

Printshop!

Exploring new possibilities for a dialogic and collaborative space of making through Letterpress printing, artistic collaboration, workshops and public engagement.

Edwin Pickstone



Edwin Pickstone and Ciara Phillips, *Bloused and Mintier*,
East Street Arts, Leeds 2015

Research Output

CONTENTS PAGE

Project details	p.1
Research Questions	p.2
Aims & Objectives	p.3
Context	pp. 4-5
Methods	pp.6-8
Research Output, Project 1	pp. 9-10
Research Output, Project 2	pp. 11-13
Research Output, Project 3	pp. 14-17
Research Output, Project 4	pp. 18-24
Contribution	p. 25
Dissemination	p. 26
Evidence	p. 27
Acknowledgements	p. 28

Project Details

Funder:

Projects 2–4 were supported by Glasgow Life, a charity which delivers cultural, sporting and learning activities on behalf of Glasgow City Council.

Project 1

Bloused and Mintier,
Blip, Blip, Blip

East Street Arts
Leeds
14–29 May, 2015

Artist Collaborator:
Ciara Phillips



Project 2

Printshop! 2015

Tramway,
Glasgow
15–30 Aug, 2015

Artist collaborator:
Ciara Phillips

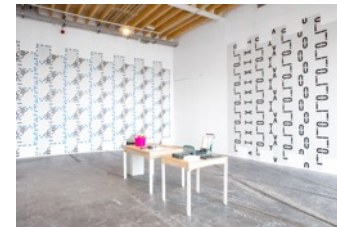


Project 3

Printshop! 2016

Tramway,
Glasgow
5 Aug–4 Sept, 2016

Artist collaborator:
Giles Round



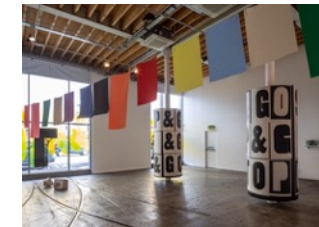
Project 4

Printshop! 2019

Tramway,
Glasgow
20 July–04 Aug, 2019

Printshop Goes Large!
A one day, hands on
Festival of Print
20 July, 2019
Tramway, Glasgow

Artist Collaborator:
Claire Barclay



Research Question

What is the continued importance of the Caseroom as a dialogic and collaborative space of making, and publicly communicating, print heritage?

- What is its importance as a sociable space in relation to opportunities for in-person, hands-on collaborative making and testing?
- What do analogue methods of working offer in contrast to the virtual/online processes that dominate current art-design collaborations?
- What is the implication of the above for the methods adopted in my research?

Issues and context of research question

The letterpress method of composing text, dominant for almost five centuries in Europe since c.1450, conducted in the shared space of a Composing Room or Caseroom, was superseded in the latter half of the twentieth century by photographic processes, then followed by digital typography. The contemporary proliferation of the computer as the standard tool of typographic design has brought into focus the contrast between the individual user-interface of the Mac and previous shared collaborative spaces of making such as the Caseroom. The omnipresence of the single user digital interface is keenly felt within graphic design. It would be hard to suggest another area where a designer would engage formally in typography other than through a keyboard or via Letterpress. Letterpress is still retained in some art school environments such as RCA and GSA. The relative uniqueness of being in a shared space for formal engagement in typography is rare and deserves active development.

Aims and Objectives

AIMS

To gain new insight into how retaining letterpress equipment within a practice-based art school setting might bring diversity to the scope of contemporary letterpress printing activity.

To develop new knowledge of the possibilities of jointly authored artistic collaborations using letterpress equipment.

To encourage diversity of engagement with typographic processes, including knowledge of print heritage.

To activate public engagement in keeping with ideals of print as a democratic medium.

OBJECTIVES

To explore the factors at play in collaborating with a range of artists and to develop links with other projects and academic communities to further the dissemination of knowledge acquired.

To develop a programme of open access creative print workshops to bridge the private space of production and the public space of exhibition.

To disseminate a series of collaborative print-based artworks via public exhibition.

To develop a diverse public audience for this type of work, raising the profile of Letterpress as a creative print discipline and linking this audience to a shared typographic heritage

Context

Significance of GSA's Caseroom collection

The Caseroom, Glasgow School of Art is the largest collection of letterpress printing equipment in a higher education institution in Scotland. This workshop houses approximately 300 cases of metal type and an extensive collection of wooden type comparable with the most significant in UK/EU HEI's. It is home to multiple printing presses and associated machinery, the oldest of which date from the mid nineteenth century. The Caseroom is the only Scottish member of the European Association of Printing Museums and a founding member of the International Association of Printing Museums. I began working in the Caseroom in 2005 as Designer in Residence (a position I still hold) and took over technical responsibility for the area in 2006.

The experience of working as one of few Letterpress designer printers in the country for close to ten years before embarking on this programme of research enquiry in 2014 brought about an initial insight regarding the way in which clients (notably artists, designers

and musicians) and I would often naturally, as projects progressed, move away from correspondence through email and gravitate towards the immediacy of sharing the space of production.

Letterpress is a highly specialised technical process, which demands a keen working and historical knowledge of the technology involved. My interest in collaboration was raised by the possibility of applying this specialised knowledge whilst encountering the challenges and possibilities brought by skilled designers and artists bringing fresh eyes, alternative objectives and new methods of working to the process, allowing a break in the normal commercial chain of client-designer-printer.

Opportunities for Collaborative Practice

In the opening of *Co-Art: Artists on Creative Collaboration*, Phaidon, 2017, Ellen Mara De Wachter suggests that the making of all art is to some degree collaborative. Questioning why some activities are regarded as supporting

roles whilst others constitute a work of art, she states 'For Artists collaborating today, the status of 'artist' comes down to being the final decision maker in the process of making work.'

