THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Postgraduate Research at Edinburgh College of Art

Architecture & Landscape Architecture | School of Art | History of Art | School of Design | Reid School of Music

EDINBURGH
Extraordinary futures await

Why Postgraduate at Edinburgh?

- We are globally recognised for our **research, development and innovation** and we've provided our students with world-class teaching for more than 425 years
- The University of Edinburgh placed **27th in the 2025 QS World University Rankings**.
- Our graduates are ranked **24th in the world by employers.**

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Why Postgraduate at Edinburgh?

- The University is ranked **fourth in the UK** based on the quality and breadth of its research
- Quality Assurance Agency awarded us the **highest rating possible** for the quality of the student learning experience
- The University & ECA have **world-leading facilities** both for academic research and creative practice.

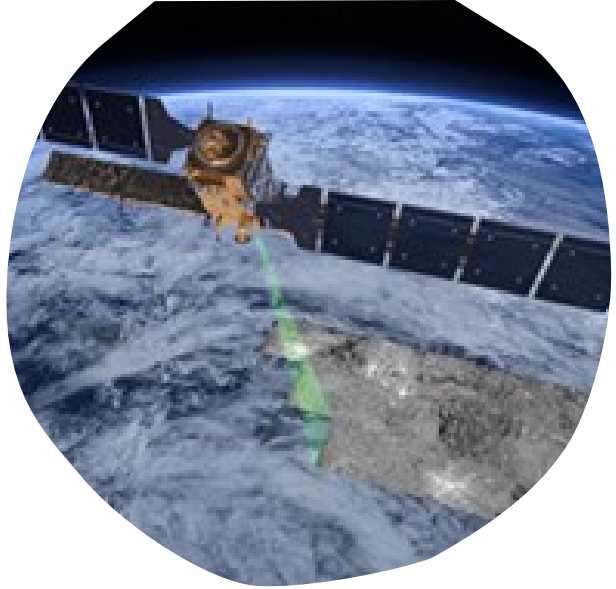
THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

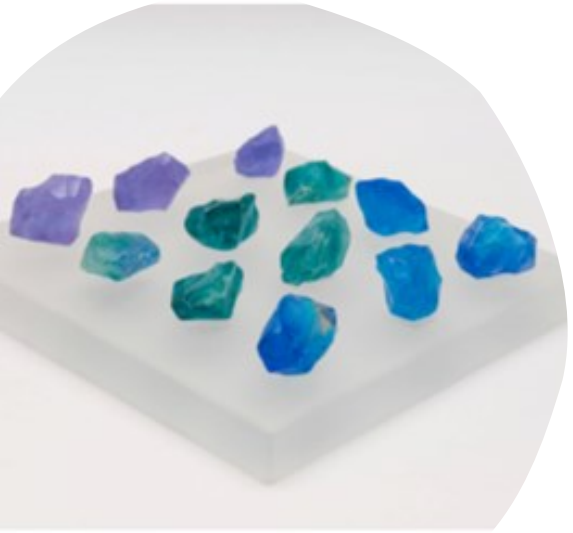
Our programmes include:

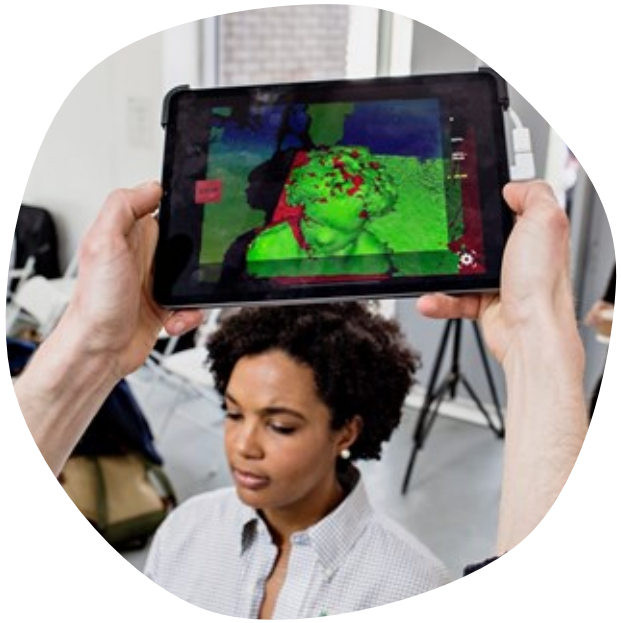
- PhD, MPhil Architectural History
- PhD, MPhil Architecture
- MScR Architecture
- PhD, MPhil Art
- MScR Collections and Curating Practices
- PhD Creative Music Practice
- PhD Cultural Heritage
- PhD, Mphil Design
- MScR History of Art
- PhD, MPhil History of Art
- PhD Music
- MScR Music
- PhD Musical Composition
- MScR Sound Design

