

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON
Unit of Assessment: 34
Title of case study: Professor Stephen Farthing and the study of the process and functions of drawing.
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Professor Stephen Farthing's research proposes a new framework for the structured study of the process and functions of drawing beyond the specialist art school curriculum. His work since 2004, in collaboration with Tate Britain and the Ashmolean Museum, has tested the possibilities of utilising museum collections as a resource for the teaching of drawing and has directly impacted on the development of a new drawing curriculum for schools and further education institutions and on the extension of new audiences for Ruskin's teaching collection.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>In 2004 Farthing was appointed the first Rootstein Hopkins Chair of Drawing at University of the Arts London (UAL). His remit was to explore all facets of the medium he describes as the translation of '<i>multidimensional events that may or may not physically exist, into readable two dimensional matter</i>' (2011). The status of UAL as an art and design monotechnic, embracing diverse approaches to drawing pedagogy, offered Farthing a means to establish the importance of, and build a framework for, the structured study of drawing beyond the specialist art school curriculum. This research had two stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use UAL's resources and expertise to enable drawing collections in museums to function effectively as teaching collections. • To develop museum drawing collections as the means to engage non-specialist practitioners with a structured drawing curriculum. <p>Farthing's <i>Drawing from Turner</i> exhibition at Tate Britain (2006/2007) was designed to test the value of redrawing examples from museum collections as an active component within a drawing curriculum, and improve understanding of the process of learning to draw by redrawing high quality examples of fine art drawing. The project took place at a time when, both within secondary and tertiary education, there were few shared assumptions about how the subject of drawing should be defined and taught. There was only one general area of agreement, which was that copying was no way to learn to draw. This exhibition challenged that understanding and questioned '<i>whether the making of transcriptions from the drawings of high achievers have a part to play in developing a curriculum for learning to draw today?</i>' The exhibition and project proposal were submitted to Tate Britain in 2004 and were approved by a curatorial team led by the Museum Director Stephen Deuchar and funded by Tate and the Rootstein Hopkins Foundation.</p> <p>Farthing was Principal Investigator, with Nicola Moorby, Collections Registrar – Prints and Drawings Tate Britain, and Professor Maryanne Martin, Experimental Psychology Department, University of Oxford. A group of 50 artists, students and graduates were invited to draw one of 35 Turner drawings selected by the organisers from the Turner Bequest. The goal was to better understand the role of redrawing within the process of developing drawing skills. The primary outcome was an exhibition of the original Turner drawings and the 'redrawings', with text panels that recorded the participants' responses to the research question. This approach was extended in Farthing's project <i>On Drawing a Man Reading a Newspaper</i> (2007/2009), where he explored the value of transcription as a means of both learning to make and to 'read' drawings by tracking his making of 25 interrogative transcriptions from the original charcoal drawing <i>Man Reading a Newspaper</i> made in 1950 by the modernist painter Jean Helion.</p> <p>In 2007, as a part of his subsequent appointment as Hood Fellow at The University of Auckland, Farthing exhibited 31 drawings at the Gus Fischer Art Gallery, University of Auckland, with an</p>

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accompanying publication. The exhibition and publication were an analysis of John Ruskin's 1857 teach-yourself-drawing book, *The Elements Of Drawing*. Together they were a practical and theoretical re-assessment of a unique and once highly regarded 19th century 'distance learning' package and explored the idea of whether '*Ruskin's curriculum has a currency beyond historical curiosity in curriculum design today?*' Farthing's research findings suggested that Ruskin's drawing course remains in part still viable. This work on Ruskin enabled a second phase of Farthing's research in which he tested the possibility of using a museum collection to engage non-specialist practitioners with a structured drawing curriculum. In 2010, Farthing was invited to join the AHRC funded *Elements of Drawing* research team at the University of Oxford (PI Colin Harrison, Print Room curator, Ashmolean Museum Oxford). In a series of nine short films, Farthing used John Ruskin's teaching collections as the means of constructing a structured drawing curriculum for non-specialists.

Farthing's work has also researched the landscape of drawing beyond fine art, including how drawing is used by mathematicians, cartographers, scientists, designers and statisticians. Initially explored in his inaugural UAL Lecture *Dirtying the Paper Delicately* (2005), and developed in his keynote speech *The Bigger Picture of Drawing* at Teachers College, Columbia University (2010), later published in *Thinking Through Drawing: practice into knowledge* and further developed in *Drawing Drawn (A Taxonomy)*, *Visual Communication* (2013). Here Farthing proposes a contextual taxonomy that allows drawing to be seen as a '*compendium of possibilities, not simply as a craft subject attached to the past by the life room and the future by digital modelling*'.