What happens when rather than one party being a client of the other, both parties have the responsibility of final decision making and authorship is jointly shared?

I believe that Letterpress could hold particular relevance for this type of collaboration due to a combination of two key factors: the fact of the physical shared space of production and the opportunity to work with a typography, by definition a collection of pre-existing components, a 'kit of parts,' with which we have a shared experience of the written word and which despite its orthogonal restrictions can liberate a collaboration from one party's 'hand' or gestural style.

Context

How my practice builds on and relates to previous research by others

Codex Project, St Martins, 2005, was concerned with the rationale for the continuation of teaching Letterpress. It aimed to draw out 'intrinsic qualities' of the 'Letterpress Process' highlighting how the physicality of setting metal type, as opposed to digital typesetting, might stimulate 'play' and imaginative new routes for students' design work. Here I take this further to suggest that the proliferation of the laptop as the standard tool of graphic design has brought into focus the contrast between the individual user-interface of the Mac and shared spaces of making such as the Caseroom.

6x6 Collaborative Letterpress project, University of Brighton, 2014, focused on pedagogy, and with a keen eye on the history within design education. The collaboration here took the form of participants from six design schools each submitting an edition of prints to be

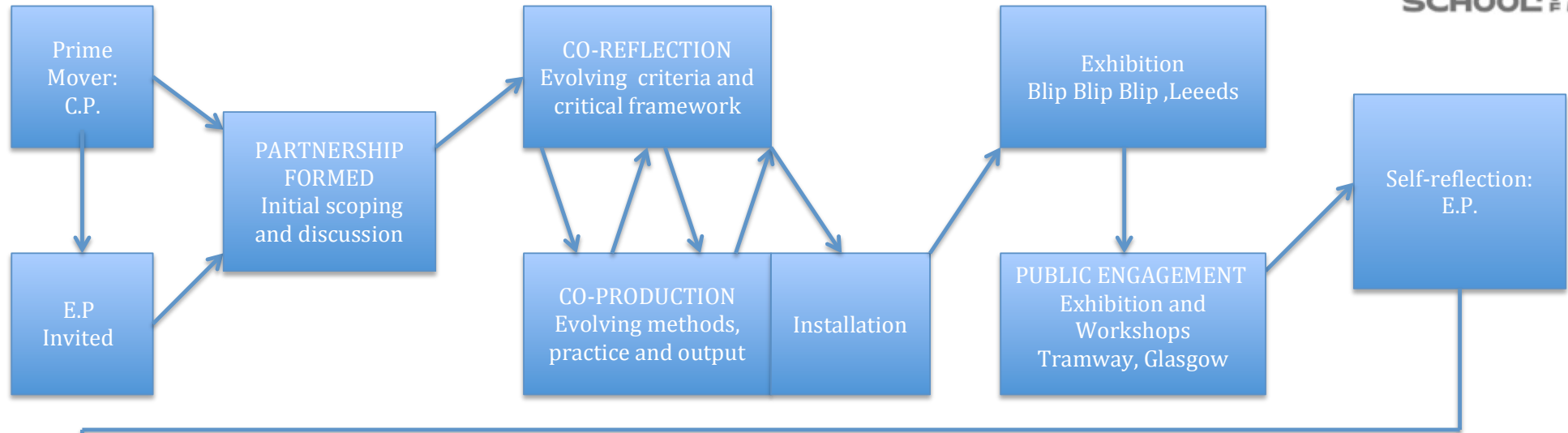
gathered together into a publication. All written contributions to the publication discuss the physicality of the materials inherent in Letterpress printing. Most discuss the spatial awareness necessary to manipulate these materials in the production of a satisfactorily laid out page of type. There is also a well-articulated discussion of the change in focus of Letterpress workshops from site of regimented industrial training to spaces for iterative design through exploration and experimentation. It is my intention in this project to demonstrate how these key themes, raised in the 6x6 work, might form the basis of a body of work where the aspects of space and collaboration are explicitly brought to the fore.

Of Ligament and Ligature A Practice Led Investigation of Letterpress Printed Artists Books in the UK, 2019, Angie Butler's PhD thesis gives an overview of Letterpress research activity and associated projects from a Book Art's perspective. Butler draws out collaboration as a theme: 'Working in collaboration intensifies

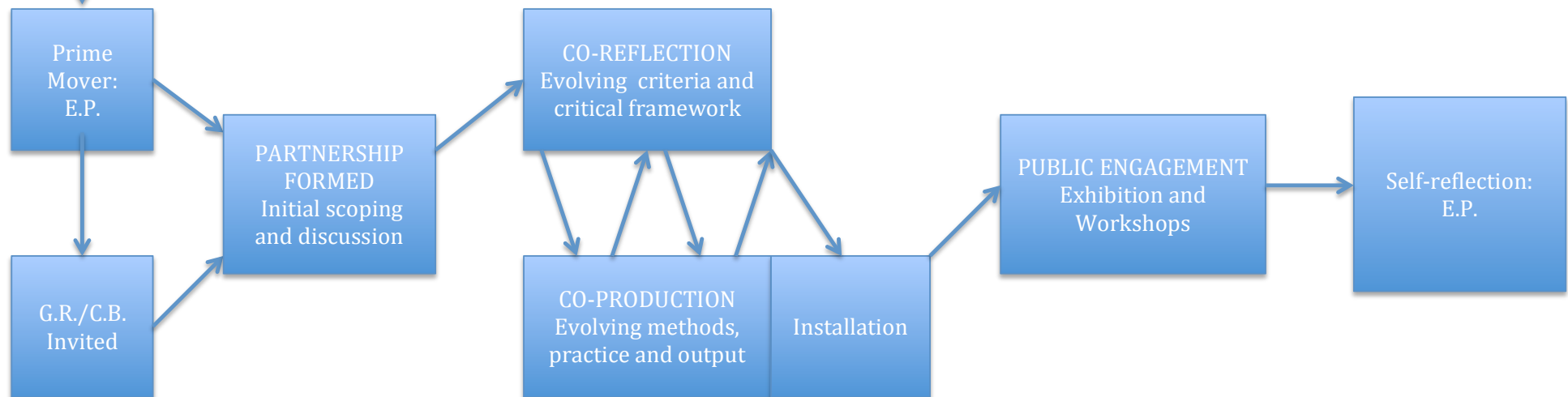
the range of one's own abilities and also allows new creative possibilities to surface that would not have been possible if working in isolation.' Referring to a paper by Nancy De Freitas (*The role of the evolving artefact in creative collaboration, Research into Practice Conference, Hertfordshire, 2004*), Butler suggests three significant basic reasons for collaboration: the opportunity to access specialist skills and equipment; the opportunity to open up dialogue and refine ideas and 'support for a philosophical position through the validation that comes with agreement about concepts and consensus in relation to method.' Each of these is significant and relevant here but the first two points leave us with an understanding of collaboration which might be found in a sophisticated printer/client relationship. I see the last point as crucial, however, the thesis stops short of investigating the territory of merged authorship using a shared space and pre-existing collection of typographic materials which is key to my research.

