Ikebana:

A Collaborative Design Pedagogy
Research Paper Presentation by Rachel Kelly

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Introduction

This paper evaluates current collaborative Teaching and Learning within Art and Design Higher Education in the UK. The research for this work considers evidence suggesting that student led collaborative projects can develop new teaching methods and engages students as co-developers of their learning experience.

(HEA, 2014)

The Teaching Context:

L5 Undergraduate Collaborative Art & Design Interdisciplinary Teaching Units.

“I don’t like it, (working in a group) but I guess it is good for us to do. We’ll have to get used to it’
L5 Fashion student”

(Goodman 2016).

Image Source: Rachel Kelly 2016

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Theoretical Perspective

“The words 'collaborative learning' describe a situation in which particular forms of interaction among people are expected to occur, which would trigger learning mechanisms, but there is no guarantee that the expected interactions will actually occur. Hence, a general concern is to develop ways to increase the probability that some types of interaction occur”.

(Dillenbourg,1999:5)

Sarah Mann's 2001 paper Alternative Perspectives on the Student Experience: alienation and engagement explores how alienation has become a defining feature of undergraduate student experience.

(Mann 2001:7)

Collaborative ‘Paper Reading’ session… “Having to explain to non-specialists what you do is the most difficult and helpful challenge to face in any project” (Knott, Hunter and Elzenbaumer 2010:67).

Creative thinking and learning within collaborative activity takes place **during action** and is **pre-reflective**, as Heidegger in his 1927 work Being and Time considers “ready-at-hand” and “present-at-hand”, knowing to be (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller 2014:5).

Methodology

1. Subject- Shin, Object- Soe and base- Utsuwa (Ohara 2015)
2. Use of organic, ambiguous or disconnected materials to create coherent outcomes.
3. The manner of “ad-hoc or bricoleur qualities” (Adamson 2007:89) working in congruity with the circumstances and materials to hand, rather than creating something designed.
4. Vygotskian More Knowledgeable Other(1978) role where the tutor becomes a facilitator and participant.
5. Space and object as a metaphor for collaborative practice. Students visualise their projects as models to support reflection for assessment.

