The Art of Unknowing – The joy of amateur practice as a space for emancipation from the constraints of academic discipline.

LEVICK-PARKIN, Melanie <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3925-9792> and CARROLL, Katy

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The Art of Unknowing

The joy of amateur practice as a space for emancipation from the constraints of academic discipline.
Katy Carroll
Principal Lecturer
Critical Theory

Melanie Levick-Parkin
Senior Lecturer
Visual Communication
Katy Carroll  (25 years in Service)
Principal Lecturer
Critical Theory

Melanie Levick-Parkin  (12 years in Service)
Senior Lecturer
Visual Communication
Being immersed in the Art School for the most part of your professional life is a privileged position to find oneself in. But what if this immersion also presents a certain entrapment in the connoisseurship and knowledge that you have acquired, embodied, and are passing on. This paper is about the creative liberation of two female visual communication academics, through the pursuit of amateur practices in un-professional curatorship of personal obsessions.
Being immersed in the Art School for the most part of your professional life is a privileged position to find oneself in. But what if this immersion also presents a certain entrapment in the connoisseurship and knowledge that you have acquired, embodied, and are passing on.

This paper is about the creative liberation of two female visual communication academics, through the pursuit of amateur practices in un-professional curatorship of personal obsessions.
‘…tastes are acquired through instruction, through the acquisition of knowledge and the development of values.’

Roger Scruton (1996)
All the aesthetic and behavioral values I had embodied over years of seeking the disciplines acceptance had started to make me feel like never wanting to design anything again in my life.

Design became the prison of my own making.
Amateur Practice
Amateur Making
Disclaimer

This presentation is entirely fictional and any resemblance of any of the practice mentioned to any real amateur practice or any real amateur makers is completely coincidental and pure good luck.
‘An open, self-regulating, peer to peer system that operates without the centralised rules and regulations of professional intervention – yet manages to sustain a cohesive and productive culture.’

Andrew Jackson 2008
‘... they appear closer to a Rancierean act of archive excavation into forms of expression that fall outside professional realms.’

Lucia Vodanovic 2013
‘Such gazes are constructed through difference.’

John Urry 2002
No. 78 — Cretan peasant family — Famille paysanne Crétoise
Souvenir de Crête.
Mia Παραμυθή έλα τα πεζήτων Χανιών.
Un Vendredi dans les environs de la Cuné
“MUM, YOU ARE GOING TO GET ARRESTED” (LOL)

KRITI MOU
On loving foreign places

Badly designed postcards with naff type that screams ‘I love Crete’ are found in abundance on the island, even though one wonders who even still bothers sending them these days. I am repulsed by their aesthetic as much as I am drawn to their sentiment. How do you love a place that does not belong to you and where you do not belong? Is my love for Crete any more meaningful, then any lame postcard sent to colder climates by a sun, sea & sand tourist holidaying in a resort in Malia?

I am really not convinced, but what I am sure of is that my love for the island has led me to an engagement with areas of knowledge I’d have never guessed I’d be interested with areas of knowledge I’d have never guessed I’d be interested. But then - many Minoan designs should sit quite well with that and are said to have actually influenced certain aspects of modernism.

I have the suspicion that the more deciding factor is that I first became familiar with Minoan artifacts by seeing bad replicas in tasteless tourist displays. Not that I wasn’t interested, I just never seemed to work, just like the stupid tourists who would stop and stare whilst looking at piles of old rubble.

It would be years before I would find myself really clearly in the originals in the museums. When finally did some of them made me weep with their traces of human thought and creativity tainted with such clarity through the ages. But sometimes, when I pointed them out to others, I’d hear ‘I don’t see it either’. I’d go on the contrary, that if I didn’t see it in a contemporary, say, postcard, there is a decision to be made to that effect.

So in the context of this, my idea of ‘heritage – re-contextualising scripts of Linear A and Linear B. It is a modernist aesthetic, even if the perpetrators of de-facing public space are mere functionaries, but there are practitioners. But then, the aesthetic barrier somehow produced antiqueness that doesn’t fade with time. It’s the process, not the artifact. It’s a start – not a finish.