Methods

PHASE 1:
Projects
1 & 2:



PHASE 2:
Projects
3 & 4



The use of the term Prime Mover for initiating role and co- prefix to describe collaborative actions are taken from Linda Candy's *The Creative Reflective Practitioner*, 2020. PGL = Printshop Goes Large! E.P. = Edwin Pickstone; C.P. = Ciara Phillips; G.R. = Giles Round; C.B. = Claire Barclay

Methods

Phase 1 to Phase 2: Role of Prime Mover

'The Prime Mover is a lead person whose vision and drive motivates the collaboration'. Following project 1, I took this role, inverting the established relationship of artist to designer/printer and creating circumstances where I might control the conditions within which work was to be produced to better explore the dialogic and collaborative potential of the Letterpress process.

Partnership Formation

Scoping and discussion: initial meetings used to establish shared interests, frames of reference, possible starting points for making and setting up a basic schedule.

Process of co-reflection

The flow diagram in the previous slide illustrates how the programme of research enquiry was advanced from one output to the next. My work involves an iterative cycle of exploration, experimentation, production, reflection and analysis, common to the generation of each output. Whilst individual elements of the iterative cycle have varied, the basic structure of the project has remained

constant.

The questions and methods used have, by nature of the project, been emergent. In parallel to the limitations of process and practical methods discussed in the Outputs section, I have imposed a set of simple constants in order to give the project stable boundaries allowing advances in enquiry to be recognised from one output to the next.

Approach to co-production

Each of the three artists involved has some form of printmaking practice, giving a shared language of materials, some shared technical knowledge, and offering a critical reflection on typographic heritage.

Each artist has significant professional experience of working collaboratively: future iterations might test and expand this boundary but given the nature of Tramway's public funding I believe it would be irresponsible to select an artist without evidence of their suitability to collaborative practice.

All work was produced in the Caseroom at

GSA or exhibition space, creating consistency of equipment and space of production. These constants have allowed the effects of conscious choices, made in the initial stages of a cycle, to come to the fore. Significant intuitive decisions, have also come to be recognised and built into the framework of subsequent cycles. An example of this might be the recognition, whilst working with Ciara Phillips on Projects 1 and 2, that the 'kit of parts' (Esterson, *Eye Magazine*, 2002) nature of typography is particularly suitable to removing the gestural artist's hand from jointly authored projects. We also deliberately shifted letter parts and words in playful anagrams. These insights were then taken forward to become a key tenet of the work with Giles Round, Project 3, provoking the decision to treat the collection of wood types as abstract modular building blocks suitable for creating pattern and rhythm; in short, using the kit of parts purely formally.

Methods

Approach to co-production, contd. -Whilst individual elements of the iterative cycle have varied, its basic structure has remained constant. In Project 4 with Clare Barclay, a sculptor whose work is highly context-dependent, we collaborated in a way that embraced 3d practice concurrently with print, using the history and spatiality of Tramway, and of the Caserom as a starting point. The Tramway Building was originally Glasgow's major tramshed. We took this context alongside allusions to the coming of the modern age found in the work of E. M. Forster, writing when Letterpress was the key environmental medium of communication in a rapidly urbanizing, industrial world. We drew out the idea of 'connection' central to Forster's *Howards End* in representations of bridges, arches and rainbows, which in turn became a touch point for the connection of materials inherent in both sculpture and relief printing processes.

Means of public engagement

Exhibitions and workshops: By removing the pressure of developing a new commission for the exhibition *Printshop! 2015*, I was able to direct attention to developing a public

engagement program as an integral aspect of the exhibition. With the support of curator Claire Jackson, I devised a series of print workshops, run by specialist makers with open access as a core principle. In defining 'open access' it was decided that all workshops would be: accessible for all ages; with a purposeful no booking ahead drop-in policy; and most importantly free to join.

All the prints in all four projects were installed on the walls and other similar 'bill-posting' surfaces. In Projects 1 and 2, the prints wove snakelike around artworks and workshop spaces. These bodies of work were produced one day per week over a duration of months. This working pattern naturally promoted an iterative approach with intense making sessions followed by reflection and analysis before entering into another cycle of making and experiment. As the project extended to include research into ways of collaborating, I formed a simple set of criteria for selecting subsequent artist collaborators: artists should be mid-career; with experience of collaboration as existing aspect of their practice; and an active engagement with print/printmaking as a creative discipline.

