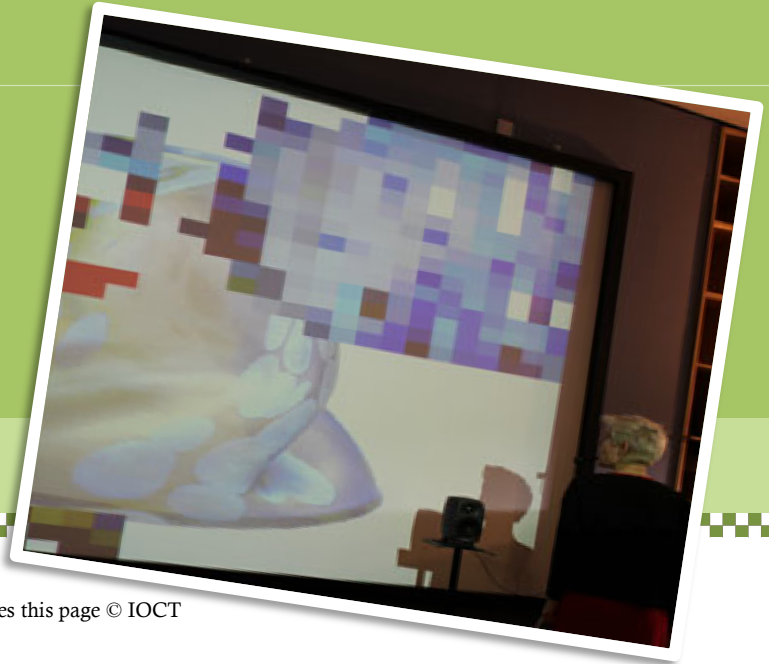


# PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH

## Doctoral Training Programme

for traditional / new media artists (dance, design, drama, fine art, music, performance) and creative technologists specializing in cross-disciplinary practice and theorizing



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## Upcoming Events

- 27 Nov 2013  
@ 10.30-12pm  
TDC
- Prof Ernest Edmonds**  
Introduction to practice-based research (Unit 1 LO 1)
- 2 Dec 2013  
@ 1-2pm  
GH4.78
- Professor Bernd Stahl**  
Ethics and new technologies (Unit 1 LO 2) (w / Info Society DTP)
- 11 Dec 2013  
@ 1-2.30pm  
TDC
- Dr Tracy Harwood**  
Ethical considerations for human participants in research (Unit 1 LO 2)
- 17 Dec 2013  
@ 2-3.30pm  
Interact Labs (Phoenix)
- Dr Ximena Alarcon**  
Theory and practice: sonic arts (Unit 2 LO 1 & 2)
- 6 | 13 | 27  
Nov & 4 Dec  
from 1pm  
(various)
- Case study (Unit 6) seminars with MTI – see [www.mti.dmu.ac.uk/must](http://www.mti.dmu.ac.uk/must)**

## Programme Overview

This flexible Programme (DTP) is intended for students in any DMU faculty who have registered to submit under regulation 11.1 or whose research is strongly involved in designing or making things or in staging performances or events. Thus students who intend to involve or include an artefact or significant documentation of artefacts, performances, exhibitions or events in their submission will benefit from the Programme.

The Programme will give a comprehensive overview of different approaches to combining theory and practice (see over page for a description of the Units and Learning Outcomes), as well as provide opportunities to discuss research challenges and share experiences of practice-based research.

The definition of an artefact is very broad, ranging from an object such as a painting or telephone to an abstract entity such as a novel or a computer program or a transient entity such as a performance.

The Programme is coordinated by the Institute of Creative Technologies (IOCT) and has been developed by academics working across a wide range of disciplines, all with significant experience in supervising and examining practice-based PhD degrees.

### Interested in participating?

If you are interested in participating in our events or wish to register your research for this Programme, please contact Dr Ximena Alarcon ([xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk)), the Institute's PhD coordinator, in the first instance.





images: Ogi Zahariev (© IOCT)

# Practice-Based Research

## Programme Outline and Indicative Content

### Unit 1 Overview of PBR

An introduction to the basic philosophy of research. The different methods that can be employed: deduction, induction, qualitative evidence, quantitative evidence. The specific issue of research in practice and about practice. The role of the artefact, new knowledge and alternative approaches to generating, representing and validating that knowledge. Ethics and the conduct of the research. Describing the problem, context, methods and outcomes.