Questions - no answers.

Next year I might go on a trip there and see if a Linear A logogram for woman. (An admittedly obvious choice.) Most of the writing on postcards tend to be quite obvious. The words and symbols scratched into the wet ink on the surface of public space belong to the public space, to the public space. I can be as honest as I wish and not be bound by equipment failure and I am not sure how much I like the lines I saw. The logogram as a big toks as cheap to my mind, as any other top. But at the very least, the logograms lived in a public space, it is a contemporary element of the script seemed to engage the past with the present.

So in the context of this, my idea of ‘Any ‘reading of the past, is also a reflection of our presence.’

In Linear B. Since the 2008 economic crisis, more and more graffiti and street art in Greece has been defaced. People express their fury and opinion by scratching and scrawling into the air. People express their fury and opinion by scratching and scrawling into the air. People express their fury and opinion by scratching and scrawling into the air. People express their fury and opinion by scratching and scrawling into the air. People express their fury and opinion by scratching and scrawling into the air.

For my tag I had chosen the Linear B logogram for woman, a surprisingly obvious choice. Most of the writing on postcards tend to be quite obvious. The words and symbols scratched into the wet ink on the surface of public space belong to the public space, to the public space. I can be as honest as I wish and not be bound by equipment failure and I am not sure how much I like the lines I saw. The logogram as a big toks as cheap to my mind, as any other top. But at the very least, the logograms lived in a public space, it is a contemporary element of the script seemed to engage the past with the present.

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Observation of Linear B Session
Sheffield 2016, it's a Wednesday in February and the basement lab in the School of Archaeology is about to become a place for transcribing the data from the latest survey. I wear my usual office attire as we head over to the ASL, where I spent much of my time during the survey.

As I enter the room, I see a familiar looking kind of space. The basement lab looks much like an art & design studio than the usual academic environment. The room is filled with various materials, and the atmosphere is immediately comforting for someone used to a more sterile environment.

A smell of clay dust and fresh nesting fabric waft in the air, mingling with the warmth of the room, creating a pleasant ambience that echoes elements of artistry.
As it is a bonus room the ceiling is quite low with some exposed pipework and bare ceiling. There are two surfaces on both sides of the room, one is completely covered in various boxes and some big pithos style jars in the corner, the other one is fairly clean and has a task in the middle, with a sign asking for donations.

There's a big grey shelving unit at the end of the room, which also houses a glass display case and some shelves on the wall. The front of the room has a whiteboard with pictures on it. There are some shelves at head height, containing fall with different clay based artifacts, some easily recognizable as beautiful examples of ancient ceramics, others not so much, - quite charming, but to my eye slightly dodgy, decorative painted motives. Some of the boxes are broken and most are very dusty.
One of the instruments is a thumb-length narwhale dent piece of cylindrical-shaped wood with a sturdy, blunt metal needle sticking out of one end. The other is a piece of narwhale tusk, with the end being finished manually by the whale's teeth, thus giving it a distinct end to it.

The natural whisking implement is about the same length as the narwhale one. It makes sense to me to offer this variation, as the choice of tool will ultimately impact on the production of the script. It would be interesting to compare these to original implements.

After the initial welcome and setting down, Angela cuts a piece of clay for every student, while John explains to the students the manner of the task about to be commenced. He asks them to start by cutting a piece of clay, in any shape they wish, and to then transcribe their name in Latex B onto the clay, using one of the many instruments provided. He demonstrates the naming of a sample tablet and writes some instructions for the Latex B script onto the whiteboard.
The students busy themselves discussing what this tablet is used for to spell their names in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. John highlights a few of the illustrations on the tablet, each with their own unique symbols, and the students use this information to communicate in relation to numbers.

The students try out the different writing implements and discuss how they feel the tablets could be used. Some prefer the hieroglyphic stick and think it moves more elegantly through the clay, whilst others prefer using the more implement as they find it more controllable.

