

Disrupted Ornamentation:
How can the study of ornament at
Manchester School of Art in the late
19th and early 20th century inform
contemporary craft?

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Abstract

This practice-based research project observes Walter Crane's historical teaching practices, which took natural form and decorative art objects as a starting point for ornamental design, in order to explore how historical museum objects can be used as a pedagogical tool and inform contemporary craft and design practice. Focusing upon a collection of museum objects which contributed to the Arts and Crafts Museum at Manchester School of Art (MSoA), founded following Crane's recommendations, this research responds to his historical pedagogy through creative practice and written investigation.

Object surfaces are broken down into their ornamental parts within craft-focused practice-based research, taking influence from Manuel De Landa's theories as they are rearranged into new assemblages which explore ornament both upon material surface and as independent object. These assemblages originate as responses to a series of design controls laid out by Crane in his book 'The Bases of Design' (1898), and develop into compositions which observe, extend and challenge traditional rules of design, resulting in a series of "Disrupted Ornamentation". The research also takes a pedagogical focus, encouraging the reader or viewer to spend time with historical museum objects and look more closely. This results in the presentation of ornament as pre-assembled, unfixed ornamental compositions, inviting the viewer to handle ornament and to be inspired to create new ornamental arrangements.

Craft and design practice is underpinned by theoretical investigation into De Landa's Assemblage Theory and the wider context of ornament, including challenging modernist claims that we have gone 'beyond ornament' (Loos et. Al, 1998:168) through the exploration of similar projects within the field of contemporary craft. Through the combination of written review, practice-based research and reflective writing (documented in a research journal at the end of the thesis); this thesis aims to demonstrate that historical pedagogical methods can be used in combination with ornamented museum objects to inspire new craft practice and encourage meaningful interactions between object and viewer.

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Discovering Ornament, 13th November 2018

(Reflective writing following a visit to Special Collections, 13/11/18)

A visit to the archive is the chance to explore, investigate, question, handle and discover. A privileged researcher taken behind the scenes to root under the careful watch of the curator. Drawers opened.

“Panel designed to illustrate the use of principles of ornament”

A student of the 19th century speaks to me, her voice louder than any object I have examined, or book I have read: Emma Louise Bradbury. Delicately she takes a flower:

“Three designs from a plant.”

Across imagined material surfaces this plant becomes ornament, petals, leaf and stem as motif, its blue and yellow colours enriched.

Myself, a 21st century researcher, ponders.



Figure 1: Three Designs from a Plant (Bradbury, 1894)

Introduction

Historical Context of Ornamental Art

Manchester School of Art was established as a School of Design in 1838, before becoming the School of Art in 1853 (MMU Special Collections, 2019). David Jeremiah describes how 'Design was to be concerned with developing those skills related to creating ornamental art' (Jeremiah, 1980:4) and how George Wallis, headmaster of the School of Design, believed the drawing of ornament would be most suitable for the local textile industry (Jeremiah, 1980: 8). The collecting of historic and contemporary examples of ornamental art were provided for study purposes in the early School of Design, but in the 1880's a policy developed to form the museum collection which became the Arts and Crafts Museum at MSoA (Jeremiah, 1980: 22). When William Morris gave evidence to the Royal Commission¹, he suggested that 'every School of Art should have a museum of historic examples appertaining to local industries and other beautiful objects'. He believed that the drawing of these things was a 'capital education for the student' (Macdonald, 2005: 24).

Morris and his followers, particularly his daughter May, were instrumental in Arts and Crafts museums and the study of historic art becoming the central reference within Schools of Art and important parts of design teaching. (Macdonald, 2005: 27) Walter Crane became Director of Design at MSoA in 1893, and one of his first actions was to write a paper of suggestions for a design course² (Macdonald, 2005: 75). He agreed with the importance of forming an Arts and Crafts Museum at MSoA, believing that it would act as a 'historical library full of suggestion and inspiration to the designer and craftsman' (Shrigley and Davis, 1994:18). He held great disdain for the majority of existing design teaching methods, particularly reliance upon books such as Owen Jones' 'Grammar of Ornament' (1856) and R.N Wornum's 'Analysis of Ornament' (1860). Wornum stated 'We have not now to create Ornamental Art, but to learn it; it was established in all essentials long ago' and it was this idea of imitation that Crane viewed with contempt. (Macdonald, 2005: 79)

Crane suggested alternative teaching methods for design, including replacing outlining and shading from lithographs or casts of ornament with freehand drawings of floral and ornamental forms (Macdonald, 2005: 75) In the work of Emma Louise Bradbury, a 20th century design student at MSoA, we can see evidence of design teaching based on historical objects (figure 2, Bradbury, 1891) and natural forms (see previous figure 1, Bradbury, 1894), and titles which

¹ Morris gave evidence to the Royal Commission, South Kensington, 17th March 1882

² Paper of suggestions for the Technical Instruction Committee, 1893

reference 'principles of ornament' (figure 3, Bradbury, 1893). Stuart Macdonald describes how these notes from Bradbury were written as Crane spoke during his lectures at MSoA³, justifying my use of Bradbury's work alongside Crane's own writing within the 'Bases of Design' (1898) in my analysis of historical design teaching. Crane demonstrated to students 'how they could analyse the design of artefacts and nature for themselves from fundamentals, and so dispense with imitating ornament.' (Crane, 1898:87). His lectures and demonstrations based on his 'suggestions' in 1893 became the basis for design teaching in British Art Schools over the next 40 years (Macdonald, 2005: 75).



Figure 2: Illustrations of pattern and design of historical ceramics Castel Durant 1510 Italian about 1520 (Bradbury, 1891)



Figure 3: Panel designed to illustrate the use of principles of ornament. (Bradbury, 1893)

In art schools during this period, the importance of looking to existing examples of ornament in order to learn basic design principles was stressed, including by Morris who stated that 'However original a man may be, he cannot afford to disregard the works of art that have been produced in times past when design was flourishing; he is bound to study old examples...' (Macdonald, 2005:24). The idea of links between ornament is present in early historical examples, including in the development of ornament upon utensils and tools in the early stone age. Alexander Speltz suggests these were developed from studies of nature and imitated by 'copyists' who 'deformed them in such a way that purely naturalistic drawings were finally changed into purely ornamental motives' (1989:2). This example of copying crudely demonstrates ideas which Crane communicated favouring taking influence from existing ornament rather than imitating it (Hart, 2010:196). He also encouraged 'characterization rather than naturalism' (Crane, 1898:110) when translating nature.

³ In his book 'A Century of Art and Design Education' (2005), Stuart Macdonald states that a set of illustrated notes 'taken down directly as Crane spoke' are now in Macdonald's possession.

In her book 'Arts and Crafts Objects', Imogen Hart describes how the Arts and Crafts museum at Manchester 'demonstrated how influence could take place without direct imitation' and how 'modern designers were inspired by 'the individuality and craftsmanship of older objects' (Hart, 2010:196). In the Bases of Design, Crane compares artistic tradition to a golden chain. 'Individual artists are jewels on the chain, but it is important to consider the chain which brings his work into relation and harmony with contemporaries, predecessors and successors' (Crane, 1898:350). He invited students to 'add another stage to the chain of influence' and to be inspired by ornament rather than imitate it (Hart,2010: 196). The evaluation of Bradbury's work and Crane's lectures support the development of a methodology for this research project based on historical pedagogy.

Key Terms and Definitions

Ornament

The term ornament has 2 meanings, 1 refers to an object and 1 refers to decoration. This thesis will refer to ornament as art, or 'decoration that is added to increase the beauty of something' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). James Trilling states that "Ornament is elaboration that relies primarily on the appeal of stylized or non-representational form" (2001:12). Ornament will be defined within this thesis as surface pattern, and explored in practice-based research as stylized form.

Ornamental Art

This thesis will explore 19th century methods of design teaching which used historical artefacts and natural objects as a foundation for design. This will be referred to as 'ornamental art', a term which describes this method of extracting fundamental elements of ornament from historical artefacts and nature, and the subsequent designing of new patterns for the adornment of a material surface.

Ornament Cycles

'Ornament comes from ornament' (James Trilling, 2001,10)

Within this thesis I will refer to the 'cycle of ornament' and 'ornament cycles', encompassing the idea of a chain which connects ornamental art with historical, contemporary and future examples. This term describes ornamental design as part of a continuous cycle, taking influence from previous examples but also contributing to a 'chain of influence' for future designers.

Chapter 1 Research Aims, Objectives and Methods

Establishing Design Controls

Design in its many forms and applications must be reconciled to certain limitations of material and method...limitations lead to those results of beauty and harmonious expression. (Crane, 1898:121)

In 'The Bases of Design', Crane developed a series of lectures for design students at Manchester. These demonstrated key principles of design and argued that the designer is limited by both material and method (Crane, 1898: 121). I spent time reading and extracting examples of these limitations from the Bases of Design, establishing the following list of 'Design Controls'¹¹.

Crane's Design Controls

- Expression of line, for example horizontal lines rest and vertical lines support. (Crane, 1898: 47)
- Adding to or cutting away from the material surface. (Crane, 1898: 93)
- Pattern incorporated into the material surface. (Crane, 1898: 106)
- Pattern designed as surface decoration. (Crane, 1898: 106)
- Flatness of mass. (Crane, 1898: 110)
- Squareness of mass. (Crane, 1898: 110)
- Characterization of nature rather than naturalism 'allying it with invention in a distinct region of their own'. (Crane, 1898: 111)
- Ornamental conditions, for example wallpapers and hangings demand 'patterns which climb upwards'. (Crane, 1898: 128)
- Perspective distorts across floors and pavements, use geometric shapes as they preserve form. (Crane, 1898: 128)
- Beauty of contour, graceful mass in pattern and bold and sweeping curves. (Crane, 1898: 210)
- Enclosures for smaller fields of pattern. (Crane, 1898: 210)
- 'A form once found is repeated. The eye grows accustomed to it, takes delight in it and expects recurrence.' (Crane, 1898: 355)
- The unconscious variation of ornament, due to 'the natural tendency of the hand to vary a form in repeating it'. (Crane, 1898: 357)
- Design built up of a few units. 'A flower, a leaf, a stem and straight lines of borders' (Crane, 1898: 372)
- It is better to do a small thing well than a big thing badly (Crane, 1898: 373)

13 ¹¹ The term 'control' is used within science as a benchmark for the comparison of results within an experiment (Oxford Dictionary, 2019). I felt this term suited the purpose of this list of principles which would guide rather than limit making and allow for open comparison should my creative experimentation move out of the boundaries of the original design principle.

Crane was a pioneer of his time, speaking out against key figures in ornament art teaching such as R.W. Wornum and Owen Jones (Macdonald, 2005: 79). Through this research project I aim to prove that the idea of taking influence from objects rather than imitating their ornament is still relevant in a contemporary design context.

