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Drawing Symposium: UWE Nov 2019

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Abstract: **Drawing Learning/Learning Drawing: a personal view**

Type of presentation: Paper (15-20 mins)

In the context of an increasingly target-driven education system, the rise of new mainstream qualifications and control measures for secondary education (such as EBacc and Progress 8 introduced in the UK in 2010 and 2016 respectively) have steered a sharp course away from creative subjects, favouring measurable learning and raising the spectre of teaching to the test. According to Biesta, in 'educational systems that reduce children to test scores, that stifle creativity or only allow creativity if it generates the 'right' outcomes [], the arts definitely have an important role to play' (Biesta 2018). As the creative industries continue to grow globally, we are at the same time witnessing the strangulation of its pipeline. We face an increasing need to reassert the role and practice of drawing as an insubordinate and radical proposition in learning, capable of unlocking new ideas, thoughts and experiences in and of the world.

Over the last 20 years or so, I have been fortunate to have been involved in and around the resurgent discourse in contemporary drawing within an art school context, and have invested a personal commitment to the relationship between drawing and learning. As a teacher, I have primarily focussed on the role drawing plays in the construction of learning within a range of educational paradigms and contexts. As an academic, I have become increasingly interested in understanding how drawing might challenge, or is challenged by, the orthodoxies of an industrialised education system, and how it might continue to offer us routes to new knowledge and understanding.

In a short personal account of my experience teaching and promoting drawing throughout my career in Higher Education, I will briefly illustrate some of the ways drawing has defied expectation and categorization during my teaching experience, and offer some personal thoughts on the position of drawing in the art school.

Reference:

Biesta, G.J.J. (2018) 'What if? Art education beyond expression and creativity', in Biesta, G and Cole, D., Naughton, C. *Art. artists and pedagogy; philosophy and the arts in education*, Abingdon: Routledge, pp.13.