3. References to the research

Underpinning research and related awards listed below.

1. Farthing, S. (2006) *Drawing from Turner*. London: Tate Britain. 6 November 2006 –20 May 2007 [Exhibition]. Farthing designed and curated the exhibition. The exhibition catalogue, which explains the methodology and contains an analysis of the questionnaire, is available at <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/drawing-turner>. Article published in the Times Higher Education. UAL on request.
2. Farthing, S. (2007) *Leaf and Leopard: An analysis of The Elements of Drawing*. New Zealand: Gus Fischer Art Gallery, The University of Auckland. 4 May– 2 June 2007 [Exhibition]. An exhibition of 31 drawings and publication (The Centre for New Zealand Art Research and Discovery at The University of Auckland). UAL on request.
3. Farthing, S. (2011) *The Elements of Drawing* [Website content]. Nine films published on Ashmolean website. <http://ruskin.ashmolean.org/education/8989/9033>. Listed in REF2.
4. Farthing, S. (2009) On Drawing a Man Reading a Newspaper, *Visual Communication*, May 2009, vol.8, no.2, pp.147 –158 [Journal article]. Listed in REF2.
5. Farthing, S. (2011) The Bigger Picture of Drawing. In: *Thinking Through Drawing: Practice into Knowledge*. Kantowitz, A., Brew, A. and Fava, M. eds. New York, Columbia University: Teachers College Press. UAL on request.
6. Farthing, S. (2013) Drawing Drawn (A Taxonomy). *Visual Communication*. vol.12, no.4, pp. 423 –436 [Journal article]. UAL on request.

University of Oxford, Ashmolean Museum/UAL, PI: Harrison, C. Col: Farthing, S. *The Elements of Drawing Enhancement and Dissemination for Impact* (03/2010 –10/2011) £182,135. AHRC.

4. Details of the impact

Farthing's research into the use of art collections as a tool for teaching drawing has impacted on the teaching of drawing at a national level, has been utilised by the University of the Arts London's Widening Participation programme as a vehicle to raise attainment and aspiration in its partner schools, and has been exploited to extend the audience for museum collections. For the development of UAL Awarding Body Level 2 and 3 Awards, and Certificates in Drawing, Farthing

contributed insights arising from his examination of how the use of collections and transcription could inform drawing, as well as those developed from his exploration of drawing as an activity beyond a fine art context. Farthing led the team of UAL staff who wrote the qualification and was instrumental in the creation of the course structure. Part of the Diploma's originality is its promotion of the creative role of drawing across the curriculum, taking drawing outside the art room. The development stage of the qualification was financially supported by Deirdre Hopkins, patron and founder of the UAL Rootstein Hopkins Chair in Drawing.

The UAL Drawing qualifications have been delivered by an increasing number of providers since accreditation in 2010, with over 10,000 students within England having achieved one of the qualifications. There has been a substantial increase in the number of approved centres offering the qualifications (rising from 21 in 2010/11 to 30 in 2011/12 to 50 in 2012/13). These range from FE Colleges and HEIs to sixth forms and Adult Learning providers. The majority of approved centres deliver the qualifications in addition to a full time main programme of study. Evidence of the positive impact of the award can be gleaned from comments made in the report by External Moderators to the qualification in the UAL Awarding Body Chief Examiner's Annual Report 2011/12 *Creative Framework*: *'The quality of drawing in most cases was high and evidenced a real benefit from the units, confirmed by student evaluations. What was a particular aspect of the assessment evidence in this sample was the confident and inherent use of drawing by students who were not natural draughtsmen. This is to be applauded and celebrated. This has been a well run programme and students have quite obviously benefited from the experience, the drawing units have enhanced their confidence and understanding resulting in stronger portfolios and a higher level of HE acceptance.'*

There have been series of well attended events to support the ongoing delivery of the qualifications. A standardisation event was held at Leeds College of Art and representatives from over 30 centres attended, including delivery staff and external moderators. The *Drawing Conference 2012* organised by UAL in collaboration with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) at the National Gallery in February 2012, enabled 46 representatives involved in the delivery of the qualification to attend a major venue, discuss the conceptual framework of the qualification, and have the opportunity to see presentations by artists including Farthing and Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry. In addition, Deirdre Hopkins in support of Farthing's work subsequently funded a series of masterclasses to support teachers in the delivery of the curriculum. To complement the drawing qualification and serve as a body of research materials, Farthing has edited and published sketchbooks of key figures that utilised drawing to inform their creative thinking across a range of disciplines. The first in the series was the sketchbooks of architect Nicholas Grimshaw (2009) and the second was those of the stage designer Jocelyn Herbert (2011), both published by the Royal Academy. The third in the series, on filmmaker Derek Jarman (Sept 2013), was published in two English language versions (UK and US), by Thames and Hudson and in German by Deutscher Kunstverlag.