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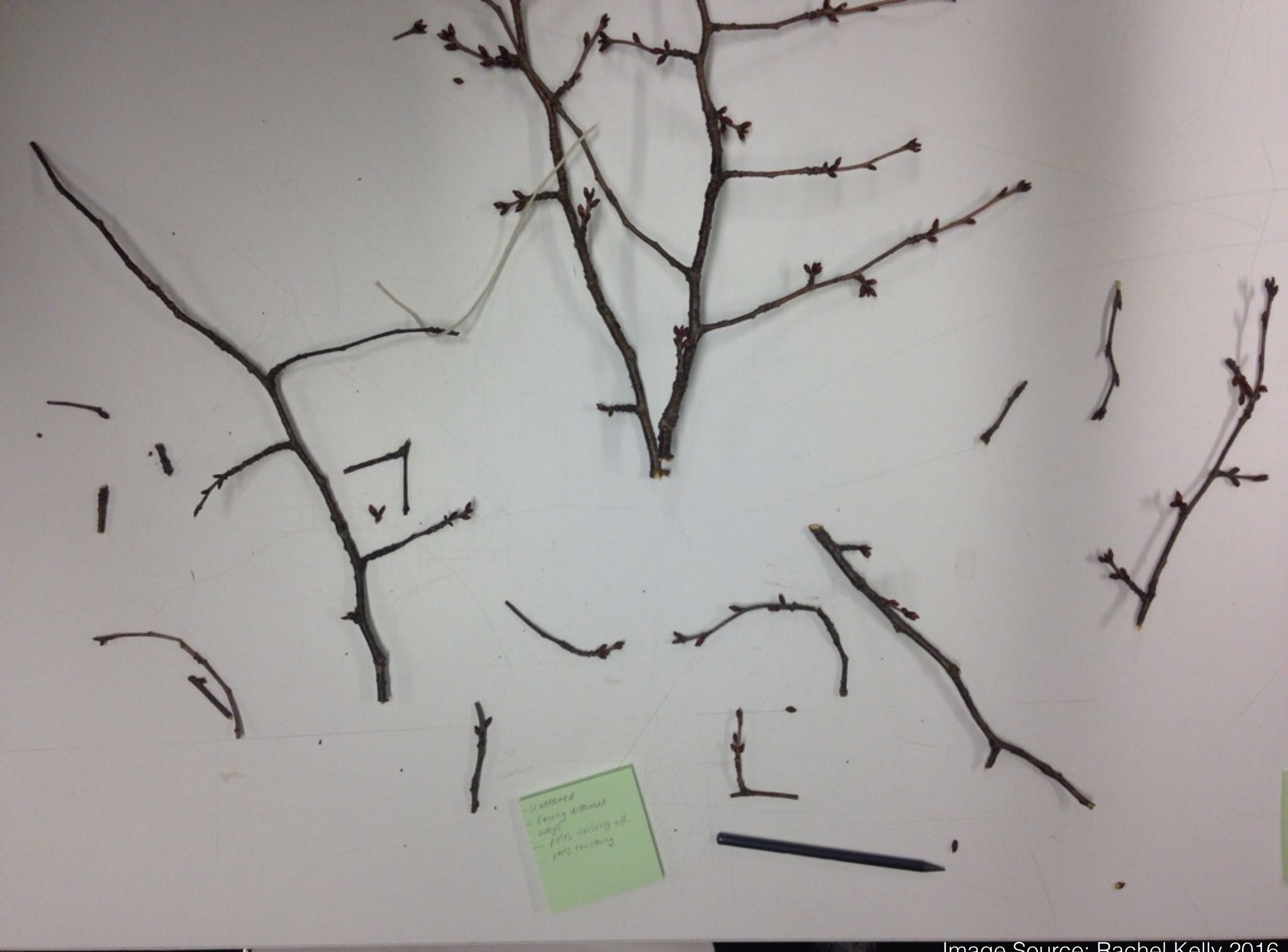

Image Source: Rachel Kelly 2016

“the idea of using branches was a bit weird at first… but when we used them to show how our group had been working and to represent how we feel it really was useful to see how everyone was feeling in the group. Because otherwise I think we would have carried on and not said anything”
Anonymous L5 Design Student Reflection.

(Goodman 2016).

Image Source: Rachel Kelly 2016

Open Evening
We now have a permanent open workspace for collaborative and interdisciplinary practice.

Come along if you're open to working in this environment.

Drinks provided.
Open to all!

Bring the space to life
with two images
(or objects) that:
— say something about who you are,
— show how you would like to work.

www.department21.net
department21@gmail.com

Literature Review

Image Left: **Department 21** at RCA(2009 -2010)

Image Below: Elizabeth Kealy-Morris's **Collaborative Bookbinding Workshops** at The University of Chester in 2015

Hierarchical structures impact upon the teaching and learning context which supports collaborative learning. In removing such structures and when students and staff work side by side as equals outside of the formal University teaching context, a shared learning space is created encompassing the **Lebensweld** (Edmund Husserl 1859-1938)

Testing the Field

“Shared understanding can be viewed as an effect, if the goal is really that a group builds the common grounds necessary to perform well together in the future”.(Dillenbourg, 1999:12).

“It is saddening to consider that students have such difficulty with collaboration, the myth of the single genius is still too strong and education is generally a very individualising experience” state Bianca Elzenbaumer & Fabio Franz 2017.

Image Source: http://www.brave-new-alps.com

Conclusion

To develop HE Art and Design collaborative pedagogy requires:

- well supported faculty and department facilitation;
- access to appropriate and stimulating shared learning contexts;
- structured delivery of teaching and learning specific to the development of collaborative practice including the use of collaborative learning tools.

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