

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Wolverhampton</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 34: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory</p>
<p>Title of case study: CADRE research cluster – Material, Theory and Practice (MTP): The impact of innovation in creative practice through material experimentation</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The work of the MTP research group can evidence significant impact upon the field of applied arts practice, industry, public audiences and education through material and process related innovations leading to formal and conceptual advances and their application in social contexts. Exemplary work by Cummings has brought the technique of glass casting into the main stream of studio glass practice; Heeney has reformed industrial working practices concerning traditional cutting boxes and soda-firing for use in architectural scale work; Brennand-Wood has reformed cultural perceptions of ornament through the reinterpretation of textile ornament in the context of cultural and political commentary.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The work of the MTP research group spans the fields of fine art, applied art and design practice. It brings together 12 researchers rooted in studio-based, creative and professional practices with the aim to explore and advance formal and conceptual approaches through material and process related innovations and their application in social contexts. The group's approach is inter and cross-disciplinary, using experience and insights generated from material manipulation and experimentation as an important source of discovery and knowledge generation. The group comprises advanced, mid-career and early researchers, and this case study presents the research and impact of three individuals whose work is exemplary for that of the group as a whole: Prof Brennand-Wood, Prof Cummings, and Heeney. With material practices in textile, glass and ceramics/brick, all three combine formal, conceptual and social concerns through artistic/design-based material practices.</p> <p>Prof Brennand-Wood's work demonstrates a sustained commitment to the investigation of new and contested areas of visual interdisciplinary practice, using ornament as a form of encoded language. The 'politics of ornament' is one of the foci of the MTP group, and is the reason why Brennand-Wood was brought into the group. His approach is exemplified in the major exhibition and publication <i>Forever Changes</i>. Brennand-Wood is concerned with the re-interpretation of historical patterns and motifs, and their adaptation through successive gene-rations, which he uses to develop new references reflecting contemporary events. He uses formal inversion to enable unexpected and challenging associations to emerge from seemingly familiar and harmless imagery, such as military and ceremonial uses of floral imagery.</p> <p>Prof Cummings' research has extended the formal and aesthetic vocabulary of studio glass practice through developing the historic, practical and creative understanding of glass casting and kiln forming as an original, viable and acceptable way of shaping glass. His research is manifest in a body of creative work based on the experimental use of glass casting and its historical understanding evident in the publication of several books. Exemplary is Cummings' AHRC funded research into the historic technique of pâte-de-verre of French glass artist Amalric Walter. Together with research fellow Max Stewart, he re-discovered Walter's techniques and methodology through systematic analysis, resulting in the first exhibition and publication of Walter's work in the UK (Broadfield House Glass Museum, 2006-7; National Glass Museum, Sunderland, 2007-8; Stewart and Cummings 2007).</p> <p>Heeney has developed new applications for the use of brick in architectural scale brick art and established the genre of brick art in the public eye. She has introduced a human quality into architectural scale work by combining architectural structure with organic form, using hand carving green brick and traditional cutting boxes for shaping special bricks. She uses social practices to research and interpret international brick art practices. Additionally, Heeney has developed experimental gas, wood, re-useable oil and low-temperature soda-firing to achieve a glaze-like surface without the traditional second firing and expensive glazing materials. This makes it more economical and ecological than traditional procedures, improves weather and graffiti resistance, and adds colour and reflectivity to enhance the aesthetic qualities of brick. Supported by the Archie Bray Foundation, USA, and leading brick manufacturers, Heeney's research has opened the medium of brick to</p>

innovative new uses in architectural and street art.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Brennand-Wood's research is manifest in the dissemination of his work since 1993 through over 130 exhibitions (including 37 solo exhibitions) and 17 public and private commissions, with his work being held in over 50 international collections. His most important work includes:

1. Brennand-Wood, M. (2009). 'Celestial Music': permanent wall installation, Colston Hall, Bristol, UK. 12 x 6 meter installation, include. 3500 badges, 234 metal discs, acrylic paint & fiber optic lighting. Part of the re-development of Colston Hall, an established music venue with an international reputation and programme of multicultural music and entertainment.