Alongside the exhibition collaboration, I

worked with colleagues to devise introductory workshops in techniques such as screen-printing, bookbinding and letterpress. These workshops create a bridge of specialist knowledge between artwork which might otherwise be passively consumed and the production of printed matter. Other workshops included a rapid-prototype style modular web printing press made by participants (2016) and a one-day Festival (2019) with multiple methods and mediums of print on offer, promising a layered and colourful hybrid print, in keeping with commercial print culture in the early twentieth century.

Self-reflection

Reflection undertaken between project cycles was used to evaluate performance against aims and objectives as well as to 're-calibrate' methods and to consider the possible merits of potential collaborators, based on my set of criteria outlined above in '**Means of public engagement.**'

Research Output

Project 1

Bloused & Mintier (Doubles and Interim)
Edwin Pickstone & Ciara Phillips
Blip, Blip, Blip
Leeds, 2014

Bloused and Mintier, represents the first jointly authored work in this Research output, which I produced with artist Ciara Phillips for exhibition in the *Doubles* series at Blip Blip Blip, a gallery project based at East Street Arts, Leeds, organised by Sean Kaye and Harry Meadley of Leeds College of Art. Invited by Kaye and Meadley to produce an exhibition with a GSA colleague of her choice, Phillips in turn invited me into the project. The variable edition of around 150 prints we created were installed to weave snakelike around artworks produced by former students of the Leeds College Foundation Course, which we selected via an application process.

This body of work was produced at a rate of one day per week over a duration of three months. This working pattern promoted an iterative approach with intense making sessions followed by reflection and analysis before entering into another cycle of making and experiment, finding 'the form... on the bed of the press' (Ken Campbell, 2001), rather than in the detailed plans produced before production was begun in trade printing.



Anagrams: reflecting the use of anagrams within the printwork, the title of this exhibition *Bloused and Mintier*, is an anagram of *Doubles and Interim*, the name of the series of exhibitions produced by Sean Kaye and Harry Meadley of Leeds college of Art as gallery project Blip, Blip, Blip

Research Output

Taking the PLORK (play/work) philosophy of artist, designer and educator Corita Kent, play, experiment and reflection were strategies at the forefront of the artwork produced for this output investigating the intersection of design and art and the differing approaches of the printer and printmaker. Over the Co-production sessions Phillips and I took up feeding paper directly into the printing-press inking system, normally a routine for cleaning the machine. We picked up on a tension between chance and control, which became a key aspect to the work. With repetition we began to hone and refine this technique, exploring our degree of control rather than looking to duplicate an ideal version. We layered these neon colour floods with a placeholder text 'SAY SOMETHING' used to establish a space, method and style of typography in the production. This holding text was subsequently replaced by anagrams of 'SAY SOMETHING' following the simple realisation that moveable wooden types are ideally suited to being quickly rearranged. A type of literary abstraction themselves, the anagrams brought a desired level of absurdity to the seemingly random, abstract colour floods of the initial printing process.



Top Left: Prints snaking around the walls 'interact' with that space in a site specific manner. Other images: Prints produced with ink-flood technique are saturated with ink so left to dry on floor before being cleaned and ironed flat. This allowed space to view, assess and reflect over the prints en-masse during co-reflection and brought the unforeseen advantage of avoiding overly precious treatment of the work during the early stages of the iterative making cycle.

Research Output

Project 2

Printshop! 2015,
Edwin Pickstone & Ciara Phillips
Tramway,
Glasgow

Invited by Tramway to hold an exhibition of recent works, I took the opportunity to re-exhibit the body of work produced with Ciara Phillips for Blip, Blip, Blip, Leeds. By removing the pressure of developing a new commission for the exhibition I was able to direct attention to developing a public engagement program as an integral aspect of the exhibition. With the support of curator Claire Jackson, I devised a series of print workshops, run by specialist makers with open access as a core principle. In defining 'open access' it was decided that all workshops would be: accessible for all ages; with a purposeful no booking ahead drop-in policy and most importantly free to join.



Letterpress workshop leader Ruth Kirkby considers where to start cleaning up after a busy session in the T5 gallery at Tramway, Glasgow.. A further selection of anagrams of SAY SOMETHING (also seen in Project 1) can be seen, for example as YOCIS ANTHEMS at bottom right.

Research Output

Workshop leaders were instructed to prepare a variety of activities which could run in parallel so that participants of any age or skill level might 'dip in' as they passed by, or stay for a whole session to develop work further. This inclusion of workshops into the project has been deeply significant. The activities, leaders, participants and products becoming a mutually constitutive aspect of the exhibitions themselves. As the project has continued over multiple outputs this importance has been heightened in the integration of the exhibited artwork and the workshops.

In this first iteration we see the exhibited artwork become an 'immersive graphic environment' a blueprint for workshops based in play and experiment with print and letterforms the products of which joined the artwork on the gallery walls over the run of the show.



A bookbinding workshop with Cristaina Garriga of My Bookcase during Printshop! 2015



The gallery workshops link the co-production stage from the private world of the studio or workshop and out into the public sphere. Remnants of the public workshops accumulate as part of the exhibition itself reinforcing our aim that the 'artwork' is an encouragement to participate rather than passive viewing experience.

Research Output

Project 3

Printshop! 2016
Edwin Pickstone and Giles Round
Tramway, Glasgow

Following the popularity of Printshop! 2015, Tramway commissioned a new artwork and program of activities for the following year. This decision is significant, firstly because large galleries rarely commission the same artist yearly as this impacts the diversity of their programming. Secondly, because undertaking an exhibition with public program (as opposed to a stand alone exhibition) means significant additional costs to the institution in terms of materials, workshop leaders, programming time and invigilation, if the activities are to be free to the public. Tramway's decision to commission a subsequent edition of Printshop! is evidence of the gallery receiving a significant return in terms of audience figures and quality of experience.