I object to Crane's use of the word 'limitation' and have therefore opted for the word 'control' within this list of principles. Oxford Dictionary describes the word control as a comparison tool in an experiment (see footnote 11) (Oxford Dictionary, 2019). I have used Crane's principles in this way to guide, support and enhance the ornamental art process; allowing change and movement away from the original idea rather than limiting or constraining it. The list of controls I have established are intended to be used as a looser framework than Crane would have intended when he was teaching, and by all means can be broken and challenged within practice in order to introduce contemporary approaches.

This approach relates to the research focus upon ornament rather than pattern. Patternity refers to pattern as something repetitive and sequential, suggesting regularity (Murray et al, 2015) whereas ornament is traditionally defined as the "elaboration of functionally complete objects for the sake of visual pleasure" (Trilling, J, 2001: 6). Pattern is fixed and must follow a structure and sequence to qualify as pattern, whereas ornament is focused on decoration but may utilize element of pattern. Crane teaches about ornament but uses the rules of pattern. I believe there is room to move away from these traditional structures in order to achieve contemporary ornament.

My practice-based research used a selection of Crane's controls to guide making, seeking opportunities to follow and break them with the aim of creating new, contemporary responses to traditional ornament art teaching. One way in which I have moved away from Crane's teaching is that I have not limited material and method. Crane presents contradicting ideas as he states "Design in its many forms and applications must be reconciled to certain limitations of material and method", yet also describes design in comparison to a tree, with each element as a branch but all elements interconnected (Crane, 1898:121). Rather than limiting design to one material or method, I have adopted Crane's tree metaphor within my methodology for practice, using various contemporary craft materials and methods which are all connected to the over-arching theme of ornament. I utilize 'contemporary craft' as a broad term to encompass the various craft practices which are covered under the term 'design', and designs happen through both 2D and 3D process.

Research Aims

The aim of this research project was to explore how historical pedagogical methods related to ornament art can be used in combination with ornamented museum objects to inspire new craft practice and encourage meaningful interactions between object and viewer, through the creation of a series of artworks made in response to objects from the Manchester School of Art collection of the MMU Special Collections archive; and the writing of a supporting thesis situating the work within the wider contexts of contemporary craft practice, design pedagogy and ornament art.

Objectives

- Explore examples of ornament art teaching at Manchester School of Art including the historical student work of Emma Louise Bradbury and the teaching material of Walter Crane to establish a methodology for making.
- Visually explore historical objects from the era of ornamental art (late 19th and early 20th century) which are linked to the study of ornament (such as Cantagalli's mosque lamp).
- Investigate the wider context of ornament from the early 20th century to the present day, including its historical development, the meaning and symbolism embedded within ornament and the arguments within art and design that are for or against the use of ornament.
- Investigate the history of ornamental art at Manchester School of Art from its origins.
- Make a series of artworks exploring the decorative patterns of historical objects within the Manchester School of Art section of the MMU Special Collections archive, with particular focus upon design and making processes which draw attention to an object's ornamental surface.

Research Methods

The research methodology centred around a series of processes which led to creative making in response to this object collection. Linda Candy states that 'if a creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge, the research

is practice-based' (Candy, 2006:1), and my early intentions to gain knowledge through creative practice defined this as a practice-based research study. It was important to underpin this practice-based research with elements of theory in order to situate it alongside similar pieces of research in the surrounding field and to strive to contribute original research. These two research methods became intertwined within a reflective research journal (included at the end of the thesis) which was used throughout to document all aspects of research including object exploration; artistic outputs and responses; historical study; and theories and debates around ornament. The structure of this research journal informed the overall thesis structure, moving away from a traditional thesis layout by interspersing the literature review amongst analysis of practice.

Reflective passages of creative writing feature within the thesis, taking influence from Caroline Slotte's publications 'Closer' (2010) and 'Second Hand Stories' (2011). Slotte states that 'the role of the written word in the project has expressly been to increase accessibility, to steer the visual, concrete result closer to the viewer and, at the same time, closer to myself' (Slotte, 2010, 12). My reflective writing is included with the aim of communicating my emotion in response to objects, in order to share my connection with the reader and inspire increased engagement with objects.

The research takes ornament as the overarching theme which influences practice. Crane suggested that ornament was limited by material and method, but this research limits only by method and embraces a variety of materials, exploring ornament across multiple material surfaces. The materials and processes which are used to explore ornament are craft-based: hand-built ceramic, screen printed textiles and embroidery; and many of them also embrace digital technology: water-jet cutting, digital print and laser-cutting. Due to the nature of these materials the practice is sited within the field of contemporary craft to allow for the exploration of multiple materials and processes, as opposed to a study sited within the field of ceramics, textiles or surface pattern design, for example.

The aesthetic qualities of ornamental art and an aim to draw attention to museum objects have been the focus for this research, relating to Caroline Slotte's concept of objects as 'image surfaces' (2010: 56). As practice moved into making, although my focus was on the aesthetic quality of ornament over symbolic significance, I carried out contextual research which helped me gain understanding of ornamental symbolism and the counter arguments developed by modernist theorists such as Adolf Loos. My contextual reviews also explored practitioners

who were creating ornamental artwork, or work in response to historical collections. I was able to draw from the methods of makers such as Slotte and Betty Woodman in their use of methods to guide making, developing my own design controls from Crane's 'Bases of Design' (1898) to guide the development of ornamental compositions. I aimed for my making to challenge Modernist theories, for example by proving that we can create 'new ornament'.

Clare Twomey's project 'Time Present and Time Past' (William Morris Gallery, 2016) emphasised the importance of hand processes within the project through hand-painting to enhance the sensory experience and encourage meaningful engagement with historical objects and processes, whilst also incorporating contemporary process through the inclusion of digitally printed tiles. In a similar way my making practices intentionally embraced both hand-built and digitally-created processes, in order to retain a sense of tradition whilst exploring innovation through contemporary practice. Crane said that we are only at liberty to use examples of the past on the condition that we make it our own (Smith & Hyde, 1989:44), and the making explored ways of taking influence from (not imitating) the original ornament, through the rearrangement and combining of ornament from multiple object surfaces.

In the later stages of research when presenting elements of practice, De Landa's Assemblage theory became key to the development of a series of ornamental assemblages. These assemblages were un-fixed compositions created from 2D and 3D ornament, inspired by examples of wider context which discussed interaction with historical objects and the relationship between objects and ornament within display. De Landa's theory helped me to realise the experiential nature of the work which was key to its display, highlighting the importance of the virtual alongside the actual within my overall research and displays of artwork.

The research has a strong pedagogical element which is derived from Crane's writing within *The Bases of Design* and also takes influence from other contemporary responses to object collections that use pedagogical methods; such as Donna Claypool's project exploring historical textiles in Bolton to prompt creative enquiry from BA textile students (Claypool, D (2018), and the development of the Materials and Innovations collection at MSoA (Boydell and Grimshaw, 2018). Pedagogy was key to my own research as I used Crane's methods to inform my own learning and exploration of objects, and I was then keen to exploit this element further by presenting the practice and research within a workshop framework. The ornamental assemblages were exhibited at a

occasion the audience were invited to interact with objects and rearrange assemblages. The workshop used qualitative research methods including discussion and written questionnaires to evidence the impact of practice on participants. The intention was to prove that the research and practice had achieved its aim to draw attention to ornamented objects and encourage focused attention. The interaction with objects was important as both the emotional and physical relationship with objects informed pedagogy and supported creative thinking and making.

The research study examines the use of historical objects to inspire contemporary craft and suggests methods of using historical pedagogy to encourage audience interaction. This method could inform new pedagogical methods for working with design students and historical objects, which refer to the tradition of ornamental art as exemplified at Manchester but identify a contemporary approach to this teaching.

Chapter 2 Wider Context: Ornament and Changing Perceptions of Value

Perceptions of Value: 21st and 19th Century Ornament

The value that ornament adds to objects is heavily debated, with ornament dividing opinion throughout history and continuing today. During the 19th century, every architect and designer was expected to have a good understanding of ornament and it was described as a 'natural want' (Durant, 1986:7). However during the ascendancy of modernism in the 20th century, the fortunes of ornament declined and it became the subject of ridicule- H.S Goodhart-Rendel stated 'a fondness for ornament is no more readily acknowledged by refined persons than would be a fondness for gin' (Durant, 1986:7) Austrian architect Adolf Loos compared ornament with crime and called for a move towards the removal of ornamentation from the everyday object surface. (Loos, 1908) His views made a huge contribution to the decline of ornament during the rise of Modernism following WW1.

Loos said 'We have gone beyond ornament, we have achieved plain, undecorated simplicity' (Loos, 1908:168). He believed people of the 20th century were unable to create 'new ornament' and that ornament ceased to be an accurate expression of his culture. He called for the removal of ornamentation from the surface of designed objects.

In his recent touring exhibition 'Criminal Ornamentation' (Yorkshire Sculpture Park [YSP], 2019), Yinka Shonibare responded directly to Loos' 1908 essay, with a show of 102 works selected from the Arts Council Collection for their use of pattern and ornamentation. In an exhibition which layered pattern upon pattern to such an extent that you could not escape it, Shonibare challenged Loos' call for the removal of ornamentation. In a statement displayed on the wall of the exhibition, Shonibare stated 'Criminal Ornamentation is about the refusal of artists to stay away from vulgar ornamentation and obsessive popular repetition of pattern', finishing his statement with 'Cheers to all the criminals!' (Shonibare, 2019) His selection of pieces, linked through ornament, layered with cultural and political meaning and punctuated with Loos' text, revisited the controversy surrounding ornament.

My research project explores ornament as a cycle, with ornamental art taking inspiration from existing ornamented objects and relating to historical,

contemporary and future versions of ornament (as referenced by Crane in his comparison of artistic tradition with a golden chain) (Crane, 1898:350). This concept argues against Loos' belief that we have gone beyond ornament. Trilling describes how 'the evolution of ornament shows its makers responding, with varying degrees of subtlety, to each other's styles' (2001: 183), and in the introduction we read about copyists from the early stone age who transformed naturalistic drawings into ornament (Speltz, 1989:2) The designers of the 19th century referred to the ornament of the past and used this to influence the ornament of their time. Since the first primitive motif was created, ornament has never again been entirely "new".

In 'Criminal Ornamentation' (YSP, 2019), Loos' quote 'We have outgrown ornament; we have fought our way through to freedom from ornament' is displayed above Emily Taylor's ceramic vases 'Playing the Field' (Figure 4, Taylor, 2016) and 'Raising Cain' (Figure 5, Taylor, 2017).



