Where do you how do you find that I'm sorry, this is probably a big question. I want to know as well, so.

35:04

I personally, I never feel it's very far away. I mean, I think I think I think, you know, Google search, failing that, go to the library and ask, because there's this kind of absolute experts in finding that knowledge, you know, but even if you go to, you know, even if you do a Google Scholar search, I mean, if you tap in love Island, you will come up with pages, you know, and, actually, that that's interesting, because in my approach that I've just described, about everyone finding their own way, you know, that there is a problem there. Because there's so much it's impossible to navigate. So one of the things a programme or course does is really help you identify those sources, which are going to be more useful and more helpful for you. So. Yeah, I think I think you get you, you know, in whatever your you're trying to get been trying to think about who would be writing about love Island, and that it's not going to help us in this conversation. But it's more about, yes, I think you get more clear about how you can identify those voices, which are more useful than others.

36:04

Yeah cool. All right. Well, thank you, Martin. You've been listening to RCAST, the Royal College of Art Podcast, home to the next generation of artists, innovators and entrepreneurs, and the world's number one art and design University. You can learn more about our programmes [www.rca.ac.uk](http://www.rca.ac.uk) as well as finding news and events relating to the college and our application portal if you're a prospective student.