Printshop! 2016 Tramway, Glasgow. This body of work focused on the creative potential of the repeat as well as foregrounding the multiple, often only seen at the private point of production.

Research Output

In deciding what form this next iteration might take, the potential of repeating the pattern of partnership and public engagement provoked a period of reflection. Viewing the initial collaboration with Phillips as a cycle in a research context I was keen to further explore and develop the possibilities that combining new modes of working and thinking with my own existing knowledge of Letterpress might reveal. However, one of the key reasons for not working in this way is the possibility of failure to produce a coherent, or in fact any, body of work due to differences in temperament, expectations or inability to share the burden of risk in experimental making. Looking back over many professional collaborations, mostly successful some less so, and taking prompts from V.J. Steiner's *Creative Collaboration* (Oxford, 2000), I formed a simple set of criteria for selecting subsequent artist collaborators. In keeping with the responsibilities of the project to the field, the

gallery and the public: artists should be mid-career; with experience of collaboration as existing aspect of their practice; and an active engagement with print/printmaking as a creative discipline.

Working with Ciara Phillips, the 'kit of parts' nature of typographic equipment came to the fore, particularly its suitability in removing the gestural artist's hand from jointly authored projects. This idea became a key tenet in the selection and subsequent production with Giles Round, provoking the decision to treat the collection of wood types as abstract modular building blocks suitable for creating pattern and rhythm. Having worked together on various projects including the Jerwood Space exhibition *The Grantchester Pottery Paints the Stage*, I was intrigued by Round's use of space and pattern in ceramic printed and painted works. This made me wonder how we might be able to bring these ideas together with that of typography as abstract modular system. The

body of work produced during our partnership was provoked by our reflections on the processes of printing, the creative potential of the repeat: combining abstraction of letterform and punctuation with the opportunity for relatively large quantities of precisely registered prints given by the former trade technology.

'Through the sheer act of printing and reprinting, the inherent value of production for printing's sake is explored, as is the essential quality of the collection they form. In stretching [expanding] the framework in which they are producing, Pickstone and Round seek to oppose the idea of a unique edition in favour of a cohesive and large scale graphic artwork.' (from Tramway visitor info.)

Research Output

In this iteration the show was articulated as ‘a functioning studio for visitors to participate in specialist-led print.’ The large-scale work produced within the Caseroom provided a setting for introductory workshops in techniques such as screen-printing, bookbinding and letterpress. These workshops create a bridge of specialist knowledge between artwork which might otherwise be passively consumed and the production of printed matter. The connection here is pertinent as the relatively recent emergence of a typographically active public, one which produces and consumes ever increasing amounts of text in social, commercial and professional capacities, has not necessarily been followed by an increased general awareness of our shared typographic heritage.



Trials produced during co-production with Giles Round. Early trials such as the those in the left hand image were unsuccessful as letters such as X and Y were less easily abstracted into pattern by repetition than the simpler characters and punctuation used in the final works.

Research Output

More ambitious workshops were activated during *Printshop 2016!* with leaders briefed before planning their workshops on the themes of the collaborative artwork. Here, designer Neil McGuire led a one day project for visitors to build a large modular printing machine using cut foam relief blocks printed under the weight of the paper: a roll or web of newsprint obtained from *The Herald* newspaper. A good example of the way that public workshops can offer hands-on activity whilst providing a connection to the world of industrial print in operation outside of the gallery setting.



Top left: The Printer Makes the Printer, workshop led by Graphic Designer Neil McGuire which brought a full size 'web' or roll of newsprint from a local newspaper printer into the gallery space to be used by workshop participants in the construction of a DIY press.
Other Images: Books produced from a combination of scrap materials generated over the course of the exhibition along with posters taken from around the Tramway Building.

Research Output

Project 4

Printshop! 2019

Claire Barclay & Edwin Pickstone Tramway,
Glasgow

In this most recent iteration I invited sculptor Claire Barclay to collaborate on a new site-specific installation. I was struck by the way in which Barclay's established printmaking practice drew on the same material engagement and processes of production and reflection as her renowned sculptural practice, both characterized by an intuitive way of working that resists planning and focuses on the context of production. Barclay has said that: 'Context is always the starting point for the work I make, it informs my ideas and the choice of materials, and provides the framework around which the artwork evolves. I ... resist using plans, models or designs as much as possible, as I find them limiting.'
(Claire Barclay, *The Essay*, BBC Radio 3, 2012)

This made me wonder what boundaries we might push, collaborating in a way that embraced 3d practice concurrently with print, using the history and spatiality of Tramway, and of the Caserom as a starting point.



Printshop! 2019: In keeping with the venue's 19th C. heritage, as Glasgow's major Tram-shed, we created two Litfass or Morris advertising columns. These columns allowed us to bring the printwork off the walls of the gallery. The STOP and GO! prints are a combined reference to the simple single lever of a Tram Driver's controls and the stop-start nature of mechanical printing techniques.

Research Output

After trialing 'play, experiment and the absurd' with Ciara Phillips and 'repetition, typographic abstraction and technical control' with Giles Round, Barclay's centering of context and a sculptural language of material practice and physical form presented an opportunity for me to enter a new cycle of the project with fresh artistic parameters. In keeping with my criteria for inviting artist collaborators, Barclay has an established printmaking practice and considers artistic collaboration a vital aspect of her working life. In contrast to Giles Round, however, Barclay is based in Glasgow and this was another key aspect in this partnership, building on knowledge of the previous iteration. Geographical distance between Round had imposed a less fluid rhythm to the collaboration. Much of the initial work had been conducted remotely in the lead-up to an intensive four-day co-production period. With Barclay we were able to undertake a 'long-thin' routine as with Phillips, meeting weekly, for the initial stages. This culminated in a period of

intensive co-production of printwork, as with Round, and a new intensive period of installation, suiting the more complex sculptural nature of the work, in the run up to the show.