Figure 4: Playing the Field I (Taylor, 2016)



Figure 5: Raising Cain I (Taylor, 2017)

These vases from Taylor's 'Edgelands' series combine images from Modernist housing estates with rich, lusted surfaces and traditional English aesthetics. Taylor says she is 'inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement, led by William Morris in Britain in the 1880s, and his belief in the important role of craft in society' (Mansell, 2016). She references this through the band of pattern at the top of her pots, a direct reflection of the ornament cycle occurring on a contemporary craft object. 'Criminal Ornamentation' included some of Morris' artwork including 'The Strawberry Thief' (figure 6, Morris, 1883), enabling viewers to make this connection. The placement of Taylor's 'Edgelands' vases in front of a window

over-looking the Yorkshire landscape (figure 7) also created links to the concept of ornament and beauty coming from nature, expressed by John Ruskin and shared by Morris. Shonibare referenced this concept in the exhibition and this placement appears deliberate, with Taylor’s vases contradicting Loos’ quote and their placement suggesting we can never be ‘free from ornament’ in the natural world which surrounds us.



Figure 6: The Strawberry Thief (Morris, 1883)

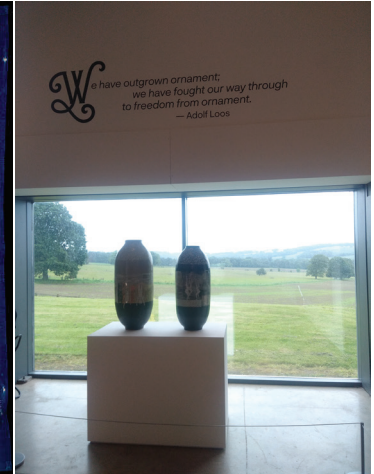


Figure 7: Vases in Criminal Ornamentation (Taylor 2016 and 2017)

It is important to read ‘Ornament and Crime’ with a consideration of its historical, political and cultural contexts. Loos was writing from Vienna at a time when apartment buildings for the upper classes featuring rich Gothic ornamentation would spring up alongside tenements and slum buildings for the rest of the Austrian population. (Opel, 1998: 3). He was initially linked with the Austrian ‘Weiner Secession’⁴ but soon disagreed with their use of anti-classical ornamental language borrowed from Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) and openly criticised the movement’s artists in his writing (Furjan, 2003:116).

In Shonibare’s exhibition multiple historical, political and cultural meanings were explored; with certain pieces highlighting ornament cycles. Shonibare’s ‘Line Painting’ (2003) features 2D wall-mounted discs of Dutch wax print fabrics, which are often associated with African textiles. The fabrics represent a cycle of colonialism and have a layered cultural history, beginning with the Dutch colonization of Indonesia and their subsequent development for manufacture in the Netherlands. The British also copied and monopolised these patterns, developing them in their factories for export to the African markets (Arts Council Collection: 2003). Shonibare deliberately selected these Dutch wax prints, bought from Brixton market, due to the multitude of meanings they communicate, within this historical context but also within his own British/Nigerian identity. ‘Line Painting’ reminds us that although this cyclical process can have a positive impact upon

⁴ The Wiener secession formed in 1897 as a movement against the Viennese art scene of the late 19th century

art through influencing and inspiring new designs, it can also have negative connotations when one associates the ornament cycle with the theft of traditional ornament from another culture. Shonibare's work demonstrates the potential for 'political activism through pattern'. (Arts Council England, 2019)



Figure 8: Line Painting (Shonibare, 2003)

Helene Furjan's paper 'Dressing Down: Adolf Loos and the Politics of Ornament' (2003), is a contemporary reading of 'Ornament and Crime' which claims that Loos' call for the complete eradication of ornament is a mis-reading, exaggerated by the French translation of the text in 1912 and 1913. (Furjan, 2003:124) She suggests that rather than eradicating ornament, Loos' introduced a new form of ornament which was embedded into rather than applied to material surface. This can be seen in the use of materials such as marble in his architecture. (Furjan, 2003: 125)

Furjan believes that Loos' anti-ornament call actually refers to a fear that people, including members of the Wiener Secession, were forcing the language of ornament to fit with contemporary design.

As ornament is no longer organically related to our culture, it is also no longer the expression of our culture. The ornament that is produced today bears no relation to us, or to any other human or the world at large. What happened to Otto Eckmann's ornaments, and those of van de Velde?...The modern producer of ornament is...left behind or a pathological phenomenon. He disowns his own products after only three years. (Loos, 1908: 102, cited in Furjan, 2003: 123)

Loos was particularly concerned with working conditions and pay. He believed that people were not willing to pay more for an ornamented object than something plain. He refers to the issue of changing fashions in the context of ornament.

'If all objects would last as long in aesthetic terms as they last physically, the consumer would be able to pay a price for them that would allow the worker to earn more money and work shorter hours' (Loos, 1908, 173). Loos' opinions relate to Morris' and the Arts and Crafts movements philosophies, as they believed that industrialisation of design objects was affecting the value placed upon ornamented objects. Their solution was to fight against industrialism and encourage craft, whereas Loos' had the more extreme reaction of calling for the eradication of ornament which ultimately had greater impact. From a contemporary perspective, this thesis argues that it is important to consider industrial processes alongside the hand-made within the production of ornamental art. Industrialisation, since the time of Loos and Morris, has removed the distinction of value from ornamented and plain objects. For example in her article 'Is ornament actually a crime?' (2012) Jude Stewart points out that, 'Apple's example demonstrates another clarion-bell truth of good design now: the ruthless reduction of bells and whistles actually consumes more labor now than the opposite.' Rather than taking the extreme approaches of the rejection of machinery or the rejection of ornament entirely, this research project explores how industrial process can contribute to ornamental art and add value to objects.

Exploring Ornament within Research

Despite several contradictions, there are certain elements of Loos' argument which are inline with ornamental art teaching, particularly the cyclical nature of ornament. When Loos' thought that he had gone beyond ornament, he was adding to the cycle by creating a new 20th century version, focused upon material surface rather than embellishment.

Shonibare describes the rebellion of artists who 'refuse to stay away from vulgar ornamentation' (Shonibare, 2019), demonstrating the conscious choice contemporary artists make in applying pattern and ornament to their work. When speaking at the Textile and Place conference at Manchester Metropolitan University in April 2018, Lubaina Himid described how within her kanga paintings, the border speaks to the field, and the field speaks to the motto (Himid, 2018), referring to the meanings that can be reflected through the relationship between different elements of ornament within an artwork. Within this research project, the choice to use ornament was an aesthetic one, but as I explored the selected decorative art objects I did so with an increased awareness of the meanings embedded within their ornament and the conversations that occur between the compositions I created.

Trilling stated that 'Western ornament is at a crossroads. We can rebuild, choose forms, set conventions that tell future generations what ornament is' (Trilling, 2001: 215). The work of companies such as Patterntity and Timorous Beasties explores ornament within a 21st century context, referencing history but changing and breaking tradition to create pattern and ornament.

The creative organisation 'Patterntity' was founded in 2009 'to celebrate the infinite and omnipresence of pattern' (Murray et al, 2015, 2015: 18). The organisation focuses on pattern research, design and experience; particularly inspired by the patterns which surround us. (Patterntity, 2019). They believe that 'we have become numb to the deeper beauty and greater meaning beyond the surface (of patterns)' (Murray et al, 2015: 203) and fear that we have forgotten how to look due to the barrage of imagery and technology in our everyday. Their aim is 'to promote a 'new way of seeing' (Murray et al, 2015, 2015: 22)



Figure 9: Warp and Reason (Brendon & Patterntity)

The Patterntity project 'Warp and Reason' with Richard Brendon honoured heritage and innovation, with a bold blue pattern whose placement inside teacups and upon handles evoked the embellishment seen on 16th century china, whilst the bold striped patterns were intended to represent 'the layering of new and radical ideas' (Patterntity, 2019) during the 17th century Age of Reason.⁵ In their book, Murray and Winteringham include several quotes about pattern including Tuli Kupferburg's statement 'When patterns are broken, new worlds emerge' (Murray and Winteringham, 2015:205), informing this research through the suggestion that the challenging of traditional ornamental rules can inspire new explorations of ornament in contemporary craft.

Design studio Timorous Beasties also embrace and challenge pattern traditions, adopting traditional motifs and techniques alongside controversial,

⁵ The Age of Reason: when the arrival of tea and coffee aided social mobility through the replacement of alcohol leading to clearer thinking and new ideas/

contemporary subject matter within their wallpapers and printed textiles including scenes of violence and grotesque creatures (Timorous Beasties, 2019).



Figure 10: London Toile Brights (Timorous Beasties, 2019)

In their video for the exhibition 'Bedsit' (Plymouth College of Art, 2016), they discuss their controversial subject matter and the value of their audience.

'The reason why people buy us is because of this love/hate relationship. It's just as important that we have people that don't like our work, because that helps create the kind of niche brand and its that kind of level of appreciation that keeps our business exciting. The people that like our work also like the fact that some people don't like it.' (Plymouth College of Art, 2016, 1 min 37)

Instantly we are reminded of the controversy surrounding ornament as a subject; of ornament's ability to divide us by adding value to a space or an object for some and de-valuing it for others. This thesis presents ornament from a positive art and design perspective, striving to demonstrate how it can contribute to contemporary craft and design practices as demonstrated through the work of these 2 companies.

Ornament's Voice, 18th April 2018

(Reflective writing following the Textile and Place conference [T&P], MSoA, 2018)

Roses. Petals. Leaves. Squares. Triangles. Does ornament have its own voice?

Whilst speaking about her Kanga artworks, Lubaina Himid describes how 'the border speaks to the field, and the field speaks to the motto'⁶. If a border can speak to the field, and the field can speak to the motto, what is the combined surface saying?

Ornament has a rich, layered history which spans multiple cultures, religions and centuries. Its origins lie within the origins of man and the development of civilization- as man began to embellish his tools and illustrate the walls of his cave, ornament was born.

Recognizable ornamental forms relate to early functionality. Plaited rushes woven in alternating horizontal and vertical forms gave us our chequerboard. A twisted cord weaving between and around upright canes gives us traditional volute or meandering borders. Each ornamental example has a similar story. The lotus flower, the spiral, the palmette. Each symbol carries its own narrative.

Himid's 'Kangas from the Lost Sample Book' are fragments of a whole, swatches and corners which allow you to glimpse but do not reveal. They are a snapshot, a moment, an imagined historical record; new creations to replace those which cannot be found.

What narratives can we find in old pattern books? These visual and textual records capture insights of an expired industry, but many are long since lost, or rotting away in the cellars of derelict mills. Did you know that the Peel Pattern Book, originating in Bury or Bolton, now sits in the Metropolitan Museum of Art?⁷ Himid says that 'you own everything in museums'. Sharon Blakey says that museum archives are a 'storehouse of memory'.⁸ I imagine the museum stores I have been in- objects in boxes on shelves; patterns, colours and symbols running across hidden surfaces.

If ornament has a voice, museum stores must be chattering.