After having completed this first task, the students move onto making a small wooden tablet on which to record everybody’s name. This seems quite limiting for those who are not very good at writing, as not all of the words make sense. For example, there were lists of things: Gods, animals, people – lists of economic resources, who paid what to whom, who owned and who possessed.
Move forwards 1 space

Did you Know:
The Phaistos Disk was discovered in 1908.
BUT .....
‘… amateur work, however ‘personal’ in its pursuits of curiosity, always exists in a relation – of aspiration, antagonism, or both – to the structures that govern the conferrance of legitimacy on practices: the school, the workplace, informal systems of judgment, the art institution, the state.’

Tom Roberts 2005 (in Vodanovic 2013)
‘It is, therefore, the manifestation of (again) a distance, a separation but also an engagement with this distant relationship what makes something to be amateur.’

Vodanovic 2013
The gaze therefore pre-supposes a system of social activities and signs which locate the particular tourist practices, not in terms of some intrinsic characteristics, but through the contrast implied with non-tourist social practices, particularly those based within the home and paid work.

John Urry 2002
Hallo Lydia und Heinz,

sowie Ursula

mit freundlichen Grüßen

Euch

von der Familie

und ich wieder

Heinz und Lydia

Par Avion

Jochsberger Str. 7

8801 Buch am Wald

Gruß aus

172

Crete-Kreta

SOUVENIR

OF CRETE

SOUVENIR

OF CRETE
Greek: Ελλάδα - Νερακία - Greece - Griechenland

English: 11th Oct.

Here we are again having a drink in the corner bar and washing our feet in the Taverna! The food is good and the wine is OK.

Great excitement - we went on a donkey boat ride and got soaked in at the end! We went to a mountain village to climb 210 steps up to a church.

Are you mad? The weather is really good and we haven't been in the sea for two weeks.

Last time was in October.

How are you? Love from us all.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith

Wimley, BRADFORD-ON-AVON

BA15 2NF

U.K.
22.10.1984

Freundliche Grüße
Aus den schönen Ferien sendet
Toni und Jan
Hier brachte man noch keine Heizung!

pa/ma

Dit alles oké?
Bij jou ook?
Veel liefs

Mom & Pa.

19/6/87

De heer
E. van Riessen

Adelaar 93

5348 EH OSS

HOLLAND
Apropos of “Duchamp Tourism”
WANTED

$2,000 REWARD

For information leading to the arrest of George W. Wray, alias Bull, alias Pickett, alias ectere, etcere. Operated Bucket Shop in New York under name HOOKE, LYON and CINQUER. Height about 5 feet 9 inches. Weight about 180 pounds. Complex medium, eyes same. Known also under name RROSE SELAVY.
Duchamp’s Parental Retirement Home
Rouen

Marcel Duchamp, *Erratum Musical*, 1913
Duchamp Family Grave
Rouen Cemetery
And then there is that one-man movement, Marcel Duchamp—for me a truly modern movement because it implies that each artist can do what he thinks he ought to—a movement for each person and open for everybody.

Willem de Kooning

IN 1913 I HAD THE HAPPY IDEA TO FASTEN A BICYCLE WHEEL TO A KITCHEN STOOL AND WATCH IT TURN.

A FEW MONTHS LATER I BOUGHT A CHEAP REPRODUCTION OF A WINTER EVENING LANDSCAPE, WHICH I CALLED "PHARMACY" AFTER ADDING TWO SMALL DOTS, ONE RED AND ONE YELLOW, IN THE HORIZON.

IN NEW YORK IN 1915 I BOUGHT AT A HARDWARE STORE A SNOW SHOVEL ON WHICH I WROTE "IN ADVANCE OF THE BROKEN ARM."

IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME THAT THE WORD "READYMADe" CAME TO MIND TO DESIGNATE THIS FORM OF MANIFESTATION.

A POINT WHICH I WANT VERY MUCH TO ESTABLISH IS THAT THE CHOICE OF THESE "READYMADeS" WAS NEVER DictATED BY ESTHETIC DELECTATION.