The UAL Drawing qualification is used as part of UAL's Widening Participation programme. The qualification has been chosen as the vehicle for this programme as it translates across the curriculum, giving students a range of transferable skills, and is an excellent means through which to explain the creative sector. The drawing programmes are aimed at young people of 14 –15 years of age who are studying visual arts subjects and who think that they may be interested in a career in the creative sector; six cohorts of students have been taught since 2010–11. The courses are run on Saturdays by UAL tutors and supported by UAL student ambassadors, with additional masterclasses featuring professional practitioners. Research visits to the V&A and Tate Britain include talks and instruction from staff from the museum education departments. Teachers from participating schools observe and take part in some sessions. The programme gives students an insight into potential careers within the creative industries, introduces 'art school methods', builds confidence, as well as professional and personal skills, and brings together like-minded young people. As one of the schools involved in the programme says: *'For the students involved it has raised attainment levels, developed social skills and broadened horizons. The success of the drawing qualification and the Saturday course is in short evidenced by the change in our young people.'*

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The value of the activity is evidenced by high attendance and retention rates within the cohorts with an average pass rate of 89 per cent and a retention rate of 91 per cent. The programme participates in The Sorrell Foundation's (a charitable organisation which aims to inspire creativity in young people) National Art & Design Saturday Club (NADSC). As part of this initiative, students exhibit their work at Somerset House alongside 13 other NADSC groups of young people working with Art & Design faculties in universities and colleges across the UK. Further evidence of the significance of impact achieved comes from UAL's OFSTED Inspection Report, 28th February 2012: *'The University [...] makes a significant contribution to social inclusion and widening participation in Higher Education. Inspirational and innovative activities involve an extensive range of partners including employers, Local Authorities, schools, specialist art and design and general further education colleges. Each year around 2000 students from schools and colleges benefit from participating in a very well planned series of Saturday workshops, summer schools and portfolio days. Some of these lead to intermediate level accreditation in drawing contributing in raising attainment and aspiration in partner schools.'*

Farthing has collaborated with the Ashmolean Museum on *The Elements of Drawing: Enhancement and Dissemination for Impact* project (2010/11) funded by the AHRC. The project aimed to enhance the sustainability and impact outside academia of the *Elements of Drawing* website, which publishes online the collection assembled by John Ruskin to support his teaching of art and drawing while Slade Professor at Oxford. As part of his Co-I role Farthing created an online drawing course and directed the educational areas of the project. He built upon his previous experience of working through Ruskin's *The Elements of Drawing* in the exhibition and publication *Leopard and Leaf*, as he investigated the use of the Ruskin collection as a tool for teaching drawing while constructing the course. He produced an 8-week practical drawing course based on Ruskinian principles, using the objects in the collection, writing the scripts, selecting the drawings and acting as the interface between the student and the website via his recorded spoken demonstrations. The resource is free to use by amateur artists via the project website, the Oxford University website and iTunes U. On iTunes U there have been over 300,000 downloads of the 9 lessons. Farthing also supported the development of other online resources (factsheets, worksheets, etc) for the *Elements of Drawing* project designed for use by the teaching profession and targeted at Key Stage 3-4 and 5 pupils.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

Education via delivery of Drawing qualification:

1. UAL Awarding Body Chief Examiner's Report 2011/12 *Creative Framework*. UAL on request.
2. Drawing level certificate at South East Essex College of Further and Higher Education. *'The need for greater drawing skills in those entering employment has been identified by a range of industries in the creative sector including; animation, film, architecture, art practice, design and communication industries. This qualification, whilst allowing learners to build on prior experience, will require you to face up to new intellectual and material experiences and challenges designed to deliver an independent critical understanding and extended skills base'* <http://www.southessex.ac.uk/course/drawing-level-2-certificate>

Use of qualification within Widening Participation Programme and impact on education:

3. OFSTED UAL London Inspection Report, 27 January 2012. UAL on request.
4. Statement from Advanced Skills Teacher and Head of Art at Plashett School, Newham. UAL on request.
5. Statement from Business Manager at Little Ilford School, Newham. UAL on request.

Extension of audience for Museum Collections:

6. Statement from Director of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. UAL on request.
7. Professor Farthing's online drawing course at <http://ruskin.ashmolean.org/education/8989/9033>
<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/itunes-u/the-elements-of-drawing/id442428860>
<http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/elements-drawing>