⁶ Himid, L 'The Lost Sample Book- Never Sleep Inside the Invisible' T&P 2018

⁷ Claypool, D 'The History of Textiles in Bolton – The Archive Collection as Historical and Creative Enquiry' T&P, 2018

⁸ Reference to Blakey, S and Mitchell, L, 'Unfolding' T&P, 2018



Figure 11: The Lost Pattern Book: Never Sleep Inside the Invisible (Himid, 2012)

Chapter 3 Exploring Museum Collections

Wider Context: Exploring Museum Collections

Ornament began to return to favour in the late 20th century (Durant, 1986: 8) and many everyday items such as decorative textiles, wallpaper, and tableware survived modernism. (Trilling, 2001:185) Today at MSoA the importance of access to design objects for handling within the teaching process is once again being recognised, for example within the recently developed 'Material and Process Innovation Collection' at MMU Special Collections. This collection helps students to explore contemporary design objects and examine an object's materiality, combatting issues of digital interaction overtaking physical interaction within design teaching (Boydell and Grimshaw, 2018). Whilst this is a move towards echoing Crane's teaching principles, I would argue that there is room to also encourage the exploration of historical objects within MMU Special Collections.

When we explore museum collections and archives, we discover further value debates around objects alongside those surrounding ornament. In his book 'Do Museums Still Need Objects?' (2010) Steven Conn discussed the changing perceptions of value for museum objects, describing how the place of objects within museums has shrunk due to people losing faith in the power of objects to tell stories and share knowledge (Conn, 2010: 7). On the other hand, Susanne Keene describes museum collections as 'stores of cultural capital' (2005: 160 cited in Blakey and Mitchell, 2013:173) and links the increasing value of a collection to the contact people have with it.

Liz Mitchell and Sharon Blakey encountered various value debates when they were invited to explore the domestic objects of the Mary Greg collection at Manchester Art Gallery. There had been a controversial proposal in 2006 to dispose of the collection, with the conclusion that it was 'not sufficiently valuable to warrant attention but too embedded in Manchester Art Gallery's history to be easily shed' (Blakey and Mitchell, 2013:171). In their paper 'A Question of Value: Rethinking the Mary Greg Collection' they discuss issues within museum culture including a crisis in collection storage (Wilkinson, 2005 cited in Blakey and Mitchell, 2013:171) meaning it is impossible to keep everything and causing difficult value judgements around which objects stay. They ask 'if nobody ever opens the cupboard doors, what is the point of having all this stuff?' (Blakey and Mitchell, 2013:178).

Artists are often given opportunities to interact with museum objects and collections which would not be available to the general public. Caroline Bartlett has responded to multiple archives and extracts hidden narratives between the museum, the curator and the collection. In her publication 'In the Spaces of the Archive' (2009), Bartlett discusses the privileged role given to an artist when exploring an archive, which allows for insights which would not be accessed by the public (Bartlett, 2009). My research builds upon Grimshaw and Boydell's developments to highlight the value of working closely with objects but focusing upon a collection of historical pieces from the Manchester School of Art collection rather than contemporary design objects. Through practice I aim to share the privilege bestowed upon artists with a wider audience, and bring new perspectives in the way Bartlett, Blakey and Mitchell describe.

The handling of objects is another privilege afforded to artists when they are given access to museum collections. Although often with a gloved hand, artists are able to hold objects and examine them in close proximity, in ways that the public cannot when viewing an object behind glass. Bartlett's practice extracts sensorial stories from the objects she explores, and she expresses concern around only experiencing objects through sight. 'They can lose their potential to be understood except through sight and our appreciation can be diminished as the manner in which we experience them does not necessarily suggest or reveal their full value' (Bartlett, 2009:29). This links to Conn's ideas about objects losing their power to communicate stories and share knowledge with their audience, but Bartlett suggests that the fault lies with the museum rather than the objects. She believes that museum systems can obscure objects rather than revealing them (Bartlett, 2009: 25).

Blakey and Mitchell describe how the most engaged responses to the collection came from direct handling of material, and they too refer to a 'privileged access' (Blakey and Mitchell, 2013:181). My research interests focus on the aesthetics of ornament, but within my practice-based research I will consider how the sensorial experience of handling or examining objects affects my responses.

Investigating the Manchester School of Art Object Collection

The MSoA object collection was formed originally as the Arts and Crafts Museum at MSoA, intended to be (in Crane's words) 'full of suggestion and inspiration for the designer and craftsman' (Shrigley and Davis, 1994:18). In 1994 Shrigley and Davis described how 'a lack of display facilities limits public access to these pieces' (1994: 20). Although the collection has developed since this statement was written and access has improved, as a student of MMU at both under-graduate and post-graduate level I have witnessed a collection which is still largely invisible to people who don't know about it. This research project focuses upon these objects in order to bring increased attention to them and their ornamental surfaces.

First Special Collections Visit: 20th October 2018

In the early stages of my research I was particularly interested in the exploration of objects which would have been utilised within ornamental art teaching. I used object references from 'Inspired by Design' (Shrigley and Davis, 1994) to guide my first research visit within Special Collections. Pottery by William De Morgan is listed as one of the first items purchased for the museum in 1894 (16), and Davis goes on to refer to pieces from Pilkington's Lancastrian Pottery and Samson and Co.(18).

This would be the first of several visits to the Special Collections archive to view objects. During each visit, I focused upon spending time looking at, handling and drawing from objects; and documenting objects through photography for extended visual research. Whilst looking at objects, further research ideas were prompted and captured through written reflection (evidenced in the research journal included at the end of this thesis.)

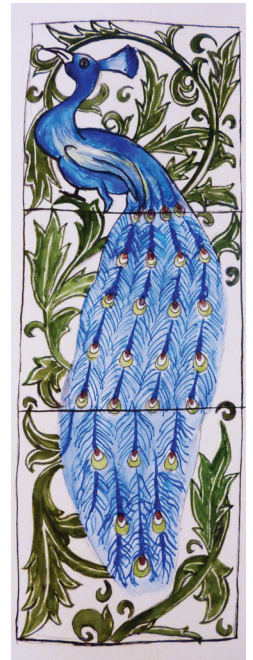
When looking at William De Morgan's bottle-shaped vase (figure 12) and peacock tazza (figure 13) I was attracted to his use of stylized botanical ornament. I had previously drawn from De Morgan's peacock tile (figure 14) and was able to draw parallels between motifs across the two objects, indicating a clear ornamental style demonstrated by De Morgan.



Figure 12: Bottle-shaped vase (De Morgan, 1894)



Figure 13: Iazza (De Morgan, 1894) and Figure 14 (left): Watercolour & ink drawing from De Morgan tile panel (1895)



I viewed the Pilkington's vase (figure 15) from various angles, aware of my privilege when viewing the base of the object and considering how this unique angle provided an abstracted view of ornament within a circular form. I noted that this had potential to be removed from the object surface as a motif for design (figure 17). My selection of this vase identified my attraction to 3D ceramic objects as a focus for the work, rather than 2D pieces such as tiles which are also part of this collection. This relates to previous practice in relation to 3D ceramic objects which has also explored surface pattern and ornamentation, finding that there is a huge breadth of ornament available upon this type of object.



Figure 15: Vase (Pilkington's Tile and Pottery Co. 1907)

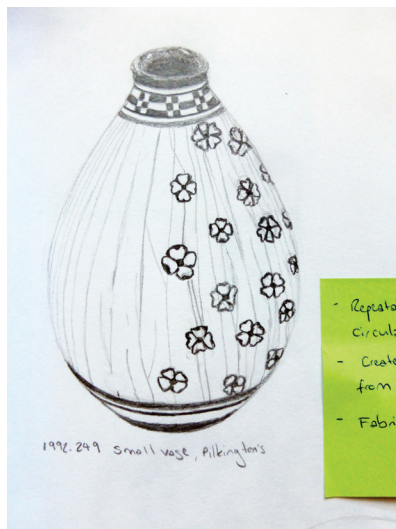


Figure 16: Pencil drawing from archive visit (Pilkington's vase 1907)



Figure 17: View of base (Pilkington's Tile and Pottery Co. 1907)

My interaction with the Samson and Co. flask vase was my first discovery of replica objects. This piece was made as a reproduction of a 16th century Chinese Wan-Li style vase. Although this was a direct imitation rather than Crane's preferred 'influence', I began to consider the use of replica objects within my research to further highlight ornament cycles.



Figure 18: Flask vase (Samson and co. 1897)

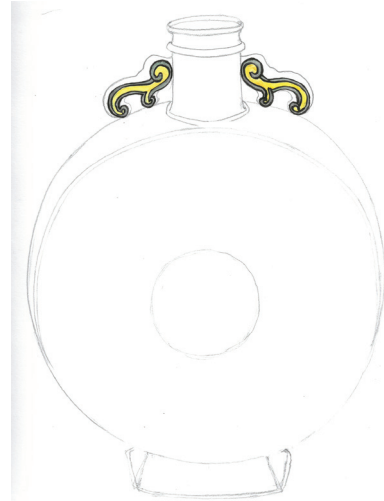


Figure 19: Pencil and watercolour illustration from flask vase (Samson and co. 1897)

Special Collections' Object Store: 13th November 2018

I gained a sense of the range of objects which make up the MSoA collection during a visit to Special Collections' object store with curator Stephanie Boydell. Rather than using the online catalogue and requesting objects, Stephanie took me into the store to look through cupboards and drawers. Together we unpicked the historical narrative of objects through discussion, adding to ideas for potential research topics (prompted during my first visit in October) including objects made in relation to other objects.

Several pieces within the collection are from companies such as Samson and Co., Elkington and Co. and Cantagalli; businesses who created replicas and imitation objects in historical styles such as 15th century Italian maiolica. These pieces are evidence of the teaching of ornament art at Manchester School of Art around the time that the collection was formed. The replicas were purchased in order to allow students to view examples of objects that would ordinarily be inaccessible⁹.

⁹ Anecdotal evidence gathered through conversation with Stephanie Boydell, documented in the Research Journal at the end of the thesis.



Figure 20: Vase in mosque lamp shape (Cantagalli, 1898)



Figure 21: Pencil illustration from vase (Cantagalli, 1898)

Cantagalli's mosque lamp (figure 20) is an example of an object which imitates a piece of Middle Eastern ceramics. There is evidence of ornament cycles within this piece, for example the alteration of material from glass to ceramic and the replication of ornament from a decorative object. The script on the surface of this lamp makes no sense and has been reduced to a purely decorative ornament, stripped of its original meaning.