THIS CHOICE WAS BASED ON A REACTION OF VISUAL INDIFFERENCE WITH AT THE SAME TIME A TOTAL ABSENCE OF GOOD OR BAD TASTE . . . IN FACT A COMPLETE ANESTHESIA.

ONE IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC WAS THE SHORT SENTENCE WHICH I OCCASIONALLY INSCRIBED ON THE "READYMADe."

THAT SENTENCE INSTEAD OF DESCRIBING THE OBJECT LIKE A TITLE WAS MEANT TO CARRY THE MIND OF THE SPECTATOR TOWARDS OTHER REGIONS MORE VERBAL.

• Travel / Holidays (Breathing / Living / Dwelling)

• Working Environment (Making / Working / Being)

• Mapping (Planning / Recording / Documenting)

• Souvenirs (Collecting / Making / Displaying)
Marshall Chess Club
New York

Herne Bay

Apartment nr Central Park
New York
Café Meliton, Cadaqués, Spain.
COOK'S
TRAVELLER'S HANDBOOK
SWITZERLAND
SAVOY, ETC.
1. Austerlitz train station
2. 11 rue de Larrey 1922
3. Rue St-Hippolyte - studio
4. Hotel Istria, Rue Campagne-Première (No. 29)
5. 37 rue de Fère de 1923
6. Rue Blomet
7. Entrance/Ciné sketch
8. Rue de Rivièras
9. Palais de la Ville de Paris - Champs-Élysées
10. 15 Ave Montaigne
11. By air mail
Katy Carroll
@duchamptourist

Tweets

Katy Carroll @duchamptourist · Jan 5
Hotel Isteia, 29 Rue Campagne-Première (1923). Looks like the place to stay ;)

Katy Carroll @duchamptourist · Jan 5
37 Rue De Froidevaux (1923) Appartment. Looks like it’s check mate ;)

Katy Carroll @duchamptourist · Jan 4
32 Ave Charles Floquet (July 1919): Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia's Appartment: after returning from Buenos Aires - retinal views ;)

Katy Carroll @duchamptourist · Jan 4
23 Rue S-Hippolyte (1913): Bicycle Wheel. Beware the wet paint ;)

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

Gaby sahhar @GabySahhar Followed by Duchamp & Sons
Contemporary Art Soo @C__
Marcel Duchamp @marcel... Followed by What Did Duch...
The Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen
The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Green Box), September 1934
Box in a Valise (From or by Marcel Duchamp or Rrose Sélavy) 1935 - 41
Stéréoscope pour positifs
45-107
N°1
Modèle déposé fabriqué en France

Stéréofilms Bruguière
Breveté 1,0,0,0
12 positifs
stéréoscopiques sur film

[Image of a stereoscope and stereoscopic slides]
A funny tea towel to help you with domestic chores!

**DESCRIPTION**

Marcel Duchamp is an exceptional artist who is yet considered, in common modernist opinion, as the man who “killed painting”.

**CHARACTERISTICS**

100% cotton

**EAN** 3760146332171

**Dimensions** 480 mm x 680 mm

**Publisher** Centre Pompidou

**Categories** Home decor, Table art
Yport Beach Pebble 9-07-07 Thursday

Stones from outside Blainville House collected Tue 17-07-07
Readymade

‘work of art without an artist to make it’

‘letting things go by themselves’

Marcel Duchamp
NEW "Come to Life" STEREO PICTURES
to thrill all the family

All the family will enjoy pictures of famous American scenes, exotic fantasy lands, exciting children’s stories, in the amazing depth of three dimensions.

View-Master stereo color pictures are so real you’ll feel you are actually part of the scene! Each low-cost View-Master Reel—for use in View-Master Stereoscopes and Projectors—contains seven stereo Kodachrome scenes. Over 400 entertaining, educational subjects to delight all the family.

ask to see
VIEW-MASTER
stereoscopic pictures

AT SELECTED PHOTO, GIFT AND DEPARTMENT STORES
The gaze is as socially organised and systematised […] it is not a gaze confined to professionals ‘supported and justified by an institution’ (Foucault, 1976:89).

