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Preface

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Preface

This research training project “Interrogations:Creative Interdisciplinarity in art and design research”, began two years ago as a collaboration between the postgraduate research students of De Montfort University Faculty of Art and Design and Loughborough University School of Art and Design. Developing out of a previous joint project resulting in the 2007 conference “In Theory? Encounters with Theory in Practice-Based Ph.D. research in Art and Design”, these two projects generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council were designed to address central issues in art and design research training, and allow research students to gain valuable experience in conference organisation, ranging from practical skills to high-level academic skills such as peer-reviewing of conference paper submissions. This publication is the result of the international conference, which took place on July 1st and 2nd 2009at Loughborough University. Prior to the conference three workshops took place exploring ways in which interdisciplinary thinking and practices could interact to creatively inform research. Topics in the workshops included the discussion of various maps and models of interdisciplinary thinking and creativity, exploration of a number of theoretical approaches which might be useful to researchers who wanted to break out of their “home” disciplines (such as rhizomatic or nomadic thinking), and using metaphors and symbols as ways in which to encourage an adventurous and exploratory journey through discovery and creation (such as doors and windows.)

The conference papers here, together with the keynote addresses, give a flavour of the conference experience. However the conference was also the occasion for lively and challenging questioning and discussions, which, hopefully, will result in participants going back to their research with renewed enthusiasm and critical thinking. We both feel that it has given us, as senior academics, new perspectives on research and research training in art and design and related fields of scholarship. We also hope that our project will encourage other research students to take advantage of the AHRC’s valuable help in funding such activities for postgraduate students. We also want to thank De Montfort and Loughborough Universities for their support. However without the commitment and dedication of the committee of research students who

took on the planning and organisation of the conference, this conference and publication would not have been the success that it proved to be, so our thanks and admiration for their efforts are expressed here. In particular we want to thank Basia Sliwiska, whose dedication and professionalism is a model for any aspiring researcher. We hope you enjoy reading these papers as much as we enjoyed working with such an impressive group of students.

- Gen Doy (De Montfort) and Jane Tormey (Loughborough)