Figure 22: Drawing demonstrating repetition (Bradbury, 1892)



Figure 23: Drawing demonstrating bisymmetry (Bradbury, 1892)



Figure 24: Line drawings in pencil demonstrating geometry exercises. (Bradbury, 1892)

Alongside historical objects from the MSoA collection, I was also introduced to the work of Emma Louise Bradbury in the MSoA archive. Bradbury was a student at MSoA in the late 19th century¹⁰ and received teaching from Walter Crane including using historical objects and nature as inspiration for ornamental design (Macdonald, 2005: 83). I described the piece 'Three Designs from a Plant' (figure 1, p7) in the introduction, as an example of work which illustrates a student using the fundamental elements of an object to inspire new ornamental design. Other drawings enabled me to gain a better understanding of the methods used within this historical design pedagogy, for example applying elements of design to ornament including repetition (figure 22) and symmetry (figure 23) (Bradbury, 1892). I decided to research these methods in more depth in order to create my own research methodology for responding to historical objects.

Final Object Selection



Figure 25: Jar (Cantagalli, 1898)



Figure 26: Watercolour illustration of jar (Cantagalli, 1898)

I returned to the archive later in the year to draw from Cantagalli's mosque lamp and another of the Cantagalli jars (figure 25). The final collection of objects is made up of William De Morgan's vase and tazza, Cantagalli's mosque lamp and jar, Samson's vase and Pilkington's vase (figure 27). During the earlier stages of visual and material investigation, I focused on the De Morgan and Pilkington vases, and much of the practice-based research applies to these pieces. This visual practice is described in Chapter 5 and included drawing and digital design, which informed material practice encompassing a range of materials and processes (described in Chapter 7).

Although in total I viewed a wide range of objects, including pieces designed by Crane himself, the research focused on only 6 objects from the MsoA collection. Large quantities of objects were not needed to prove the value of this historical design pedagogy and the relevance of museum objects to the contemporary craft and design process, as this small number ensured in depth study into each object was carried out which revealed the breadth of design potential within each surface. In the next chapter I will reference practitioners who emphasise the importance of focusing upon and spending time with objects in a similar way.



Figure 27: Digital Image - Final collection of objects selected from Manchester School of Art collection for research

Chapter 4 Wider Context: Focused Attention upon Objects

Exploring Objects

My research includes focused periods of time spent visually exploring objects within Special Collections. My methodology references Caroline Slotte, who describes the close examination of decorative ceramic objects within her publication 'Closer' (Slotte, 2010). She begins by choosing a detail, 'a building depicted in blue on a white plate.'

I follow the lines of the detail I have chosen. Some are clear, sharp in their print. Others are faint, with blurry edges here and there. In some areas the cobalt has flowed out into the surrounding glaze. In my mind I render the pictorial elements three-dimensional... I do this until I know the shape, until it is as though I could hold it in my hand and run my fingertips over it. Then I can repeat it. (Slotte, 2010: 47)

Her process can be connected with Crane's design teaching and the work of students like Emma Louise Bradbury. In Bradbury's drawings she analyses a decorative art object or a natural object, beginning with a study of the whole object before developing elements of its ornament into new repeat patterns. (Figure 1, p8, Bradbury, 1894). Slotte discusses her desire to inspire 'a new form of consciousness' and 'a more observant gaze' from her viewer (Slotte, 2010, p56). She follows the same process as Bradbury but works physically, using a rotary tool to sand away at the object's surface. In the series 'Unidentified View' (Slotte, 2009) she imitates an element from a blue and white plate, sculpting onto a plain white ceramic surface and sanding away the surrounding background until the imitated element appears as 3D form. Her manipulation of the object surface causes her viewers to study an object more closely and spend more time with it, breaking their usual habits of looking.



Figure 28: Unidentified View- re-worked ceramic second-hand material (Slotte, 2009)

Exploring Process

In the project 'Time Present and Time Past' (William Morris Gallery, 2016), Clare Twomey created a piece in response to Morris' drawing process. One of Morris' draft drawings was transferred to the surface of 130 ceramic tiles, and gold details were added to the surface every day for 3 months by a master painter and member of the public acting as an apprentice (figure 29).



Figure 29: Time Present and Time Past (Twomey, 2016)

The project focused upon process rather than outcome. The most important element of the work was the experience of painting the gold, for the master painter and the apprentices, but also for Twomey and all those who witnessed the work in action. Their hands echoed Morris', bringing his drawing and skills to 2016. Twomey describes this as a way of 'bringing life to the work'. This emphasis upon the importance of the hands and senses other than sight bringing added value to the work connect with ideas discussed in Chapter 2 around the sensorial impact of object handling. Those involved in Twomey's project have gained a deeper sensory experience, similar to that of Bartlett within the museum archive, through the replication of Morris' process, more meaningful than if they had simply viewed the drawing under glass within a museum.

I am interested in the methodical approach to making which is present in the practices of other contemporary makers. In the series 'Going Blank Again' (Slotte, 2010) Slotte worked again with a sanding process, using a rotary tool but this time taking away elements of the object surface on a blue and white patterned plate (figure 30). In this particular series the blue of the pattern was removed, leaving the negative space behind- a collection of ghostly white forms with a pale blue bleed around their edges.



Figure 30: Going Blank Again, re-worked Second Hand Ceramic (Slotte, 2010)

Slotte is evidently methodical in her making process, with each series based upon a pre-determined instruction. In 'Going Blank Again' her instruction was to 'remove all the blue from the plate' (Slotte, 2011, p34).

Ceramicist Betty Woodman described a methodical approach to the making process in the video 'Betty Woodman- Thinking out Loud' (1991). She described a 'zen activity' within her making, making decisions and repeating them in a rhythmic process of production (Woodman, 1991: 6 mins 52). I am interested in the way that each of these artists applies particular methodology to their making, through the following of specific rules and limitations. Twomey followed the strict process of a master painter to achieve the outcome of applying gold to the ceramic surface in 'Time Present and Time Past'. Slotte gives herself particular instructions when working on a series such as "repeat the shape" or "remove all the blue from the surface". I decided to establish my own set of rules based on design principles extracted from Walter Crane's 'Bases of Design' (documented in Chapter 5). I gave these rules the title of 'design controls' and used these to guide my practice-based research.

Chapter 5 Investigating Objects through Visual Practice

Units of Ornament

An examination of the designs by Mr Cobden-Sanderson... will show that they are built up of very few units. A flower, a leaf, a stem and straight lines of borders with the lettering, which is also an important ornamental unit. (Crane, 1898: 372)

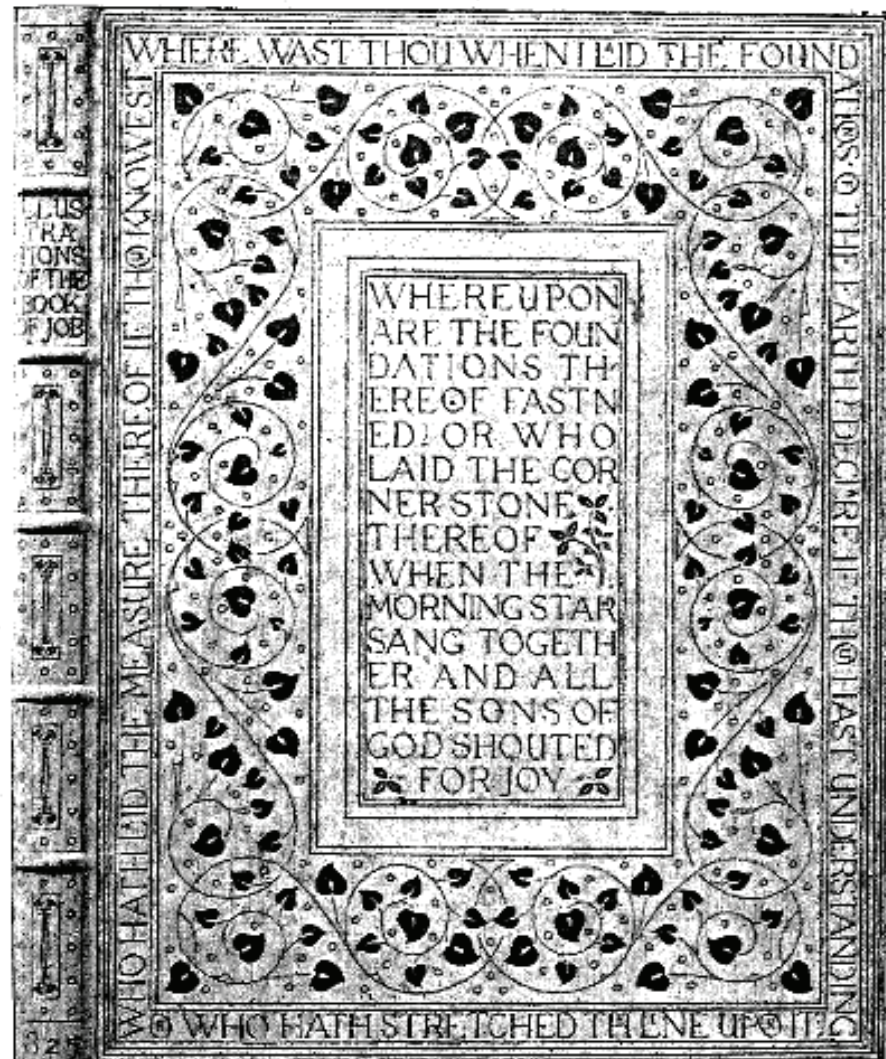


Figure 31: Gold-tooled book cover (Cobden-Sanderson, image from Crane's Bases of Design, 1898:371)

Units of Ornament. 25th April 2018

(Reflective writing in response to Pilkington's Vase (figure 32), 25/04/19)

Pilkington's, £2. Colour seeps out of seaweed, rusted ochre infecting avocado green. Your fish are fading, murky blue underneath a puddle of oil; yet little red kelp trees sit pristine. (Figure 32)

What are the units of ornament?

Indigo lines border the neck and base, topped with a copper petrol lip.

A cracked mint green surface sits underneath blue seaweed, which grows upwards, following the curvature of the vase.

Smaller sea urchins and bits of red kelp grow on the same border at the object's base, as rusting fish swim above.

Dots embellish each ornament, forming a triangle on the vase neck and appearing interspersed throughout seaweed and kelp plants. Even the fish eye is a blue dot.

The maker's hand is so evident here, in wobbled lines and uneven brushstrokes. The metallic glaze (applied liberally) has discoloured overtime, giving way to rusty ochre patches and hinting at the object's age.



Figure 32: Vase (Pilkington's and Co. 1904)

Visual Object Exploration

Visual investigation extended beyond the initial archive visits within Chapter 3, as drawings were edited, developed and dissected. Limitations of working within an archive setting included working in pencil for initial drawings and working for limited periods of time with each object. Following each visit I continued with object drawings and used photography to support development, completing intricate ornament details and adding colour and pen work to pieces as seen in figure 33 and 34.



