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The Ignorant Art Schools

The Ignorant Art Schools Research Group emerged out of the work carried out under the umbrella of the *Ignorant Art School: Five Sit-ins Toward Creative Emancipation* exhibition and event programme at Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee, curated by Sophia Yadong Hao. The group included curator Sophia Yadong Hao (University of Dundee), curator and writer Sarah Perks (Teesside University), curator and artist Paul Stewart (Teesside University) and artist and researcher Edgar Schmitz (Goldsmiths, London).

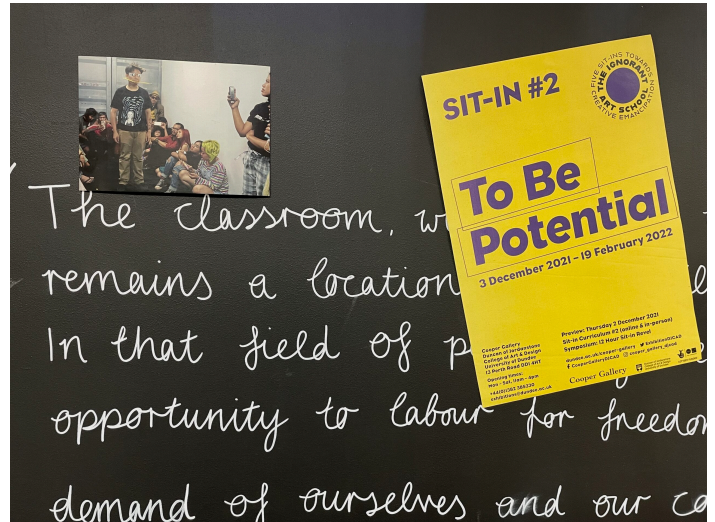
The group investigated the intersections of European alternative art pedagogy and recent forms of collective curatorial agency in Global Majority countries. Charting the organisational praxis, spatial politics and power structures of these new forms, the research provided working models for enhancing socially conscious and transformative approaches to curatorial practice, art education and knowledge production.

Building on the interest generated and the archival material made available through the series of events and exhibitions of The Ignorant Art School programme at Cooper Gallery, the group aimed to bring key protagonists into dialogue in order to pool models and approaches between very different geopolitical and cultural backgrounds. We facilitated long overdue dialogues and assessed how these models and approaches are translated between very different contexts.

The objectives of the research group were to:

- Describe the relationship between alternative art pedagogies and sites of crisis in view of their contribution to current socio-political narratives including decoloniality, social justice and environmental stewardship (the 'what')
- Articulate how these new curatorial ecosystems challenge social hierarchies and economies of access, and reveal how they have transformed modes of participation and production (the 'how')
- Investigate where these new curatorial ecosystems take place and how these spaces impact social experiences and how they

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se analyse for new forms of sociality (the 'where'). This means we set a cookie. See our [cookie policy](#).
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Contact Information

The exhibition and event programme *The Ignorant Art School: Five Sit-ins Towards Creative Emancipation* at Cooper Gallery is ongoing. [Find out more on their website.](#)

For more information or to join the group, please email Sophia Yadong Hao s.y.hao@dundee.ac.uk.

Related Research Members

[Edgar Schmitz](#)

[Sophia Yadong Hao](#)

[Sarah Perks](#)

[Paul Stewart](#)

BAN Supported Activity

2024

For the second year of the group, our activities focused on national and international concerns and outputs, furthering our investigations on ecosystems and our research-based curatorial practice globally. The research questions expanded our focus on decolonial, feminist and queer narratives whilst intersecting with the institutional and social context of our outputs. By questioning the role of our ecosystems our research directly engaged social communities in how notions of collective participation from the past can inform and impact upon future activities, and vice-versa through revisionist tactics.