URL: <http://www.aprb.co.uk/projects/all-projects/2009/colston-hall--michael-brennand-wood>

URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bristol/hi/people_and_places/arts_and_culture/newsid_8008000/8008159.stm

2. Brennand-Wood, M. (2012). *Forever Changes*. A retrospective solo and touring exhibition of Brennand-Wood's work, curated by June Hill for Ruthin Craft Centre. Exhibition venues:

Ruthin Craft Centre, Denbighshire, 22 September – 25 November 2012

Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh, 7 December 2012 – 12 January 2013

Burton Art Gallery & Museum, Bideford, Devon, 9 March – 19 April 2013

The exhibition documents Brennand-Woods research and practice development over forty years and is illustrated through a rich catalogue that contains an exceptional selection of Brennand-Wood's work, and commentary of his own:

Hill, J. and Hughes, P. (2012). *Michael Brennand-Wood: Forever Changes*. Ruthin Craft Centre and Hare Print Press, 204 pages. ISBN 978-1-905865-48-2

Further references: Ruthin full video http://youtu.be/_s4PkfwLg8Q

Artist In Residence: Michael Brennand-Wood: <http://vimeo.com/11024369>

URL: <http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/whats-on/view/michael-brennand-wood-forever-changes>

The dissemination of Cummings' research has been achieved through exhibition and publication; to date these include four books and several chapters, papers and conference presentations (e.g. Cummings 1980, 1996, 1997, 2002a, 2002b, 2010). Additionally, his work features in major museums worldwide, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Paris; Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York; Shanghai Museum of Glass, Shanghai. The most significant research includes:

3. Cummings, K. (2002). *Techniques of Kiln Formed Glass*. A. & C. Black, London and University of Pennsylvania, USA. ISBN: 9780713661200

A & C Black are a large publisher of academic books, literature and reference handbooks who specialize, amongst others, in publications for the glass and ceramics sector. URL:

<http://www.bloomsbury.com/au/the-techniques-of-kiln-formed-glass-9780713661200/>

4. Cummings, K. and M. Stewart (2005-7). *The Amalric Walter Research Project*. AHRC. Total value: £67,500. The project was conducted in two stages:

- a) Main investigation 12 months (2005/6), value £57000, which employed research fellow Max Stewart to support Prof Cummings in the investigations.
- b) Supplementary grant of £10,500; application for which was invited by the AHRC to facilitate the dissemination of the research outcomes. The project outcomes included:
 - Production of publication: M. Stewart and K. Cummings (2007). *The Amalric Walter research project: the techniques and methodology of Amalric Walter 1870-1959*. Wolverhampton, UK: University of Wolverhampton.
 - First exhibition of Amalric Walter's work in the UK: Cummings, K. (2006-7). *A Glass Menagerie: Pâte de verre by Amalric Walter*. Broadfield House Glass Museum,

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Kingswinford, UK, 19 August 2006 - 4 February 2007. URL: <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/see-and-do/museums/glass-museum/whats-on/past-exhibitions/walter/>

Heeney's research is manifest in one book publication, a number of conference and keynote papers, and through exhibitions and public art projects in form of site specific installations:

5. Heeney, G. (2003). *Brickworks*. A. & C. Black, London and University of Pennsylvania USA. URL: <http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/14000.html>

URL: <http://www.bloomsbury.com/au/brickworks-9780713648805/>

Heeney, G. (2005-6). *Shadow Stack / Pit Stack*, Deconstruction 1, Deconstruction 2, Light Stacks. Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, 2915 Country Club Avenue, Helena, Montana, USA. A description of the work has been published in: Heeney, G. (2013). Light, Shadow, and Reflectivity. *Ceramic Review*; Mar/Apr 2013, Issue 260, p. 60-61.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Brennand-Wood champions the re-interpretation and re-conceptualisation of ornament in expanded textile and interdisciplinary practice. Through his influence, the idea and symbolism of ornament has been repositioned and revalidated as a serious vehicle for symbolic social and political expression and reflection, as evidenced by his worldwide contributions. Further, through his influence, cross-disciplinary approaches have become an internationally recognised part of expanded textile practice. His exemplary influence is documented through his creative output and national and international public engagement activities: (1) The wide impact of his work on expanded textile practice and the reconceptualisation of ornament is evidenced by the purchase and display of his work by over 50 premier museums and collectors worldwide, including Gallery of Western Australia; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa; Cummins International, Memphis, USA; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Crafts Council, London; Automobile Association; BUPA; Hewlett Packard; OFSTED; Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, Norway. (2) The exceptional impact of Brennand-Wood's work with regard to interdisciplinary practices on a diverse set of audiences through public engagement activities is evidenced through the large number of public and private commissions (17 since 1993) for which the Coleston Hall project is exemplary through its cross-over with music. It is further evidenced through regular reference to his work in GCSE and Advanced Level study exam questions; through his works being purchased by 20 national and international education establishments, including OFSTED; and through his expansive outreach work with school children; with hobbyists through organisations such as 'Knit and Stich' where he has championed the role of amateurs and enthusiasts where other practitioners have distanced themselves (e.g. New Space); and with specialist audiences, especially blind and partially-sighted users, e.g. through TACTILE: The Whitworth Art Gallery's contemporary textile handling resource, where his work being the most often requested (Jane Harris 2013) – totalling over 150 workshops to about 8000 children, young people and adults between 2008-2013.

