

DRAWING ROOM

Drawing Research Forum 2025/2026 Sessions – Part 2

Friday 27th February 2026

This afternoon of presentations and discussions, selected from an open call, provides access to recent research examining critical issues around contemporary drawing.

The session will feature presentations and a plenary discussion with artists examining diverse themes, and utilising and developing current discourse around contemporary drawing. The Drawing Research Forum provides a space for knowledge exchange between disciplines, encourages cross-fertilization of ideas and methodology, and fosters collaborations between artists and researchers.

SCHEDULE

2 – 2.05 pm	Welcome and Introduction
2.05 – 2.25 pm	Max Cooper-Clark - Pits and Pansies: Drawing as Social Geology in Toxic Mining Landscapes
2.30 – 2.50 pm	Joanne Berry-Frith - A Framework for Action and Reflection: Using Play to Understand Relationships between Art Practice and Life Science
2.55 – 3.15 pm	Elin Eyborg & Christian Petersen - Spatial Ecologies
3.20 - 3.40 pm	Chaired plenary discussion

ABSTRACTS

Max Cooper-Clark - *Pits and Pansies: Drawing as Social Geology in Toxic Mining Landscapes*

Pits and Pansies shares, a site-responsive drawing project developed in Nenthead, a former lead-mining village in the North of England. Here, the violences of mining persist, as residual contamination continues to toxify lands, waters and multispecies lives. Through collaborative workshops, community dinners, and processional performances, ten hand-drawn fabric banners were created and paraded at the Durham Miners Gala. Stained with pansy dyes, metal threads, and collective gestures, these fabrics hold evidence of pollution alongside histories of solidarity and resistance to extraction. At the Forum, these banners will be presented alongside sound recordings, moving image, and excerpts of autoethnographic text, offering a multi-sensory account of the project's process and procession. Through the presentation, collaborative drawing will unfold as a social geology: sedimenting memory, holding contradiction, and tracing how bodies, minerals, and histories remain entangled within and resist toxic grounds.

Dr Joanne Berry-Frith - *A Framework for Action and Reflection: Using Play to Understand Relationships between Art Practice and Life Science*

Dr Joanne Berry-Frith's research investigates how play-based artistic methodologies enhance collaboration between art and the life sciences. Between 2015 and 2024, she conducted three interdisciplinary projects at leading research institutions, embedding artistic practice within scientific laboratories. Working with scientists to challenge microscopy techniques—including Confocal, Super Resolution, Scanning Electron, and Multi-Photon Microscopy – she developed novel imaging methods and redefined protocols, generating novel visual datasets. Through experimenting with drawing digitally, her work transformed data via a strategy she terms 'serious play' (e.g., industrious, divergent,) which fosters innovation, creativity, and reflective practice, bridging aesthetic inquiry and scientific discovery.

Christian Petersen - *Spatial Ecologies*

The *Spatial Ecologies* project takes image-making out of the studio and situates it in the climate-vulnerable landscapes of East Anglia. Central to the project is Norwich University of the Arts' research-led Spatial Ecologies summer course. In its 2025 iteration, Elin Eyborg (UCL) and Christian Petersen (Norwich), joined by Kirsty Badenoch (UCL), brought artists and designers to Halvergate Marshes in the Norfolk Broads. Here, the participants used mark-making, performance, and deep listening to attune- and respond to the landscape. Using *Spatial Ecologies* as its example, this presentation reflects on the drawings that resulted from the course fieldwork, and on how practitioners may cultivate ecological, collaborative, and post-studio approaches to contemporary drawing practice. *Spatial Ecologies* is hosted by the Interior Design and Architecture programme at Norwich and supported by Hahnemühle UK, the RSPB, and the Broads Authority.

BIOGRAPHIES

Max Cooper-Clark is an artist, researcher and writer from the North East of England whose work explores the intersections of art, ecology, architecture and extractivism. Through site-responsive installations, drawings and collaborative performances, his practice reimagines post-industrial terrains as spaces for collective futures. His drawing-based work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Venice Architecture Biennale, the Royal Academy of Arts, the Design Museum, BASE Milano and Hangar CIA Lisbon. His research has been published in the *Landscape Research Journal*, *Journal of Architectural Education*, and by the Royal Institute of British Architects, which also awarded him the 2025 prize for Best Architectural Drawing. Max holds a Master's degree in Architecture from the Royal College of Art and an MA (Cantab) from the University of Cambridge, where he has also taught as a visiting lecturer. He is currently Design and Research Lead of the Turner Prize-nominated collective *Cooking Sections*, creating a garden with the Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark, and teaching on the *Spatial Practices* programme at Central Saint Martins.

Joanne Berry-Frith – as well as conducting practice-based research I exhibit regularly throughout the Country and Internationally with pieces in the Victoria & Albert Museum, Arts Council England Collections, Nottingham University Medical School and Zeiss Microscopy Labs, Munich, Germany. My project 'Hijacking Natural Systems' was funded by Wellcome Trust, ACE, Derby City Council and Derby Museum & Arts Gallery (2012). This successful project was nominated by Nottingham University for The Times Higher Education Award and cited by the Wellcome Trust as an exemplar of a successful Arts and Engagement project. Artwork from this project was featured in the BBC4 TV series *The Beauty of Anatomy* (2014, 2017) presented by Dr Adam Rutherford. Residencies include Florence Trust, London, Natural History Museum, London.

Elin Eyborg is an architect, performance maker, and researcher from Copenhagen, based between London and Norwich. She trained at The Royal Danish Academy (2011) and Goldsmiths (MA Performance Making, 2015) and has worked at practices including Foster + Partners and Ab Rogers Design. She is a PhD candidate at The Bartlett (UCL), where her research develops methodologies through her practice P-Arc Agency, using performance to explore what environments and materials demand of the human body. Alongside her research, she teaches at Greenwich, The Bartlett, Norwich University of the Arts, and the Royal College of Art. Her practice also spans exhibitions, book editing, and archival work with architect Sir Peter Cook.

Christian Petersen is a visual communication designer, researcher, and illustration lecturer at Norwich University of the Arts, where he is currently undertaking a practice-based PhD on post-studio design practices. The Dane holds an MFA from Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design (Sweden) and also trained at Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design (UAL). He is the author of several graphic novels, including the award-winning, climate-critical *Efter København* (2022). Christian's research interests include design ethnography, critical design, visual communication, and design prototyping. He has recently been involved in bringing Sir Peter Cook's 'Wonder Hub' to Norwich University of the Arts.

Kirsty Badenoch is a multidisciplinary artist, researcher, and educator. Through a research-led, collaborative practice spanning drawing, performance, and spatial design, she explores human and more-than-human entanglements. Trained in landscape architecture and urbanism, Kirsty has worked with leading European practices and research institutions. Her projects include co-designing the National Trust's 30-year vision for Northern Ireland's green spaces, creating 'Cartographies of the Imagination', a month-long drawing festival, and curating 'Microscope', an experimental art-and-ecology space in Dalston. She teaches at the University of Cambridge and The Bartlett School of Architecture (UCL), where she is embarking on the PhD 'How Forests Draw', investigating drawing as a participatory method for ecological regeneration.