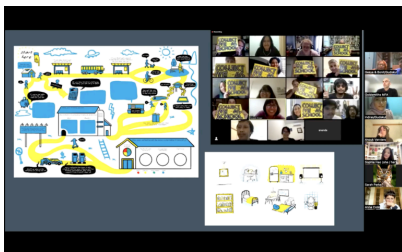
Our activities in 2024 included:

- A workshop at CHEAD (Council for Higher Education in Art and Design) Annual Conference 2024
- Practising Duets #3: Filipa César and Harun Morrison (held at Goldsmiths CCA, London)
- Practising Duet #4: Griselda Pollock & Womanifesto (held online)
- An international curatorial residency

Building networks internationally, including Thailand and Japan, enabled the research to draw specific conclusions which explicitly considered how global interpretations and ecosystems actively impact social justice and practices of decoloniality in the UK.

Unanticipated developments included how embodying the research questions through workshops in Scotland and Yokosuka expanded our curatorial practice into film making as a creative-collaborative form. This enabled the research to reflect on how different modes of participation and alternative curatorial methodologies could impact on future international participatory work.

2023



The core collective of four have met regularly throughout the first year, both online and in person. They have expanded their network on a regional, national and international through their dialogues and public events.

To enable these dialogues and events, they have positioned their core research questions as follows:

- Describe the relationship between alternative art pedagogies and sites of crisis in view of their contribution to current socio-political narratives including decoloniality, social justice and environmental stewardship (the 'what')
- Articulate how these new curatorial ecosystems challenge social hierarchies and economies of access, and reveal how they have transformed modes of participation and production (the 'how')
- Investigate where these new curatorial ecosystems take place and how these spaces impact social experiences and how they allow for new forms of sociality (the 'where')

Our activity also utilises the research and archival material established by Sophia Yadong Hao through The Ignorant Art School exhibitions and events programme at Cooper Gallery, Dundee. This is to be further explored at Cooper Gallery through a creative reading workshop lead by the collective as part of the national CHEAD (The Council for Higher Education in Art and Design) conference that will be held at Cooper Gallery in March 2024.

We are conscious of forging dialogues between international case studies of collective curatorial agency in Global Majority countries and histories and current conditions of alternative art pedagogy within the UK – the context in which all of the group leads are based – whilst placing the decoloniality of knowledge formation at the heart of our aims and processes. It has been important to our events to have an international perspective that has so far connected further into specific areas of Europe and Asia. After a selective application process, our collective has also been invited for a residency in Japan for curatorial experimentation (YOKOSUKA residency), which we hope several members of the collective can attend.

In 2023, the group conducted two public events as part of their research (also see related content below):

- Practising Duets #1 Ranjana Thapalyal and Olivier Marboeuf (held at MIMA in Middlesbrough)
- Practising Duets #2 Anna Colin and Gudskul online (held online)