Figure 33: Watercolour and ink illustration from vase (De Morgan, 1888-1897)

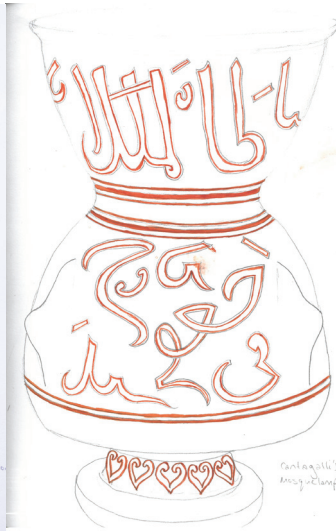


Figure 34: Watercolour and pencil illustration from mosque lamp (Cantagalli, 1898)

I was prompted by control 'Design built up of a few units' (Crane, 1898: 372) and began to use this concept to break objects down into their ornamental elements. Figure 35 shows a series of 'ornament palettes' developed from hand-drawn marks and digital photography, and figure 36 shows an overall palette containing ornament from each of the objects. This method of breaking down an object into its ornamental units supports and simplifies the development of new ornamental designs. The process of extracting ornament and placing it into a square frame acted as the first stage of designing, as accidental assemblages arose and unconscious decisions were made around how to place the ornament upon this digital canvas. This overall palette began to suggest connections between ornament from different objects which could be combined to create assemblages from a range of object surfaces.



Figure 35: Ornament palettes (left to right) De Morgan vase, Pilkington's vase, Samson Jar and De Morgan tazza



Figure 36: Overall ornament palette from 6 MSoA collection objects

When comparing the palettes in Figure 35 and the elements of ornament in the overall palette (figure 36), there was a clear distinction between the hand-drawn marks of the De Morgan vase (figure 35 left) and the digital marks taken from photographs in the other three palettes. Through the exploration of Twomey and Bartlett's practices, the importance of the experiential, particularly of handling, has become apparent. The hand-drawn marks taken from my illustration of the De Morgan vase have a greater sensorial connection to the original object, whereas the digital marks are more detached. In response to this I continued to develop the overall palette and began replacing digital marks with hand-drawn ornament. In some cases this meant working back into the original object surface with colour, as well as re-drawing elements away from the original object illustration (figure 37). At this point I had not yet drawn from the peacock plate, and decided to skip the full object illustration and jump straight to drawing the ornament palette (figure 38). This indicated a new approach to exploring objects which could inform future design pedagogy and ornament art process. Figure 39 shows the final version of the ornament palette, created from entirely hand-drawn marks.

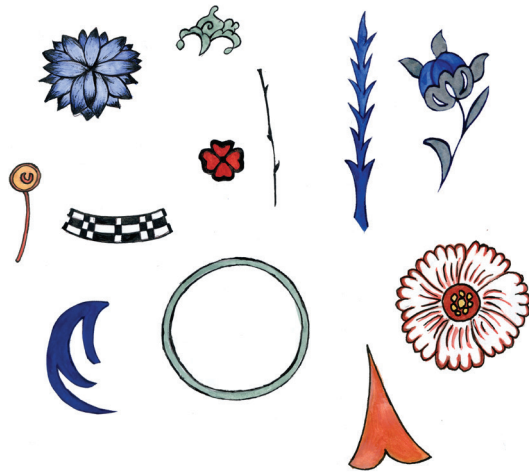


Figure 37: Sketchbook page, ornament illustrations



Figure 38: Ornament illustrations from tazza (De Morgan, 1895)



Figure 38: Final ornament palette



Figure 39: Untitled Watercolour Illustration (Bradbury, 1892)

It is impossible to carry out this type of visual investigation without having a consideration of colour. When looking at the Bradbury's work, I noticed that she broke her ornamental designs down into elements of colour (figure 39). I applied a similar process to the overall ornament palette, which again aided the future ornamental design process. It is important to note that this definition of a colour palette is often used in today's textile design industry, and is perhaps an element of ornament art that has managed to remain within design teaching. As I moved into the material practice discussed later in Chapter 8, my focus was largely on process and material surface and representation of colour is therefore not as strong in making as it was in visual practice. Colour is one area that I would like to explore beyond the research explored in this thesis, and I include this as a consideration in my final research conclusions.

Initial Ornamental Design

Ornamental design has occurred throughout the research including within the forming of object palettes. Figure 40 shows an example of an early digital exploration of ornament which is moving towards 'new' ornamental design, with elements of ornament creeping out of the boundaries of the object form.



Figure 40: Digital design from vase (De Morgan, 1888-1897)

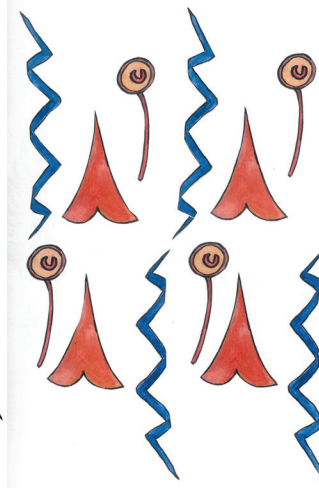


Figure 41: Collage in response to 'Expression of Line'

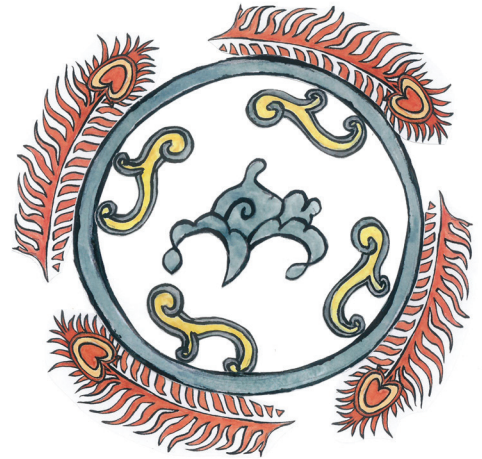


Figure 42: Collage in response to 'Beauty of Contour'

Collage, both paper-based and digital, developed as an important process within visual investigation and overall practice. Following the development of a hand-drawn overall ornament palette, I developed figure 41 and 42 as collages within my sketchbook using the hand-drawn elements of ornament. Both responded to one design control, with figure 41 exploring the idea of 'expression of line' (Crane, 1898:47) and figure 42 exploring 'beauty of contour' (Crane, 1898: 210). Within both of these collages other design controls can be seen, with figure 41 also echoing Crane's 'patterns which climb upwards' (Crane, 1898:128) and figure 42 using an 'enclosure for smaller fields of pattern' (Crane, 1898: 210), suggesting that I was unconsciously embedding Crane's controls into the developed collages.

Although a useful exercise, these collage pieces did not innovate and inspire in the way the research intended. One reason for this is that the pieces are too traditional, following Crane's design controls with no attempts to challenge them leading to a lack of innovation. The other reason is limitation of materials and process. Just as the hand-drawn is important to support the experiential research, I quickly realised that making and material surface needed to be present in order to give an audience something physical to explore. The drawn marks evoke the

historical ornament art teaching, similar to the work seen previously from Emma Louise Bradbury, whereas material practice will allow for innovation away from these traditions. Chapter 6 explores ideas around material surfaces and ornament as both two-dimensional and three-dimensional form, which informed the material practice subsequently discussed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 6 Wider Context: Objects as Image Surfaces

Slotte discusses the way in which she approaches objects as 'image surfaces'. 'Although my main interest lies in objects... most of my interventions take place on the surface, they are constructed around a rearrangement of the object's pictorial, two-dimensional information' (Slotte, 2010, p56). Despite focusing upon 3D ceramic objects, this research project adopts a similar approach in its focus upon the ornamented details of the object surface rather than the overall object form.

Betty Woodman explores ideas of 2D and 3D forms within her work, describing ceramic as being about 'painted three-dimensional form' (Woodman, 1991: 0 min 40) Her practice begins with traditional ceramic making processes, for example throwing 3D vessels on a potter's wheel, but she distorts her work away from this traditional form whilst also maintaining a connection to the image of a pot. In the Liverpool Biennial touring exhibition 'Betty Woodman: Ceramics with the Painting of the Modern Age' (Cooper Gallery, Barnsley, 2018), pattern appeared in traditional 2D media, as painted wall surfaces, but was then embellished with ceramic ornament. Despite these elements being created in a traditional 3D medium, they were largely flat, appearing like appliqué details across surfaces.



Figure 43: Ceramics with Painting of the Modern Age (Woodman, 2018)

Other pieces of Woodman's work take this enquiry further, with pieces such as 'Wallpaper' (figure 44, Woodman, 2015) directly referencing traditional forms of surface pattern but built up entirely from ceramic ornament. I am particularly interested here in Woodman's removal of ornament from the traditional object surface, and her use of non-traditional materials to build 2D surface pattern.



Figure 44: Wallpaper #9 (Woodman, 2015)

Shonibare takes a similar approach to pattern within his work, particularly in pieces such as 'Line Painting' (2003) (figure 4, p18). Like Woodman he has both 2D and 3D elements within the work which features ornament on the textile surface of Dutch wax prints and in the traditional 2D medium of painting, but he chooses to display these pattern swatches on three-dimensional discs. These simple discs differ from Woodman's vessel-like forms, but both artists follow a similar process of extracting and isolating ornament in order to provoke the same focused attention from the viewer that Slotte described (chapter 4). Shonibare's placement and limited use of colour within the painted surfaces also allows for connections to be made by the viewer across ornamented surfaces.

Lubna Chowdhary is another artist working within the medium of ceramics, but focusing on 2D handmade tiles within much of her work. In her 'Tableaux' pieces (Chowdhary, 2017) she creates a variety of shapes and ornamental forms as individual 2D ceramic objects which can be arranged together as an artwork. Despite these pieces being made as individual units, the viewer is able to form connections between them through connections in their surface such as linear details and colour (figure 45).



Figure 45: Tableaux (Chowdhary, 2017)

Chowdhary's surfaces are much simpler than Woodman's and Shonibare's, with the ornamented detail coming from the object's form rather than its surface. Her tile-like objects act as elements of ornament which can then be arranged to create an ornamental composition.

Traditionally ornament is seen as part of a material surface, an approach which Timorous Beasties adopt in their practice despite their contemporary approach to other aspects of designing. They describe the way in which their practice 'engages a design discourse with textiles history by lending an aesthetic evolution to time-honoured motifs' (Timorous Beasties, 2019). They choose to maintain traditional methods of presenting ornament across 2D surface, but update it through an alteration of the subject matter. Within this project, elements of pattern across 2D surface will be incorporated in a similar fashion to Timorous Beasties, in order to maintain a connection to the historical ornament art teaching at the focus of the project. However there is also an aim to update tradition and inform contemporary practice, and this will be achieved through the exploration of ornament as independent 3D objects, removed from the object surface.

Chapter 7 Investigating Objects through Material Practice

Introduction

When making began as part of practice-based research, the initial objective was to explore ornament through a range of processes and media, with the ultimate aim of drawing a viewer's attention to an object's ornamental surface. Both traditional and digital media and processes were to be incorporated, in order to link with traditions of historical ornament art teaching but also innovate ornament art for 21st century contemporary craft.