ECA Research

- We are a community of approximately 200 researchers, working across the creative arts, humanities, social sciences and the creative computational sciences.
- Our research is consolidated within our five subject areas: the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA), the Reid School of Music, the School of History of Art, the School of Art, and the School of Design.
- Alongside these, ECA leads three major centres/institutes (the Institute of Design Informatics, Creative Informatics, and OPENSpace), hosts two major projects (CoSTAR and Braid) and c.30 research groups focused on topics from AI and ethics, to music as social innovation, to Global Contemporary art history.







Research Themes

Our research falls broadly into the following themes:

- **Critical and Cultural Studies,** including art, design and architectural history and theory, philosophy, musicology, and film theory.
- **Creative Practice,** including contemporary art, filmmaking, animation, music composition, performance, graphic and media art, textiles and fashion, and architectural and interior design.
- **AI, Data, and New Technologies,** including design informatics, creative AI, data-driven innovation, acoustics, urban analytics, and music neuroscience.
- **Community and Environment,** including health and wellbeing, sustainable design, social inequalities, community outreach, and urban renewal.

In the year to-date we have received £4 million for our research from funding bodies.

Some of our recent research projects include:

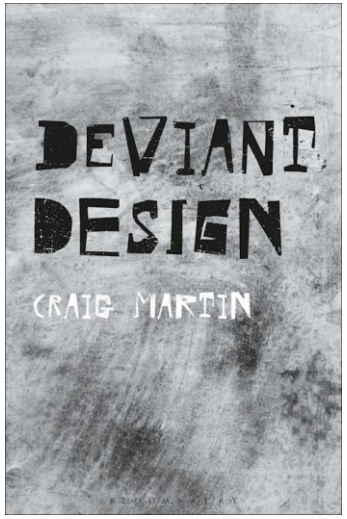
CoSTAR (Melissa Terras)

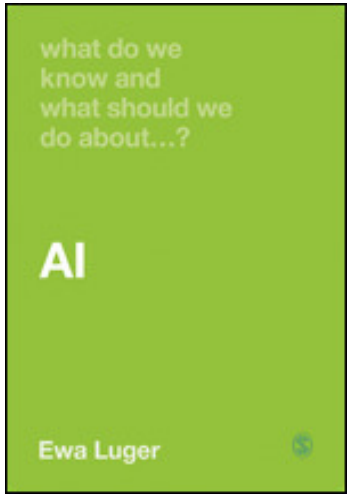
Cultural Heritage at the Metropolitan Peripheries (Ed Hollis)

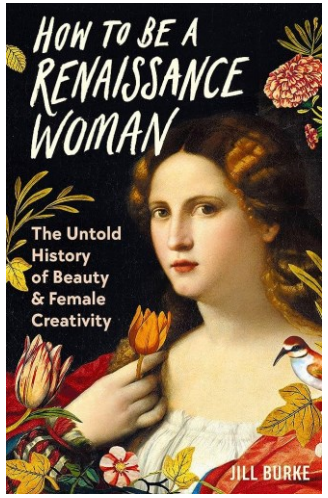
Gushing!: Excavating Oil Companies' Archived Audiovisual Media (Annette Davison)

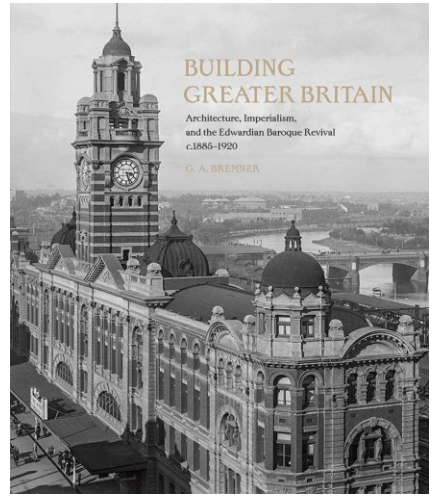
The New Real: Next Generation Intelligent Experiences (Drew Hemment)