We developed a starting starting point for production in the context of the Tramway Building, originally Glasgow's major tramshed. We took this spatial historic context alongside allusions to the coming of the modern age found in the work of E. M. Forster, writing when Letterpress was the key environmental medium of communication in a rapidly urbanizing, industrial world. We drew out the idea of 'connection,' central to Forster's *Howards End* (1910), in representations of bridges, arches and rainbows, which in turn became a touch point for the connection of materials inherent in both sculpture and relief printing processes. For *Printshop! 2019* Barclay and I made the decision to take the print away from the walls of the gallery. This decision allowed us to reinforce the material legacy of the building's history and allow the visitor a more active engagement with the work in part by spatially

integrating the workshops with the artwork. We used the supporting columns of the gallery to suspend our own advertising columns, themselves a late C19. attempt to move rampant print advertising 'off wall.' The advertising columns were constructed to fit imperial sized Double Crown sheets of newsprint bearing large letters, which when pasted up in order spell out STOP & GO! referencing the simple controls of a tram driver's lever and the repeated actions of the hand-printer. In the direct application of printing ink, using a printer's hand- roller, to the street facing windows, Barclay and I created an artwork joining the 'unconnected arches' of Forster's *Howards End* (p.194) with the former entrance for trams to the Tramway building, a background of Pantone 012 Yellow ink providing a feeling of sodium-lit, industrial hum.

Research Output

In addition to the previously established program of free hands-on printing and bookbinding workshops, *Printshop! 2019* also featured *Printshop Goes Large!* a one-day festival of printing that I devised with Claire Jackson, to spill out of the gallery and over public areas of the building. This ‘festival’ approach was developed in order to combine what I had recognized as the most successful elements of the previous two iterations and further broke down barriers between artwork, institution and public activity. These most successful iterations were the running of multiple concurrent workshops where different techniques might be trialed in combination, layering prints in different mediums. In this sense, the workshop activity echoed combinations of practical and artistic choices which Barclay and I developed.



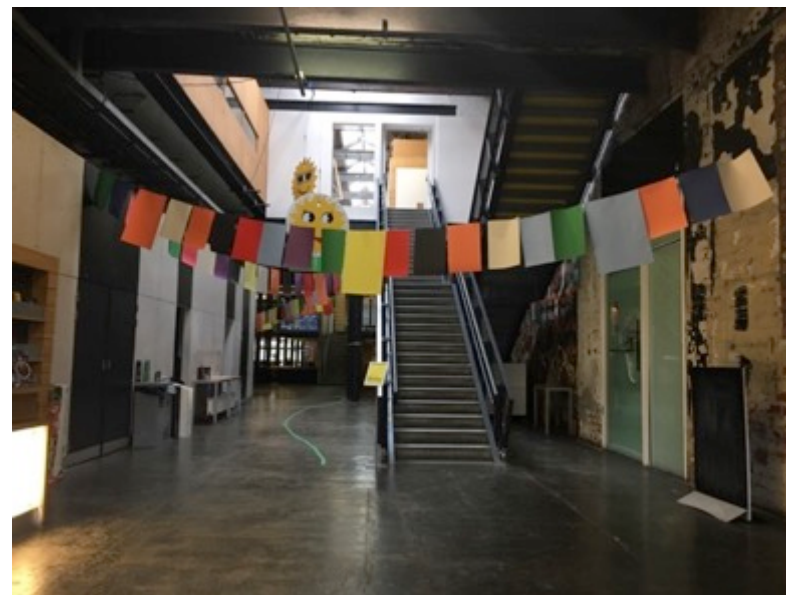
Printshop Goes Large: Cyanotype (top left) and Screen Printing workshops (bottom right).
Top right: The windows are decorated using printer’s ink with an archway motif connecting Forster’s arches with the former entrance for trams to the building. The shapes used are derived from typographic forms found in the Caserom collection: a typeface colloquially known as Caserom Grotesque.



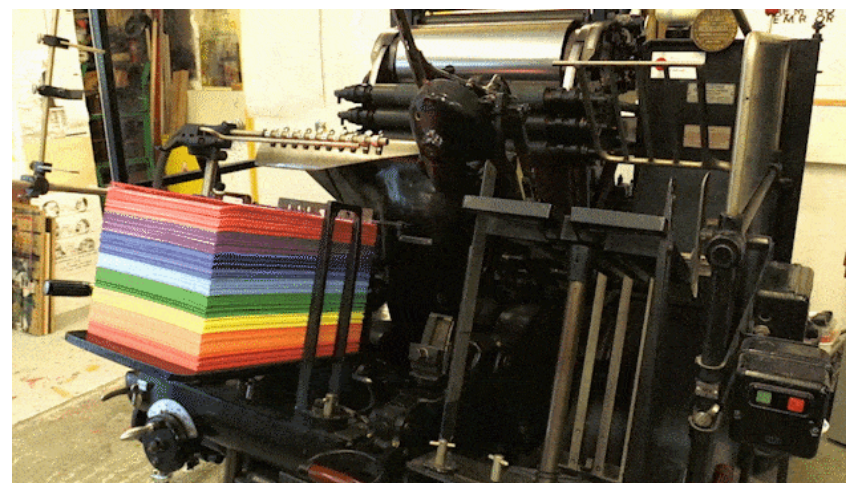
Printshop Goes Large: workshops are spread out across the building connected by a bricklayer's string hung with paper to be used by participants as wayfinder, paper supply and drying line. The line is a reference to Forster's '*Only Connect...*' motto; his allusions to rainbows and connecting arches but also to a rudimentary printer's drying line and the sight of a washing line glimpsed from the upper deck of a tramcar.