Ornament upon 2D Surface

Initially the making focused heavily on the De Morgan vase and the Pilkington's vase. These objects were explored through visual investigation, as described in Chapter 6, and then developed into textile surfaces using a variety of methods. Figure 46 shows a textile sample using reverse appliqué in response to De Morgan's bottle-shaped vase, considering Crane's design control 'adding to or cutting away from the material surface' (Crane, 1898: 93). This piece was then manipulated digitally to create a repeat pattern for digital textile print onto silk georgette (figure 47). This process illustrates well the use of traditional and digital techniques in combination which continued as a thread throughout this stage of material practice.



Figure 46: Reverse applique stitch sample



Figure 47: Digital print on silk georgette, developed from stitch sample

Drawing and collage in 2D continued alongside experiments with print and stitch, particularly when considering elements of design for application onto/ into material surfaces. Figure 48 shows a series of designs developed in response to De Morgan's peacock tazza and the Cantagalli jar, which explored simple elements of design such as those seen on Bradbury's work (including repetition and symmetry).

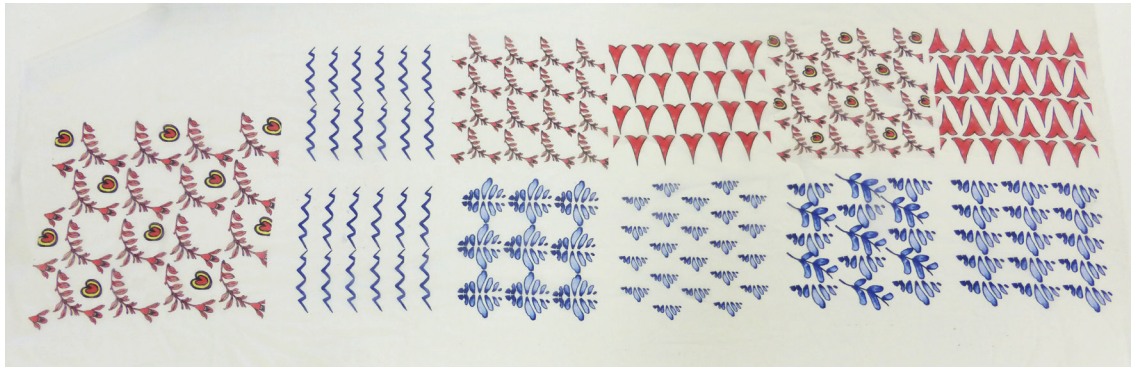


Figure 48: Digital prints on silk georgette from De Morgan tazza and Cantagalli jar

The Pilkington's vase was explored using the traditional process of screen printing. Designs for screens were created by extracting black and red ornament from the object surface, with one design maintaining the object form and the other applying the ornament to a rectangular frame. Whilst creating screen prints I began to pattern-make, exploring repetition of the screen across fabrics (figure 49) and also layering prints on top of one another to reveal new ornamental compositions which hinted at the original object (figure 50). I explored the addition of texture such as black flock, with a consideration of the aim to draw a viewer's attention to the ornamental surface.

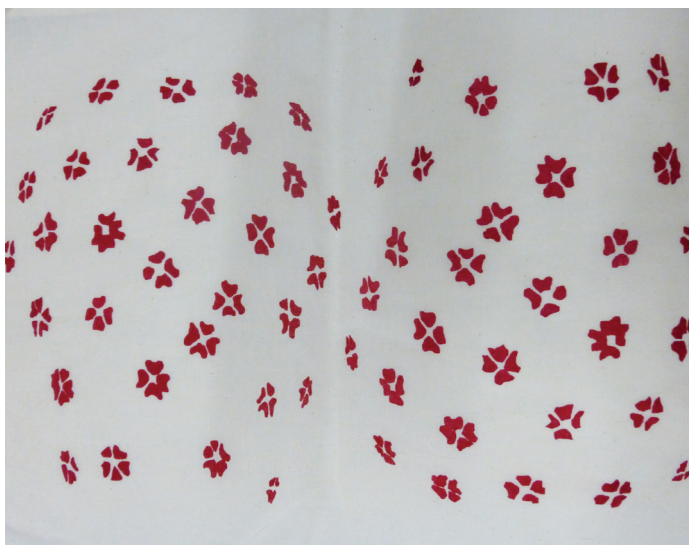


Figure 49: Screen print on calico exploring repeat, from Pilkington's vase



Figure 50: Screen print on calico with black flock, from Pilkington's vase

I returned to screen print later in the research, creating responses to the Cantagalli mosque lamp and the Samson and Co. jar. The explorations that occurred during this making process were similar to the Pilkington's vase, maintaining the object form (figure 51), abstracting the object form to create repeat pattern (figure 52), and exploring textural details through flock and foil (figure 53).



Figure 51: Screen print on calico from Cantagalli mosque lamp



Figure 52: Screen Print on voile from Samson jar

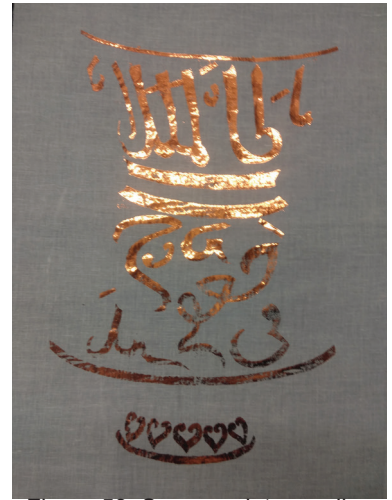


Figure 53: Screen print on calico (foil) from Cantagalli mosque lamp

I was keen to further explore innovation, beginning with the creation of a waterjet cut plate and laser-etched tiles which had the De Morgan motifs removed from their surface. These pieces echo Crane's control 'cutting away from the Object Surface' (Crane, 1898: 93). The plate caused me to consider how the cutting process and the resulting ornamental holes could be used to reveal a surface below, as with my initial reverse appliqué sample, with the potential to be used in combination with printed textile pieces (figure 55). This movement away from the textiles into ceramic material echoed the material quality of the original objects. This allowed for connections with the original objects through shared material qualities- I was keen to ensure that my innovations did not move the practice too far from the objects that inspired it and retained some authenticity.



Figure 54: Laser-etched tiles from De Morgan vase pattern



Figure 55: Water-jet cut plate, from De morgan vase pattern

Ornament as Independent Object

The water-jet cut plate triggered consideration for the pieces of the plate which were now missing from the object surface. I began to use clay to hand-build motifs from De Morgan using a process of rolling out slabs and cutting out motifs to create elements of ornament that were flat. Once glazed and fired, I began using these ornamental ceramic objects to echo the historical ornament art process. Figure 56 shows the elements laid out as units of ornament, and Figure 57 shows the process of creating a repeated pattern using 'squareness of mass' (Crane, 1898: 110) to arrange the ornamental objects within a square frame. Crane's controls discuss the repeating of a form once found, and the unconscious variation of ornament, due to 'the natural tendency of the hand to vary a form in repeating it' (Crane, 1898: 357). It was important that my hand was present within the arranging of the objects, causing the compositions to echo each other but have slight differences.



Figure 56: Hand-built glazed ceramic ornament, from De Morgan vase



Figure 57: Arranging ornament in response to 'Squareness of mass'

I continued to create hand-built ornament, recreating elements of the ornament palette (Figure 58) I also developed a series of plaster moulds to use for slip-casting and sprigs (Figure 59). The plaster moulds suggested a method for developing multiple elements of ornament quickly. They were interesting as they were initially made from a hand-built ornament which contained imperfections, so although each form would be a replica, a trace of the maker's hand was retained in each piece.



Figure 58: Hand-built ceramic ornament palette

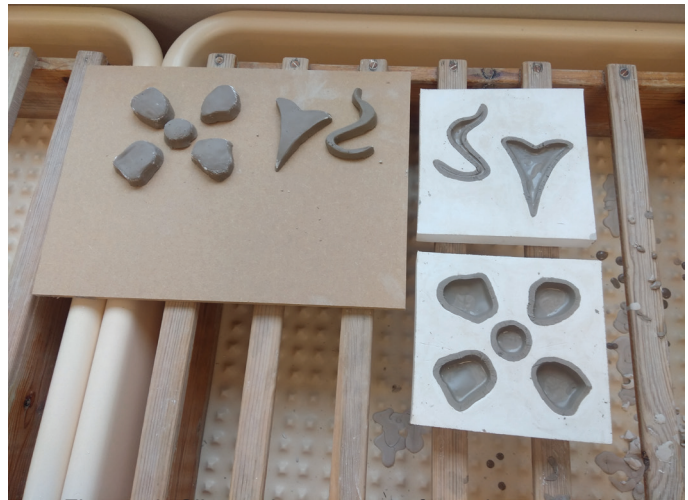


Figure 59: Slip-casting ornament from plaster moulds

I explored laser cutting and water-jet cutting to create further elements of ornament in wood, perspex and ceramic. As both processes are computer-programmed, once an initial vector design is created it is easy to create repetitions of ornament (in a similar way to the plaster moulds) and to experiment with scale as designs can be altered digitally. In the hand-built process I struggled with a lack of expertise when it came to applying colour to a ceramic surface. The digital processes allowed me instead to use the material surface to add colour. Taking inspiration from the work of Lubna Chowdhary, I used glazed ceramic tiles for waterjet cutting which already had colour applied to their surface (figure 60).



Figure 60: Waterjet cut ornament from ceramic tiles



Figure 61: Lasercut wooden ornament

In Chapter 1 I discussed Helene Furjan's response to Adolf Loos' which suggested rather than going 'beyond ornament' he had in fact incorporated ornamentation through material surface. I applied this idea to the wooden ornament, using the laser-cutting and laser-etching process to create ornament which did not need colour (figure 61). These pieces demonstrated how the

coloured materials could work alongside the natural wood and unfired clay to create a palette of ornamental objects for design.

The material experimentation process informed and developed my thinking into ways of realising initial visual investigations as 3D forms. Chapter 8 introduces ideas of object display and assemblage which informed further development of these 2D surfaces and 3D objects into a series of ornamental compositions.

Chapter 8 Wider Context: Object Displays and Assemblage

Interaction with Objects

Contemporary interactions with museum collections can be thought about as exploration of display methods and explorations of process. Earlier I touched upon the meaning embedded within ornament, as communicated by Himid in her descriptions of her Kanga works. Himid suggested that the different ornamental elements of her Kangas were speaking to each other, communicating narratives through interaction.

This is not a new concept. When Imogen Hart described the development of the Arts and Crafts Museum at Manchester Municipal School of Art, she discussed the way objects were arranged for close visual analysis (Hart, 2010, 194). There was a belief that the arrangement of objects had a significant impact on the way they would be experienced and the messages conveyed, particularly in relation to each other. Crane recommended considering which objects would fit best together (Hart, 2010, 196). Although Crane's focus is on objects and Himid's is on the ornament upon the object surface, they share the same ideas about objects and their ornament communicating with each other and conveying meanings, as does Shonibare's curation of the 'Criminal Ornamentation' exhibition.