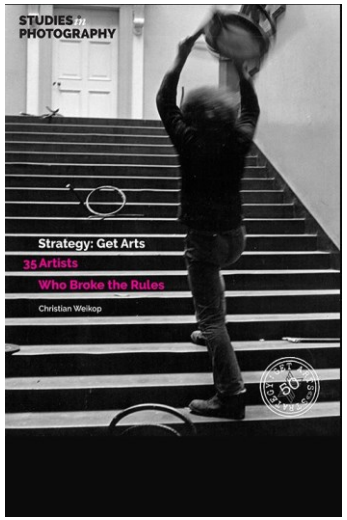
Some of our recent books

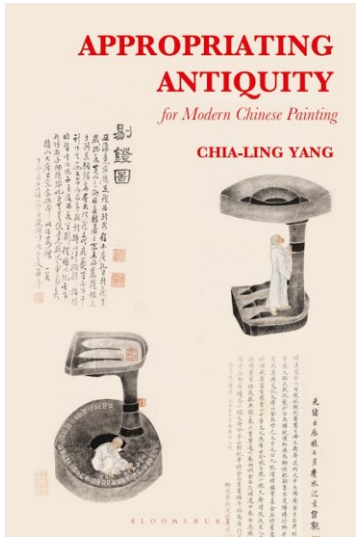


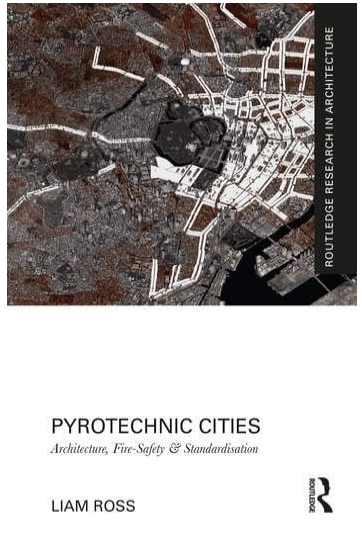


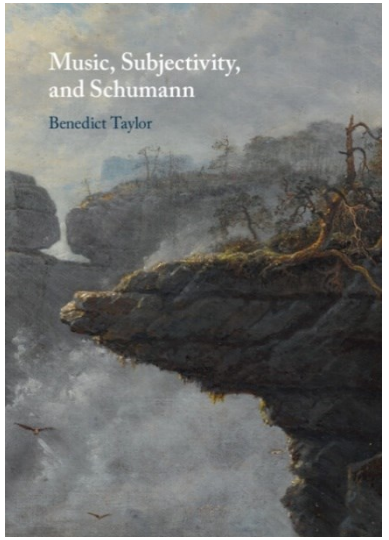


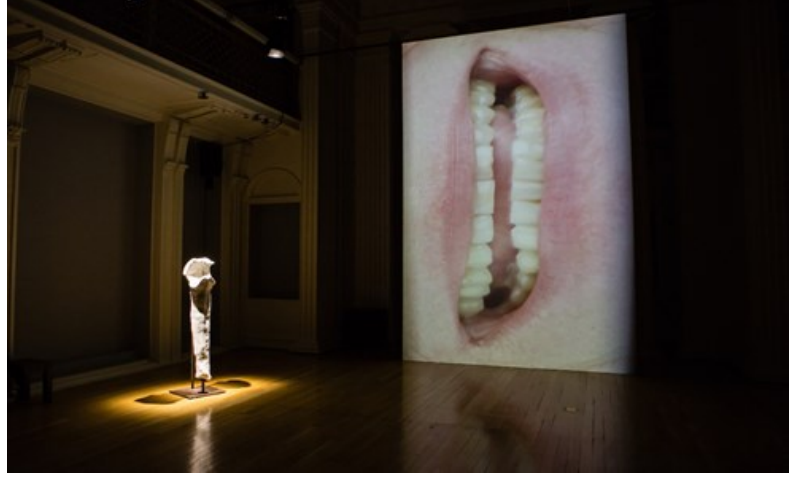


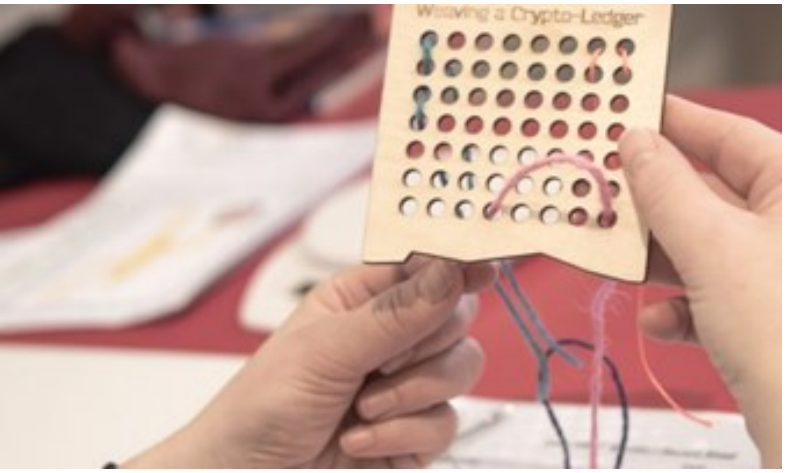


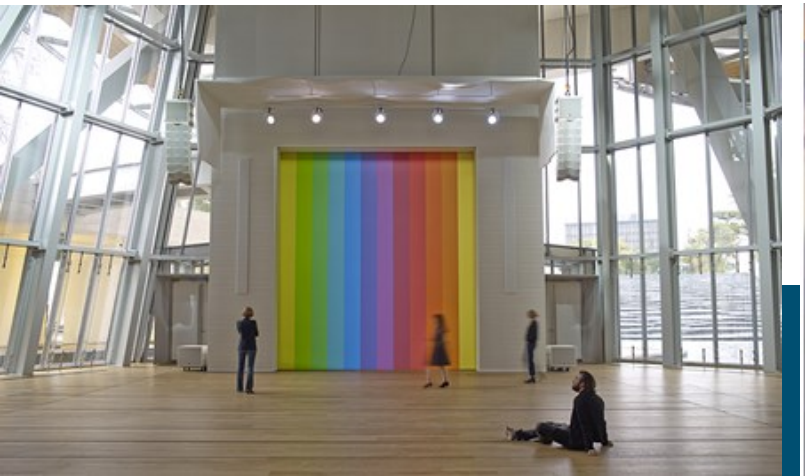










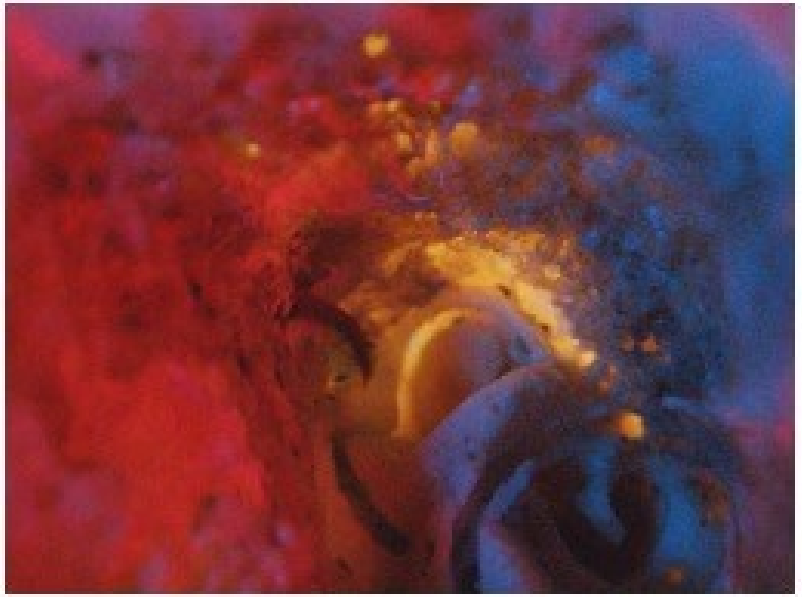


About a third of our research community are practice researchers, working across arts and design, music and landscape architecture, producing research in a variety of forms, from exhibitions, artworks, landscape design, design products, film, performance, digital media products, compositions, and artists books.

Research Groups by Subject Area

Art:

- Temporality/Entropy/Being (Louise Milne)
- Expanding Cinema (Aurelian Froment)
- Art & Learning (Neil Mulholland)
- Sexes (Lucy Weir and Benoît Loiseau)



History of Art

- Dada and Surrealism (Paulina Caro Troncosco)
- Edinburgh Manuscripts: Composition and Collection (Bryony Coombs, Heather Pulliam & Hope Doherty-Harrison)
- The Global Contemporary (Kirsten Lloyd)
- Material Culture in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Viccy Coltman, Catriona Murray)
- Sexes (Lucy Weir)
- Forum for German Visual Culture (Christian Weikop)
- Parity in Practice (Cole Collins, Elysia Leichelt, Martam Ohadi-Hamadani)
- Transoceanic Art Research Consortium (Jamie Forde)

School of Design

- AI, Ethics & Society (Ewa Luger)
- RAFT (Sarah Kettley & Jessamy Kelly)
- Animation research network Scotland (Nichola Dobson)
- Critical change (Rachel Harkness, Craig Martin, Arno Verhoeven)
- Design & Screen Cultures (Mike Anusas)

The New Real (Drew Hemment)

FilmMedicine Network/Research Group (Amy Hardie)