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Evaluate different methodological approaches to the design of practice-based research
2. Select an appropriate design and describe its implications for practice-based research
3. Prepare an ethical process for the conduct of practice-based research that includes both legal and moral aspects
4. Discuss ontological and philosophical frameworks that inform design of practice-based research, with reference to appropriate literature and/or materials (artefacts)
5. Prepare an academic argument for presenting an artefact as part of a thesis submission
6. Contextualise and briefly analyse a recent practical outcome of your work

### Unit 2 Theory and Practice (with Theory & Practice of Design & Innovation)

Different frameworks for relating theory and practice. How does one inform the other? What is required of practice to enable the generation of new knowledge and theory? What are the questions that are essentially addressed through professional practice? What is required of theory to ensure that it is of value in practice? How is theory employed in practice?

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Evaluate relevant professional practice and demonstrate how it relates to theory
2. Assess the role of theory in the conduct of professional practice and reflection

### Unit 3 Methodology (with Theory & Practice of Design & Innovation)

Practice-based research requires the researcher to recognise the ways in which subjective and expressive imperatives of creativity must be integrated with the objective and critical stance of intellectual enquiry. This module prepares students for study of the critical, analytical and reflective processes that give structure to a practice-based research project, including: action research models, reflection in practice, reflection on practice, qualitative data analysis and bespoke mixes of research methods. These will be contextualised within the frame of both collaborative and

individual practice as well as defining ways to ensure reliability and validity of practical outcomes.

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Demonstrate understanding of different modes of reflective practice
2. Evaluate the implications of undertaking mixed methods research, including the interrelationships or differences between selected research methods for practice-based research
3. Describe the ways in which reliability and validity of methods are generated and received for practice-based research

### Unit 4 Documentation and the Thesis (with Theory & Practice of Design & Innovation)

Alternative thesis structures. The required elements of the text: methodology, state of the art, claims and evaluation. Describing process and product in relation to new knowledge. Thesis writing styles. Note that the term 'thesis' is used as a generic term to also cover 'exegesis' and 'contextual commentary'.

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Prepare an outline structure for a practice-based thesis
2. Evaluate different approaches to writing theses for practice-based research
3. Describe and justify the original contribution to knowledge of a practice-based thesis

### Unit 5 Demonstration and Evaluation

How to evaluate appropriately in the context of practice and demonstrate that the claims in the thesis are valid. Interviewing, observing and surveying. Obtaining and reporting expert and/or peer group opinion. Participant observation. Audience/user experience.

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Prepare appropriate instrumentation for documenting audience participation in practice-based research
2. Analyse and present a case study of audience feedback on practice-based research to demonstrate its impact and value
3. Evaluate the validity [and authenticity] of audience feedback on practice-based research

### Unit 6 Case Studies

Examples of successful practice-based PhDs from DMU and elsewhere, selected so as to show a range of different valid approaches. Discussion from the perspective of current research students' experiences.

Learning outcomes (LOs):

1. Discuss and critique examples of practice-based research
2. Assess and recommend approaches to improve the conduct, presentation or evaluation of practice-based research examples

### Future PBR doctoral training events

Jackie Calderwood – Pervasive media and experience on the land (January) (Unit 2 LO 1)

Dr Sophy Smith – Reflective practice (January) (Unit 3 LO 1)

Dr Ines Amado – Sculpture (February) (Unit 2 LO 1)

Dr Tracy Harwood – Understanding user experience through technologies (March) (Unit 2 LO 2)

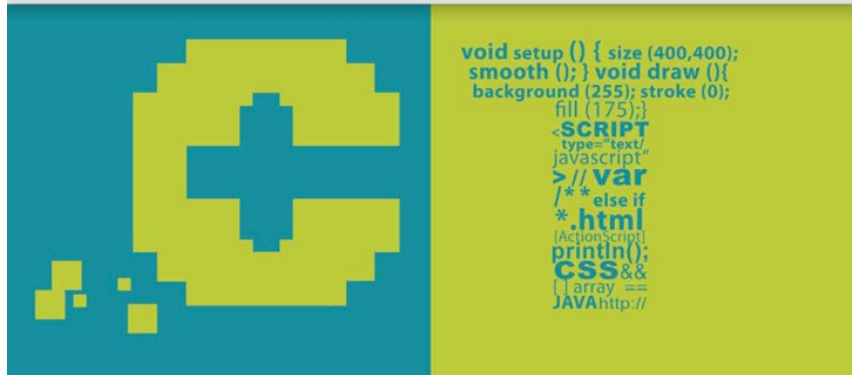
**Case Studies (Unit 6) – Music, Technology & Innovation Seminar Series details at [www.mti.dmu.ac.uk/must](http://www.mti.dmu.ac.uk/must)**

**Dates & venues** tbc next issue of our Practice-Based Research Doctoral Training Programme newsletter

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Institute of Creative Technologies  
[www.ioct.dmu.ac.uk](http://www.ioct.dmu.ac.uk)



### Institute of Creative Technologies' Transdisciplinary Community TDC - 2013 Seminars

Our popular seminar series of feature presentations by prominent creative technologists kicks off this year with a talk by Douglas Dodds, senior curator of the V&A's computer arts collection. This is highly recommended for all our PBR students as well as colleagues involved in research at the intersections of science, arts and technologies.