Urry and Larson 2011 pg1
Duchamp was a great bricoleur; he enjoyed making and fixing.

Calvin Thompkins (1996: Pg.431)
Duchamp’s Apartment
Cadaqués
Spain
The poetry of bricolage comes to the bricoleur also, and above all, from the fact that he does not limit himself to accomplishing or executing. [...] Without ever accomplishing his project, the bricoleur always puts into it something of himself. Lévis-Strauss

(in Loudrias, P. 1999. pg520)

It (bricolage) creates structures, in the form of its artefacts, by means of contingent events. To arrive at a definition, *bricolage is the creation of structure out of events.*

(Loudrias, P. 1999. pg520)
Gazing is a performance that orders, shapes and classifies rather than reflects the world.

Urry and Larson 2011 pg2
He once stated he preferred living than working, he claimed ‘Je suis a respirateur.’
Apropos of "Readymades"

IN 1913 I HAD THE HAPPY IDEA TO FASTEN A BICYCLE WHEEL TO A KITCHEN STOOL AND WATCH IT TURN. A FEW MONTHS LATER I BOUGHT A CHEAP REPRODUCTION OF A WINTER EVENING LANDSCAPE WHICH I CALLED "PHARMACY" AFTER ADDING TWO SMALL DOTS, ONE RED AND ONE YELLOW, IN THE HORIZON. IN NEW YORK IN 1915 I BOUGHT AT A HARDWARE STORE A SNOW SHOVEL ON WHICH I WROTE IN ADVANCE OF THE BROKEN ARM.

IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME THAT THE WORD "READYMADE" CAME TO MIND TO DESIGNATE THIS FORM OF MANIFESTATION. A POINT WHICH I WANT VERY MUCH TO ESTABLISH IS THAT THE CHOICE OF THESE "READYMADES" WAS NEVER Dictated by ESTHETIC DELECTATION. THIS CHOICE WAS BASED ON A REACTION OF VISUAL INDIFFERENCE WITH AT THE SAME TIME A TOTAL ABSENCE OF GOOD OR BAD TASTE... IN FACT A COMPLETE ANESTHESIA. ONE IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC WAS THE SHORT SENTENCE WHICH OCCASIONALLY IS DESCRIBED AS "Suddenly, I realized the Readymades..."

THAT SENTENCE INSTEAD OF DESCRIBING THE OBJECT LIKE A TITLE WAS MEANT TO CARRY THE MIND OF THE SPECTATOR TOWARDS OTHER REGIONS MORE VERBAL.

Apropos of “Duchamp Tourism”

IN 2007 I HAD THE HAPPY IDEA TO FASTEN AN OBSESSION TO GOING ON HOLIDAY.

A FEW MONTHS LATER I …

IN HERNE BAY IN 2013 I BOUGHT AT A SOUVENIR STORE A SNOW STORM ON WHICH I … considered the relationship between a /my collection and Duchamp / readymades?

IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME THAT THE WORD “DUCHAMP TOURISM” CAME TO MIND TO DESIGNATE THIS MANIFESTATION.

A POINT WHICH I WANT VERY MUCH TO ESTABLISH IS THAT THE CHOICE OF “DUCHAMP TOURISM” WAS NEVER DICTATED BY ACADEMIC DELECTATION.

THIS CHOICE WAS BASED ON A REACTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDIFFERENCE WITH AT THE SAME TIME A TOTAL ABSENCE OF GOOD OR BAD TASTE … IN FACT A COMPLETE LOVE.

ONE IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC WAS THE OBSESSION WITH RECORDING THE “DUCHAMP TOURISM” ACTIVITIES.

THAT DOCUMENTATION INSTEAD OF DESCRIBING THE HOLIDAY LIKE A TITLE WAS MEANT TO CARRY THE MIND OF THE SPECTATOR TOWARDS OTHER REGIONS MORE CONCEPTUAL.
Thank you!