Performance Research Group (Beverley Hood (Design) And Lucy Weir (Hoa))

The Centre for Data Culture and Society (ECA Representative – Beverley Hood)

Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA):

- History of Architecture and the Built Environment (Alistair Fair)
- Medellín Urban Innovation (Soledad Garcia Ferrari)
- Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies (Miles Glendinning)
- The Edinburgh Strategic Alliance in Architecture, Built Environment , and Planning (Soledad García-Ferrari)

Music

- **Musicology (incl. early music and popular music)**: Annette Davison, Anne Desler, Morag Grant, Marian Jago, Elaine Kelly, Benedict Taylor
- **Acoustics (incl. the Acoustics and Audio Group)**: Stefan Bilbao, Tom McKenzie, Tom Mudd, Michael Newton, Alec Wright
- **Composition (incl. Sound Design)**: Richard Craig, Dee Isaacs, Chris Letcher, Tom Mudd, Martin Parker, Jules Rawlinson, Gareth Williams
- **Music Psychology (incl. the Music in Human Social Development Research Group)** : Nikki Moran, Raymond MacDonald, Katie Overy

Programmes

- Programmes are generally prescribed by you through your research proposal and are either:
  - Practice-led: you make a body of work in which you interrogate/demonstrate new ideas, supported by a written thesis
  - Theory based: you examine the work of others with a written thesis.

- What do people research?