Details of this and subsequent seminars as follows:

30 Oct 2013 @ 2-3pm (venue Q0.11) Douglas Dodds – From analogue to digital: collecting computer-generated art at the V&A

27 Nov 2013 @ 2-3pm (venue Q0.11) Marc Garrett – net artist, curator, writer, street artist, activist, educationalist and musician. Co-director and co-founder, with artist Ruth Catlow, of the net arts collectives & communities [Furtherfield.org](http://Furtherfield.org)

**TDC seminars will be taking place on every last Weds of the month**

18 Dec 2013 Details tbc

For more information, please contact the TDC seminars organizer:

Dr Francesca Franco  
([ffranco@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:ffranco@dmu.ac.uk))



## Interact Labs and the Institute of Creative Technologies

The IOCT has formed an exciting new collaborative partnership with Interact Labs, based at Phoenix in Leicester's Cultural Quarter.

Interact Labs launches on 26 October 12-5pm (all activities free) – it aims to encourage experimentation and research in creative technologies and is a great place for practice-based research students to meet practitioners and artists, share insight and expertise, collaborate and build networks for the future.

Interact Labs is led by artist Sean Clark, currently completing his own practice-based doctoral research with the IOCT. Sean also runs technology company Cuttlefish Multimedia, based in Loughborough, and has collaborated on numerous funded research projects at the IOCT over the last 5 years.

Interact Labs has a separate programme of events that we highly recommend for doctoral researchers interested in practice-based research. These will take place at Phoenix. Events scheduled include:

12 Nov 2013 Computer Arts Society Talk: Prof Martin Rieser – The digital uncanny

29 Nov 2013 Locative Media Hub: St George's app launch

30 Nov 2013 Introduction to 3D Printing workshop

For more information about forthcoming events, visit Interact Labs' website [interactlabs.co.uk](http://interactlabs.co.uk)



Sean Clark  
Interact Labs  
[interactlabs.co.uk](http://interactlabs.co.uk)

Save the Date: The first Practice-Based Research Showcase event will be taking place at Interact Labs – 7 May 2014

If you would like to showcase your practice-based research and receive critical feedback to inform development of your work from the DTP academic team, please contact Dr Ximena Alarcon ([xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk))

## About the PBR doctoral training programme speakers for Autumn 2013

**Dr Ximena Alarcon** is an artist and lecturer in creative technologies whose practice involves listening to migratory spaces, and connecting this to individual and collective memories. Her practice and research involves ethnography, deep listening, and sonic improvisation, intertwined with creative use of internet multimedia technologies. Her Leverhulme Trust funded research at IOCT, *Sounding Underground*, derived from her PhD research at Music, Technology & Innovation Research Centre at DMU is shortly to be published in *Digital Creativity* journal.

**Prof Ernest Edmonds** is director of the IOCT, a pioneer in practice-based research and a world renowned computer artist who regularly showcases his work at leading digital arts events. He is widely published in practice-based research, his latest book is entitled *Interacting: Art, Research and the Creative Practitioner* (Libri, 2011).

**Dr Tracy Harwood** is a senior research fellow at the IOCT where she also manages the Usability Lab, a facility dedicated to understanding user engagement in a variety of experience environments. She specializes in using novel technologies to understand

psycho-physiological behavior and has undertaken research for commercial clients such as Florida Group, Speedo Plc, Next Plc, Halfords Plc. She is published in areas of digital creative practice.

**Prof Bernd Stahl** is professor of critical research in technology and director of the Centre for Computing & Social Responsibility. His recent research focuses on civil society organizations in research governance and responsible research and innovation. He is currently chair of the Faculty of Technology's research ethics committee.

For more about the Practice-Based Research Doctoral Training Programme, please request an invitation to join our Blackboard site (you must be a registered student at De Montfort University) – contact Ximena Alarcon ([xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:xalarcon@dmu.ac.uk))

To offer a talk to our research students or showcase your work as a case study in practice-based research contact Dr Tracy Harwood ([tharwood@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:tharwood@dmu.ac.uk))

To discuss your research interests or a doctoral research application – contact Prof Ernest Edmonds ([edmonds@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:edmonds@dmu.ac.uk))

This publication is produced by the Institute of Creative Technologies ([ioct.dmu.ac.uk](http://ioct.dmu.ac.uk))  
Find us at TDC (Transdisciplinary Common Room), Fletcher Quad, Leicester Campus