Film, Printing the Rainbow Arch, GIF version.

The use of sugar paper in the video is no accident, the vibrant Chemist's palette of late Victorian Britain having been brought into sharp focus for me by Dr Elizabeth Savage's workshop Colour Printing by Example, hosted by Glasgow University Library Special Collections, 2018.



The Tramway entrance hall decked out with the paper used for the film.



This 30 second GIF was used for marketing and social media. The full length film, shown in the gallery is 42 minutes long and includes HD sound of the printing press rhythmically following through it's operations.

Utilising the
workshop space.



Negative, laser-cut form on the press. These letterforms were scanned from the Caserom wooden type collection in order to be traced and enlarged to the required scale.

Secondary
research: Tram
Ride from
Forster Square,
film 1902 (BFI)

Note the size of
the word OXO
on the hoarding
to the right.
Individually
printed large
letters pasted up
to create a
message. A
standard 19C.
practice for
shouting in
print.



The Artists review
their
accomplishments

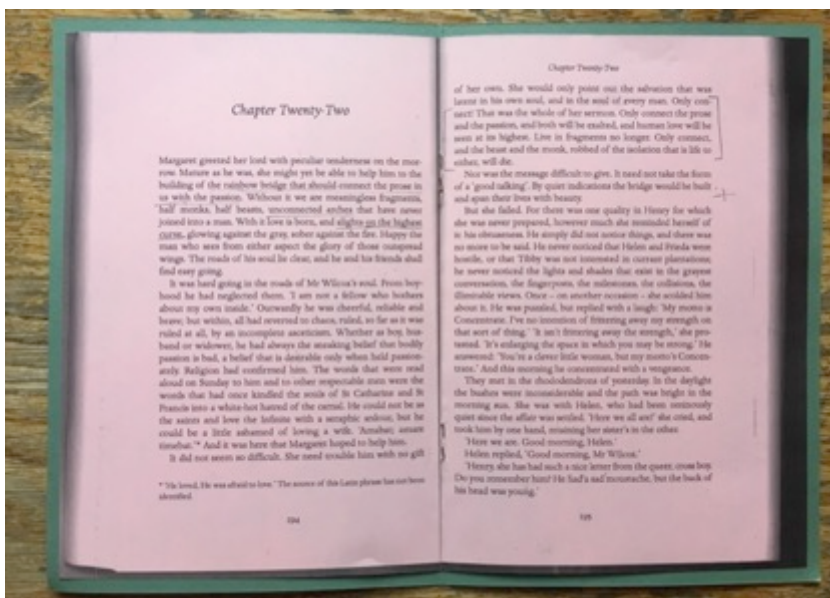
Exhibition publication. 500 copies produced for free distribution to visitors and participants allowing an additional, extended connection with audience members.

Wire stitch binding, green yapped edge, limp cover. A standard format of trade, private and radical presses alike.



Rolled ink textured endpapers.

Central pages of *Howards End* with key passages dealing with the book's central theme 'only connect' annotated in pencil.



Rigour in errant detail: Forster's 'only connect...' motto from the first edition title page of *Howards End* is faithfully reproduced down to the inverted commas in place of opening speech marks.

Contribution to the field

My approach supports artist-designer collaboration in the true sense of the word with equal engagement of highly skilled individuals, respecting all partners in the process of enquiry. Such a process - with elements of both team-based problem-solving in design and emergent context-driven outcomes in fine art - is deliberately set up so that the outcome cannot be achieved in a pre-conceived way, and past preconceptions will be challenged. The high level of craft knowledge and judgment by both parties in the collaboration helps to break some of the hierarchies of value in the visual arts, instead investigating the territory of merged authorship using a shared space and pre-existing collection of typographic materials.

My **methods** contribute to the development of insights in relation to public engagement, where engaging the public becomes a holistic part of the

research and not an added value element that could be included or excluded without impacting on the research in any meaningful way. The workshops form a key part of the output as they form both a method within the body of work and also a strand of dissemination and/or public engagement with the research. In letterpress and graphic design terms, the workshops animate the words, marks, and printed pages that support active readers, engaging with the production in three-dimensional space, and with a broader sensory range than solely reading through the screen.

Through my work I argue for the continued importance of: 1) the (endangered) technology and processes I work with; and 2) the Caserom as a dialogic and collaborative space of making. This importance comes from the sociability of the space and the opportunities for in-person, hands-on

collaborative making and testing, contrasting with the virtual/online processes that dominate art-design collaborations. Although I am aligned with notions such as David Jury's 2018, which claim that physical, crafted, artefacts in letterpress continue to support more actively engaged users and readers than digital print, my aim is to move away from limited edition productions such as the private press or artist book. Instead, the production of multiples - multiples that go through further permutations within the rules of engagement - advocate a lack of preciousness invested in the object and maintain the importance of live process.

Dissemination

Exhibitions

Doubles
Blip, Blip, Blip
East Street Arts
Leeds
14–29 May, 2015

Printshop! 2015
Tramway, Glasgow
15–30 Aug, 2015

Printshop! 2016
Tramway, Glasgow
5 Aug–4 Sept, 2016

Printshop! 2019
Tramway, Glasgow
20 July–04 Aug, 2019

Printshop Goes Large!
A one day, hands-on Festival of Print
20 July, 2019
Tramway, Glasgow

Visitor Figures

Est. 250

724

1314

1573

Talks

- Leeds University AHRC Letterpress Network Conference, 2019
- Airspace, Public You & Me programme, Stoke-on-Trent, 2019
- Cologne, Euphorie Festival (where work from Printshop! was re-exhibited), 2019
- La Cambre (Brussels) lecture and a one week collaborative workshop with Undergraduate Type Design Students informed by this project. 2019
- Talk given for KHiO (Oslo) research week. 2019
- GSA, Mondays @ 1, research talk, 2018
- Keynote, Bookmarks Symposium, Public Lecture, Edinburgh College of Art 2017
- ECAL (Lausanne) a lecture and one week collaborative workshop with MA Type Design students informed by this project. 2016
- Designer talk featuring the first of these projects given at Grafil, Association of Graphic Designers, Oslo. 2015
- Association of Printing Museums Annual Conference –Treviso, Italy 2015

Other

- Prints from the series produced with Ciara Phillips were exhibited at Ditchling, Village of Type Festival, Curated by Ditchling Museum of Craft and Design and included in a showcase edition of Random Spectacular Magazine
- Prints from Printshop 2019 were exhibited under the pseudonym Barstone Piclay at Euphorie Festival, Cologne, 2019.