Over the last 40 years, Prof Cummings has brought about a major advance in the techniques of glass casting and kiln forming, which has made them accessible and acceptable as major techniques in studio glass practice, equal to traditionally recognised techniques such as glass blowing. Through his influence, kiln casting and glass forming in the kiln have become a com-mon part of the syllabus of glass practice and glass education world-wide. Since 1993 as Prof. of Glass Studies at the University of Wolverhampton, his influence has been unrivalled as documented through reference to his creative output and books, which are a point of reference for glassmakers worldwide: (1) His work has impacted the glass movement internationally, as evidenced by the purchase and display of his work by premier museums, galleries and collectors worldwide, e.g.: Shanghai Museum of Glass; Corning Museum, New York; Museum of Decorative Arts, Paris; Museum of Decorative Art, Lausanne; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Crafts Council, London; Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh; Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham; Broadfield House Glass Museum, Kingswinford; Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead; Princess Anne Collection. (2) Cummings' books are seminal reference works for

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practitioners, academics and students alike, evidenced by their sales numbers and reviewers comments. In spite of being a specialist area, more than 30,000 copies of his three books have been sold. In its 5th edition, 'Kiln-Forming Glass' has been translated into 3 languages. His other books are being translated into Chinese and Turkish. His influence is manifest in numerous statements of reverence by students, glass professionals, collectors and others.

Similarly, Heeney has brought about a major advance in the development and accessibility of brick art: (1) Heeney has advanced techniques of cutting and glazing brick, which is being adopted by both brick artists (e.g. Archie Bray) and the brick industry and small-scale manufacture (e.g. Ibstock, UK; the sole Brick Factory, Costa Rica, Petersens, DK) alike. (2) Her book and her engagement with professional practice, public art, and community work have enabled knowledge transfer, which has made brick an accessible and acceptable medium within public art. For example, she has inspired the award-winning architects Sjolander Da Cruz, Birmingham, to use brick for creating the Youth Shelter at Penn roundabout, Wolverhampton. The 'Youth Shelters' project was a national, government initiative promoting community work with artists. Heeney was also commissioned to produce the head of Josiah Wedgwood in carved brick for the new Wedgwood Museum at Barlaston, Stoke on Trent, winner of the Art Fund prize for Museums and Galleries 2010. The Museum likens her relationship with Wedgwood to that of Eduardo Paolozzi.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Gibson, G. (2012). Textiles, pattern and the art of protest. *Crafts*, Issue 239, p. 60.
2. Wilson, I. (2011) A Dialogue between Music & Art. *Surface Design Journal*, Vol. 35 (2), p. 32. URL: <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/57620439/dialogue-between-music-art>
3. A List of international educational workshops and talks and a sample of GCE/A Level study papers 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 (pdf)

References for the impact of Keith Cummings's work:

4. Bruntnell –Astley. Contemporary Glass Gallery. URL: <http://www.bruntnell-astley.com/keith-cummings.php>
5. Zhuang Xiaowei comments on Keith Cummings influence on his own work and the Chinese glass community: Xiaowei, Z. (2008) "The Development of the Glass Discipline at Shanghai University: Influences of the University of Wolverhampton and Professor Keith Cummings", In S. Garfoot (ed.) *GlassRoutes: From Wolverhampton to China*. University of Wolverhampton, Bilston Art Gallery, and the British Art Council. ISBN978-0-9560204-0-6 URL: <http://issuu.com/debutcreate/docs/glassroutes> (and CD)
6. Prof Cummings influence on internationally recognised artist David Reekie on Wikipedia. URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Reekie

References for the impact of Gwen Heeney's work:

7. Testimony by Archie Bray: Heeney's technical and cultural impact on other artists.
8. Testimony by Ibstock Brick factory of Heeney's technical and artistic impact on industry.
9. The collaborative work between Heeney and Sjolander da Cruz has been recognised for its social benefits in designing out crime, and through several prizes:
http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/Documents/OurWork/Crime/DOC_case_studies.pdf
<http://www.sjolanderdacruz.co.uk/awards.html>
<http://www.brick.org.uk/2011/03/best-outdoor-space-6/>

The recognition of Heeney's sculptural work is attested through the Wedgwood Museum's comments about her work: <http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/aboutus/story-of-the-roundel>