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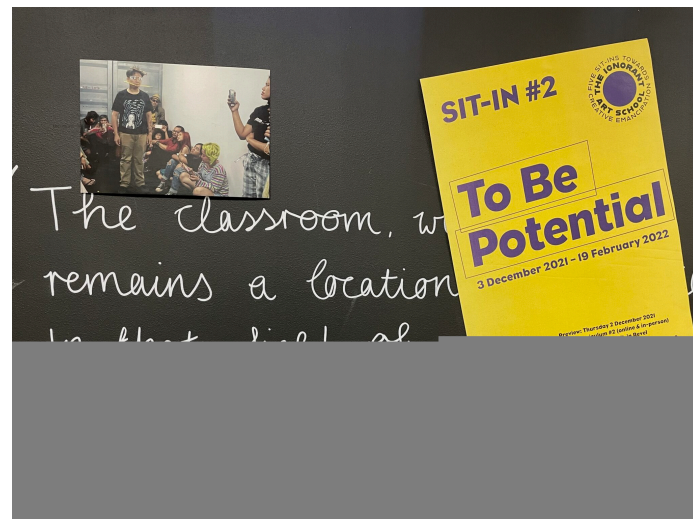
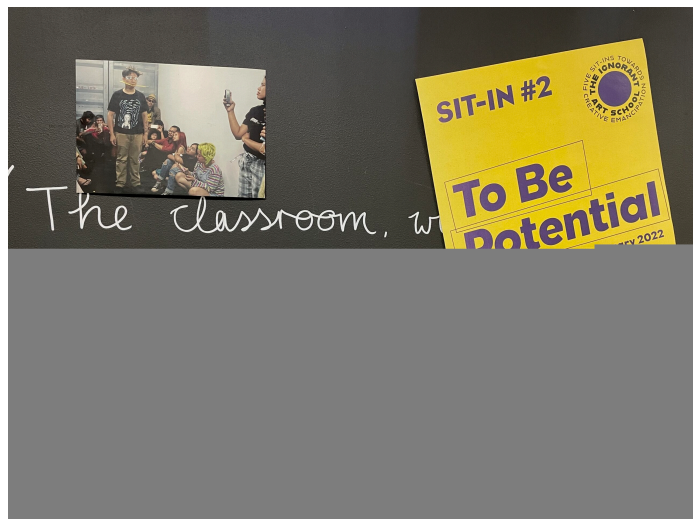
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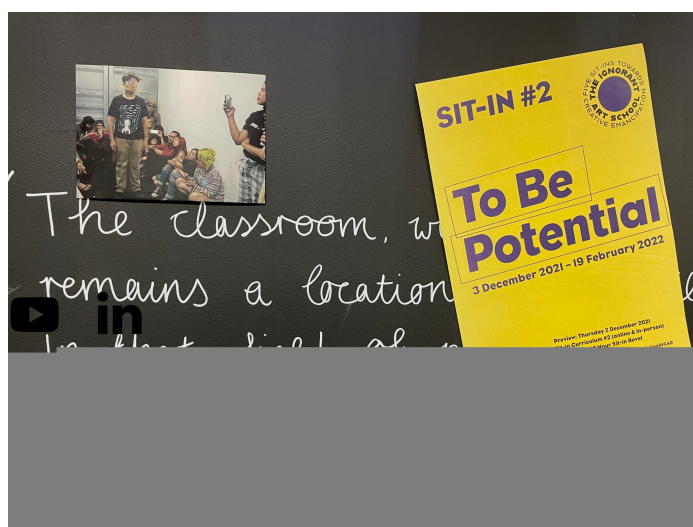
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ARTS COUNCIL
Event: Practising Duets #3: Filipa César and Harun Morrison



<https://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk>

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Event: Practising Duets #2 Anna Colin and Gudskul

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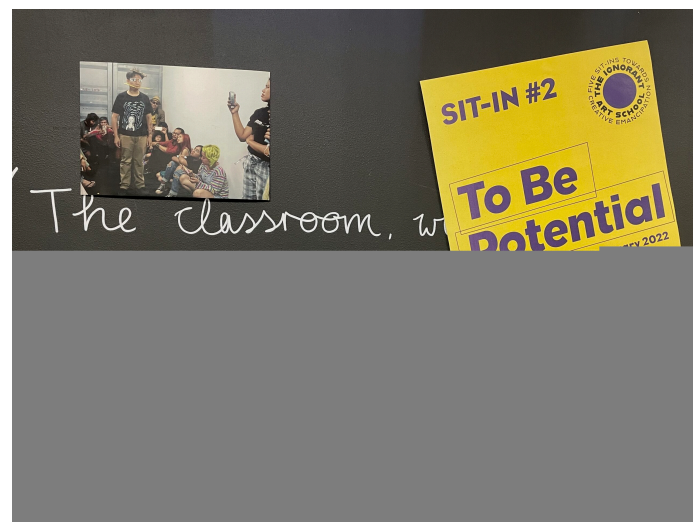
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Event: Practising Duets #1 Ranjana Thapalyal and Olivier Marboeuf

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