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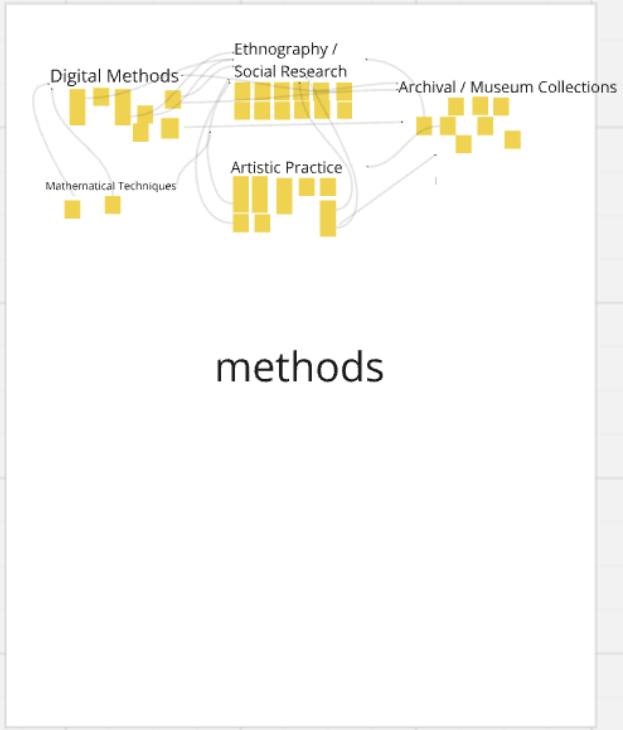
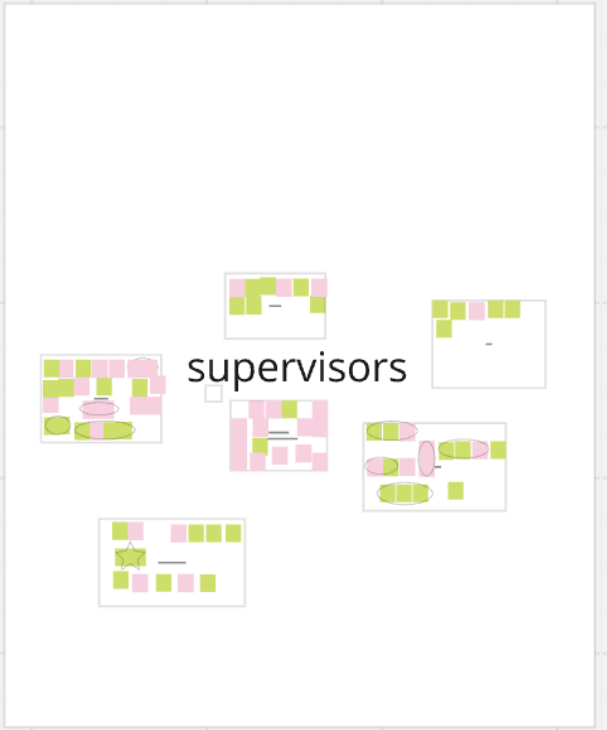
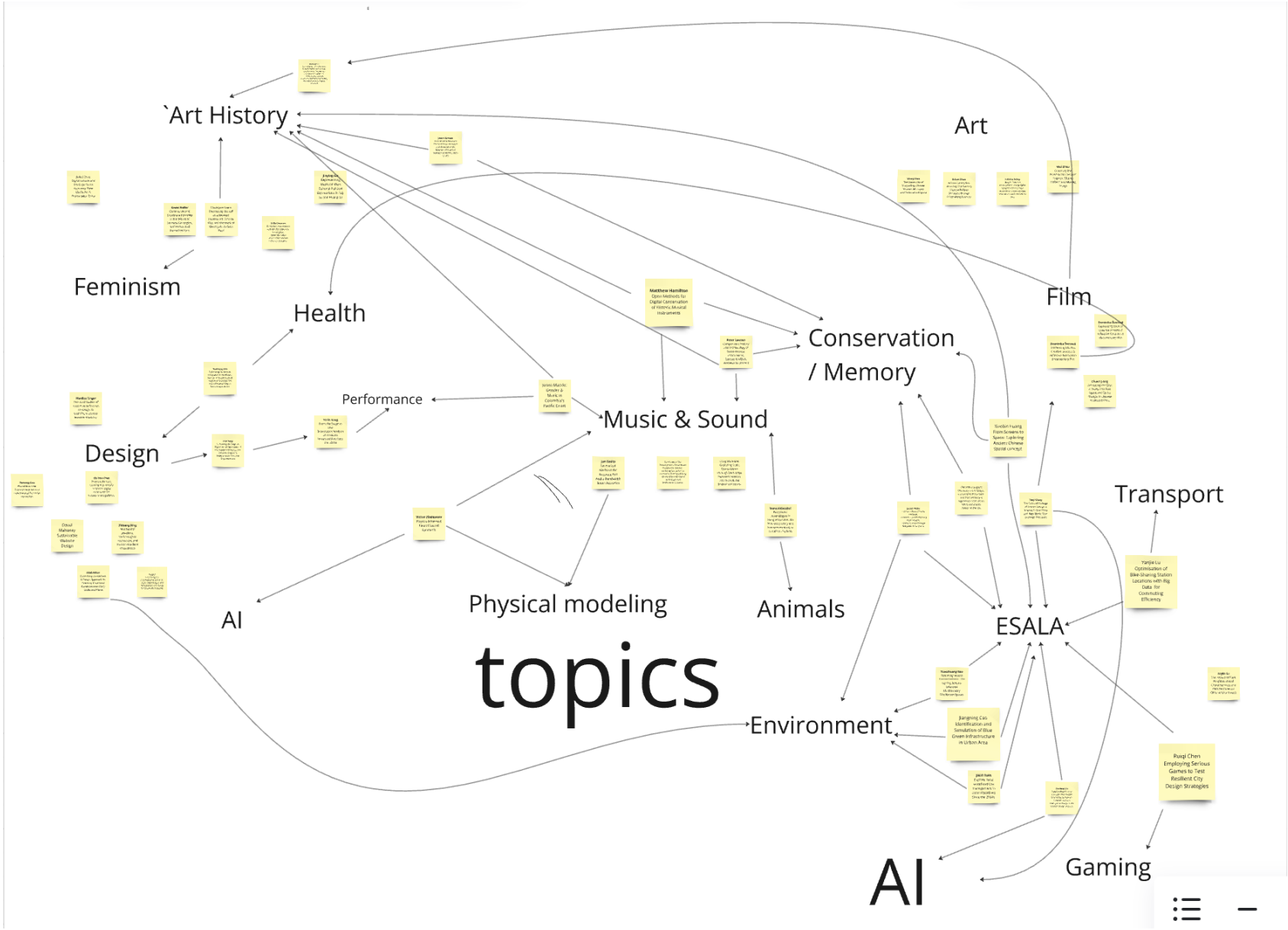
topics
methods
supervisor 1
supervisor 2

Art History
Art
Feminism
Health
Film
Conservation / Memory
Music & Sound
Design
Transport
AI
Physical modeling
Animals
ESALA
topics
Environment
AI
Gaming