Evidence

External Links

Bloused and Mintier

<https://blipblipblip.co/doubles-series-ciara-phillips-edwin-pickstone>

My Bookcase Blog post

<https://mybookcase.org/workshop-printshop-at-tramway/>

Tramway

<https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/event/3/printshop>

<https://www.tramway.org/events/pages/event-details.aspx?event=1%2Fprintshop-goes-large>

Glasgow School of Art Research Repository:

Bloused and Mintier

<http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/3977/>

Printshop! 2015

<http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/5898/>

Printshop! 2016

<http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/5901/>

Printshop! 2019 & Printshop goes LARGE!

<http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/7326/>



PRINTSHOP!

A two week free drop in print workshop and exhibition.

15–30 August 2015 / Tramway 5

Tramway presents *PRINTSHOP!* an exhibition, free drop-in print studio and workshop conceived by artist and printer Edwin Pickstone for Tramway's front T5 space.

PRINTSHOP! is open to the public from 12–5pm Tuesday–Sunday for people to get involved in making prints. It will play host to a series of exciting free weekend workshops focused on screen-printing, letterpress and bookbinding devised and led by a host of different artists, makers and designers.

On the wallspace of *PRINTSHOP!* is a collaborative artwork produced by Edwin Pickstone and Ciara Phillips. This work will be joined by printed matter accumulated from the activities happening over the two week course of the exhibition.

Pickstone and Phillips's work was originally commissioned by blip blip blip, an exhibition space in Leeds associated with the Leeds College of Art, curated by Sean Kaye and Harry Meadley. Each year blip blip blip invites an artist to make a show with another artist that they have an educational relationship with, and to curate a further exhibition with work made by former students of the Foundation Course at Leeds College of Art. The piece itself was made using various letterpress printing techniques, to create a snaking ticker tape strip that winds around the space negotiating the room's peculiarities. The form and text employed in the artwork explore the techniques, materials and linguistic history of the letterpress process; investigating the intersection of design and art and the differing approaches of the printer and printmaker.

Phillips and Pickstone, are both tutors at the Glasgow School of Art in the Fine Art and Design Schools respectively. The work presented in *PRINTSHOP!* was formed through a collaboration that developed over several months around the relationship between their interests and practices.

WORKSHOP TIME TABLE

- Sat 15th & 16th AUG (12–5pm) - Letterpress print workshop with Artist and Printer Edwin Pickstone
- Sat 22nd & 23rd AUG (12–5pm) - Screen Printing workshop with Zephyr Liddell & Ben Ashton
- Sat 29th & Sun 30th AUG (12–5pm) - Book Binding workshop with artist Cristina Garriga.

ALL WORKSHOPS ARE FREE ON A DROP IN BASIS*

* if sessions are busy places will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Work featured:
Edwin Pickstone & Ciara Phillips
Untitled 2015
Letterpress Print on Paper



BOX OFFICE 0845 330 3501



Preview: Printshop!
Friday 5 August, 7-9pm
Tramway, 25 Albert Drive, Glasgow G41 2PE

Join us for the opening of Printshop!, as the exhibition and studio returns to Tramway's T5 gallery after a hugely popular outing last summer.

Printshop! is both an exhibition of collaborative work, by Edwin Pickstone and Giles Round, and a functioning studio for visitors to participate in artist-led print. The large scale work produced within the Caserom of The Glasgow School of Art provides a setting for introductory workshops to techniques such as screenprinting, bookbinding and letterpress. Through the act of printing and reprinting, the gallery becomes a site for the production of print.

The exhibition is open from **6 August - 4 September**, free and open to all ages. There are accompanying drop-in workshops every weekend, starting with 'Sun-prints Photo Printing' on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 August, 12 noon-4pm.

Acknowledgements

Artist Collaborators:

Ciara Phillips
Giles Round
Claire Barclay

Workshop leaders:

Ruth Kirkby, Alice Rooney: Letterpress
Ben Ashton, Zepher Liddel: Screen Printing
Cristina Garriga, My Bookcase: Bookbinding
Neil McGuire: The Printer Builds the Printer
Ben Rush, Tara Beal, Danielle Sambo:
Cyanotype/Sun Prints
Mobile Print Studio: Lino Printing
Ok No Studio: Screen Printing
Juju Books: Bookbinding

Technical Assistance:

Colin Faulks, Ruth Kirkby, Paul McGuire

Photo Credits:

Claire Barclay, Cristina Garriga, Keith Hunter,
Harry Meadley, Max Slaven, Brian Sweeney.

Funding:

This research project was generously supported by Tramway, Glasgow; Creative Scotland; Glasgow Life and benefitted from the Turner Prize Public Engagement Legacy. Glasgow Life is a charity that delivers cultural, sporting and learning activities on behalf of Glasgow City Council.

The three iterations of Printshop! (2015, 2015 and 2016) and also Printshop Goes Large! (2019) were produced and developed with the support of curator Claire Jackson and the Tramway, Glasgow team.