Digital Methods
Ethnography / Social Research
Archival / Museum Collections
Artistic Practice
Mathematical Techniques
methods


supervisors

topics		Madelyne Evans Decreating the self as a feminist creative act: Simone Weil and the work of Gwenjohn & Celia Paul	**Xiaozhuang Gao** Fostering Nature Connectedness : Designing Nature-Informed Multisensory Meditation Spaces	Jiahui Zhou Digital culture and the Experience Economy: New Media Art in Postsocialist China	David Mahoney Sustainable Website Design	Jiangning Cao Identification and Simulation of Blue Green Infrastructure in Urban Area
methods	Ed Hollis creative writing/drawing	Madelyne Evans Art historical analysis theological analysis literature review archival research	Xiaozhuang Gao Literature Review participatory design Biofeedback design	Jiahui Zhou Literature Review Case Studies Action Research	David Mahoney Literature Review Case Studies Co-Design	Jiangning Cao Literature review Data Collection Spatial Analysis Machine Learning
supervisor 1	Ed Hollis suzie attiwill	Madelyne Evans Dr Tamara Trodd	Xiaozhuang Gao Ms.Beverley Hood	Jiahui Zhou Prof Chia-Ling Yang	David Mahoney Prof Melissa Terras	Jiangning Cao Prof Simon Bell
supervisor 2	Ed Hollis NIcholas Boyarsky	Madelyne Evans Prof Rachel Muers Dr Michelle Foot	Xiaozhuang Gao Dr.Denissa Petrova Dr.Candela Sanchez-Rodilla Espeso	Jiahui Zhou Prof Ian Rothwell	David Mahoney Prof John Lee	Jiangning Cao Dr Scott Ogletree Dr Alessia Calafiore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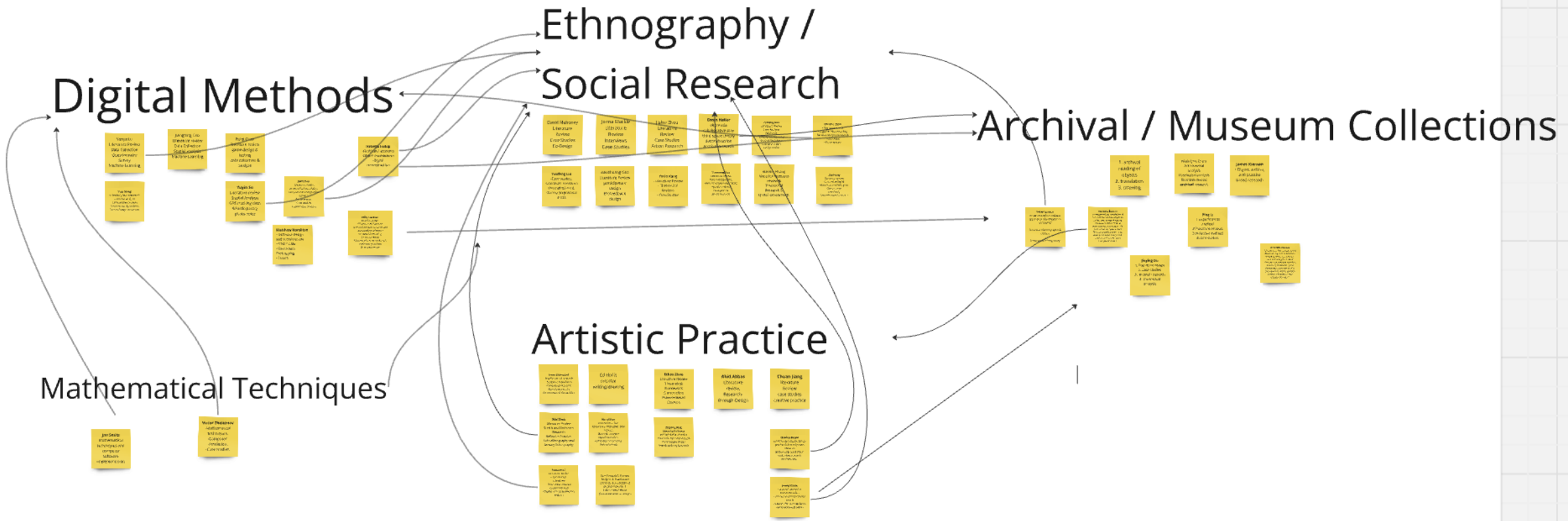
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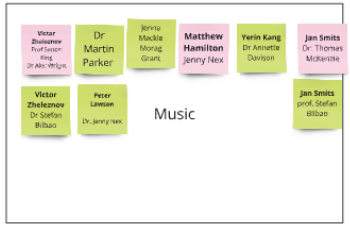

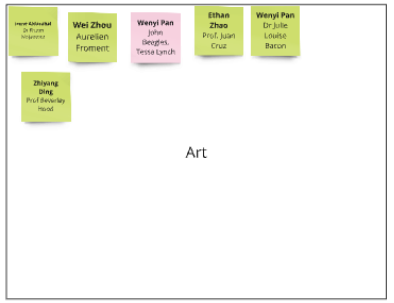

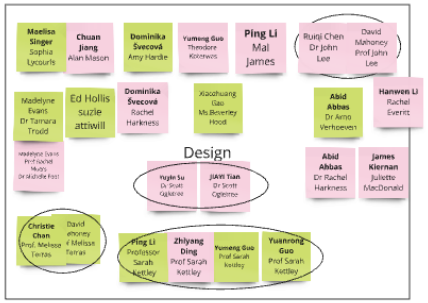

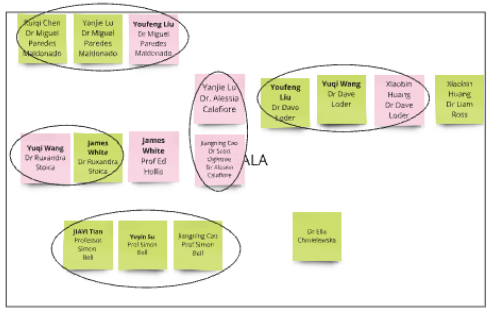

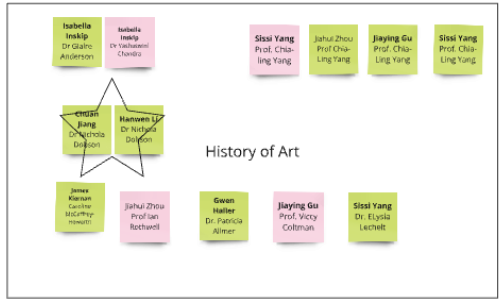

Finding a supervisor

- There are numerous disciplines across ECA – please view these online and look at staff profiles. Not all are available all the time to supervise but please contact them to find out if they are.
- It can be a good idea to discuss your idea with a potential supervisor before submitting your application.
- How to find a research supervisor | The University of Edinburgh
- People Directory | Edinburgh College of Art

Periods of study and progress

- MScR is 1 year FT; 2 years PT 180 credits = 1800 study hrs
- MPhil is 2 years FT; 4 years PT 360 credits = 3,600 study hrs
- PhD is 3 years FT; 6 years PT 540+ credits = 5,400 study hrs
  - Study Week f/t = 8 hrs per day, 40 hrs per week

Academic Progress

- Annual review every year to check on progress with supervisory team and internal reviewer.
- Submission of thesis once agreed with team, assessed by viva voce examination.

Modes of study & facilities

- Programmes are generally prescribed by you through your research proposal and is either:
  - Practice led – you make a body of work which you interrogate/demonstrate new ideas, supported by a written thesis
  - Theory based – you examine the work of others within the written thesis.
- In both instances you are looking to contribute something original to your field so you need to think about the overall discipline.
- You will have access to all of the University libraries, the ECA workshops and a dedicated study space for PGR students.*

* may depend on availability at a given time

Supporting research

- We run a dedicated research methods course in September to guide you through various ways of conducting research.
- The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) run excellent courses for PGR students in all aspects of the study as well as training if you are able to work as a tutor during your time.
- https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development
- The school (& wider University) offers a range of events over the year including talks and workshops in different research subjects to attend.

Application process

- Once you have made contact with a supervisor (and possibly me) you can follow the guidance on the website to submit your application – among other evidence of your qualifications you must submit a clear research proposal which sets out what you will do.
  - It's a really good idea to look and see what we do at ECA before submitting – we want to find the best fit for you.
- Once submitted this will go to a panel for review who will make the decision on your application.
- https://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/design-mphilphd

Application Deadlines

- Entry points are in September and January annually.
- We encourage you to apply at least one month prior to entry so that we have enough time to process your application. If you are also applying for funding or will require a visa then we strongly recommend you apply as early as possible.

Requirements

- Academic qualifications
  - Academic qualifications | The University of Edinburgh
  - A UK 2:1 honours degree, or its international equivalent. We will also take any professional experience into account.
  - Some programmes also require a Masters degree.
  - English language entry requirements | The University of Edinburgh
  - You must demonstrate a level of English language competency at a level that will enable you to succeed in your studies, regardless of your nationality or country of residence.
- Documents required
  - References
  - Research proposal
  - Portfolio (practice based)
  - Degree certificates and transcripts

Scholarship Funding

- Information on scholarships can be found here:
- Scholarships and bursaries | Edinburgh College of Art
- Scholarships and Student Funding | The University of Edinburgh

Contact details for follow-up questions

- We apologise if we did not get through all of your questions in the time allotted for this session. If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Thank you

Professor Ed Hollis
e.hollis@ed.ac.uk

EDINBURGH
Extraordinary futures await