In the video 'Thinking Out Loud' (Woodman, 1991) Woodman refers to the grouping of her objects and describes seeing all the pots together at the end of a making day, as a group of forms which relate to each other rather than as individual objects (Woodman, 1991: 8 mins 5). This inspired some of her making directly, in work where she created pieces by joining a series of forms, but this idea is also present in an abstract form within her object displays such as her Kimono Vases (figure 63).



Figure 62: Mewar Memories (Woodman, 1988)



Figure 63: Kimono Vases, Evening (Woodman, 1990)

Woodman describes the process that led to the creation of these Kimono vases. Prior to this she would make a trio of vases, where the spaces between were important but the focus was on the central vase. On one occasion, during making, she looked at two vases together and realised she did not need a third as the focus of the piece was now the central space in between the vases. This demonstrates the way in which object displays can be created from actual objects but also the virtual, such as empty spaces, which can have as much significance as the objects themselves.

In his installation 'The Lumber Room', Mark Heard explored the idea of object arrangement conveying meaning. Working with the York Museum's Trust collection, Heard wanted to celebrate the richness of the largely unseen collection. 'I wanted to inspire a sense of wonder and delight in the audience, and to allow objects of all types to talk to each other and give the viewer the opportunity to make their own connections' (Heard, 2017:8). Interestingly Heard created dialogues not only through the arrangement of historical objects, but also through the introduction of new pieces made in response to the YMT collection, for example a collection of slipware horses inspired by two 18th century Leeds pottery horses in the collection. Heard's installation demonstrates the way contemporary responses can create new narratives for historical objects, and sometimes alter their meaning.

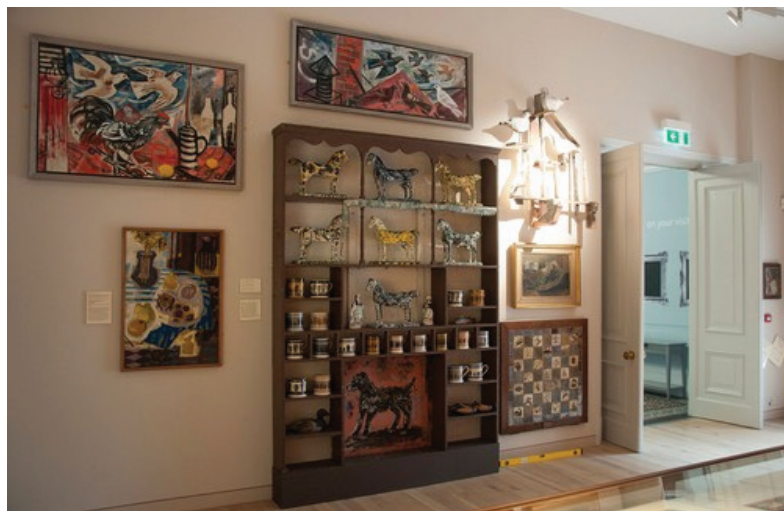


Figure 64: The Lumber Room, York Art Gallery (Heard, 2015)

Museum-like Displays

Heard's 'The Lumber Room' can be linked to Mark Dion's 'Theatre of the Natural World' (Whitechapel Gallery, 2018), within its display methods and also the idea of creating new pieces alongside historical objects. In 'Theatre of the Natural World', Dion created museum-like spaces within a contemporary art gallery. He

presented his own drawings and objects within glass display cabinets, causing the viewer to question whether these were historic or contemporary pieces. His project 'Tate Thames Dig' was organised and categorised within a mahogany cabinet which allowed drawers to be opened and explored (Dion, 1999). Dion introduces an experiential element in this method of display- the viewers who were curious enough to open the drawers experienced something of the artist's privilege in exploring drawers and boxes of objects within a museum archive.



Figure 65: Dion, M, Tate Thames Dig (1999)

Bartlett explores this notion of archive experience within her practice, through process and material as well as display method. She has responded to a number of museum collections and archives, and in her paper 'In the Spaces of the Archive' (Bartlett, 2009) she discusses the way she approaches collections by searching for insights, opening up institutional and museological practices which are then explored through making (Bartlett, 2009: 26). In the series 'Conversation Pieces' at the Whitworth Art Gallery (2003), Bartlett explored the role of the curator in conserving historical textiles, producing a collection of embroidery hoops displayed in groupings, with layered images of curator's hands; maker's hands; maker's tools; and written archive material (Bartlett, 2009: 45).



Figure 66: Detail of Conversation Piece (Bartlett, 2003).

Photographer Michael Pollard

This piece referenced museum practices such as the conserving of historic textiles, through material and process as well as imagery. Bartlett used silk crepe-line, an archival fabric, and referenced the dye and colour-matching techniques of the conservator.

Another key idea within this work from Bartlett is our sensory interaction with museum objects. Within the paper she discusses how the privileged experience of unveiling and handling objects alters her response to them. 'The objects themselves... have a certain poignancy amplified in this instance by my experience of the privileged handling of them, ritualised by the wearing of protective white gloves' (Bartlett, 2009: 28). Bartlett goes on to discuss the use of handling samples in the exhibition 21:21¹², curated by Lesley Millar, and I am particularly interested in her emphasis upon the importance of the experiential and methods of altering the way in which viewers encounter objects.

Hearld and Dion adopt display methods which encourage increased engagement with their viewer. Both provide the viewer with the opportunity for discovery, whether that is finding hidden objects within opened drawers, interpreting narratives that pass between objects within a space, or deciphering historic objects from contemporary pieces. Bartlett explores this opportunity for discovery in further depth, using a range of methods to alter the way viewers interact with museum objects. My practice-based research takes display methods into consideration, in particular thinking about my own arrangement of contemporary ornament alongside historic objects. I have explored methods of sharing my archive experience with the viewer, through sensory experience and the display of work in 'museum-like' ways.

Assemblage Theory

In the video 'Lubna Chowdhary- handmade tiles' (Lakberendezési magazin, 2014) Chowdhary discusses the modularity of her tiles and the organic nature of clay which allows you to 'compose endlessly with it' (Lakberendezési magazin, 2014: 1min 30). Chowdhary's ideas of modularity and composition relate to Crane's ideas of designs being built up of only a few units (Crane, 1898: 372), and this process of making from a series of elements links to ideas within Assemblage Theory. Manuel DeLanda describes 'assemblage' in relation to the original word 'agencement', 'a term that refers to the action of matching or fitting together a set of components (agencer), as well as to the results of such an action: an ensemble of parts that mesh together well'. (DeLanda, 2016: 1) He goes on to discuss the importance of the virtual capacities within an assemblage along with

58 12. 21:21: The Textile Vision of Reiko Sudo and Nuno (2005, James Hockey Gallery Farnham, then touring)

the actual components, and Deleuze and Parnet describe this virtual as the 'And'.

(i) it is not the elements or the sets which define the multiplicity. What defines it is the AND, as something which has its place between the elements or between the sets. AND, AND, AND—stammering (Deleuze & Parnet 1987: 34, cited in Hamilakis, 2017:173)

Several of the contemporary practitioners I have looked at touch upon this virtual 'And' in their work: Woodman discussed the importance of the space between her kimono vases (Woodman, 1991); Heard describes the connections that appear between the objects in *The Lumber Room*; and the experiential is as important as the actual within Twomey and Bartlett's archive responses. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari gave multiple definitions to their concept of assemblage, and this makes it a complex theory. I am particularly interested in the idea of assemblage as a multiplicity 'made up of many heterogeneous terms' and as a 'a symbiosis, a 'sympathy' (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: 69, cited in DeLanda, 2016: 1) The idea of an assemblage being something made of multiple, non-uniform parts which have relations established within them guided my practice-based research as I began to explore ways of bringing the various ornamental objects and surfaces I had created together into compositions (documented in Chapter 9). Ideas within assemblage theory helped to provide theoretical justification for the process of extracting ornament from multiple surfaces and bringing them together within mixed ornamental compositions.

The idea of virtual and actual is key to this research, as my experience of interacting with museum objects and spending time within museum archives has influenced making and writing in response to actual historical objects. Along with these experiences there is a pedagogical strand within the virtual that connects myself as a student of Manchester School of Art with historical students such as Bradbury and every person who has looked at or handled these objects since their acquisition. I discussed the importance of sensory engagement in Chapters 2 and 3 with object handling in Bartlett's work and hand-painting in Twomey's, and as I began to develop assemblages and think about display this developed as a key idea, embracing another important feature of assemblage: the affective/sensorial (Hamilakis, 2017). In Chapter 10 and 11 I go onto describe the presentation of ornamental assemblages at a conference exhibition and within a symposium workshop, and on both of these occasions I invite the audience to interact with the assemblages. As well as connecting with ideas of virtuality and sensoriality within assemblage, this invitation for interaction moved the compositions away from fixed artworks into pieces which developed and changed over time. Yannis Hamilakis defines assemblage as 'temporary and deliberate heterogeneous arrangements of

material and immaterial elements' (Hamilakis, 2017: 172). The next three chapters will illustrate the development of a series of ornamental assemblages which were temporary yet deliberate arrangements of actual ornamental components alongside multiple immaterial elements.

Chapter 9 Investigating Objects through Creative Assemblage

Developing Creative Assemblages

Figure 67 shows an image taken at an early stage of material development, with elements of ceramic and perspex ornament placed on the surface of a screen-printed fabric. This composition initiated thinking into the potential to combine 2D surface and 3D ornament, and to create new compositions or 'ensembles of parts' (DeLanda, 2016: 1) that reflected singular or multiple objects.

I began to develop work for submission to the Futurescan 4 Conference (FTC4) at the University of Bolton (January 2019), which had the themes 'Valuing Practice' and 'Learning from history, tradition and industry'. Initially I aimed to present a visual display across a wall and plinth growing from an object drawing into a dynamic composition featuring overlapping elements of 2D and 3D ornamental forms in a range of materials and scales.



Figure 67: Perspex and ceramic ornament on screen printed calico



Figure 68: Ornament assemblage, ceramic, perspex and screen printed fabric



Figure 69: Ornament assemblage, ceramic, wood and digitally printed fabric



Figure 70: Ornament assemblage, slip-cast ceramic and screen printed fabric



Figure 71: Ornamental assemblage, ceramic, wood and perspex ornament with screen print and digitally printed fabrics

Referencing Himid's idea of a lost pattern book as a starting point I began to create pattern swatches, pulling out elements of ornament from material development and exploring different methods of composition and assemblage. Figures 68-71 show a series of these swatches which explore material quality (transparent perspex in figure 68 and natural wood in figure 69), elements of repetition (slip-cast motifs upon a screen-printed fabric in fig 70) and pattern moving across surface (combining fabric prints and 3D ornament in figure 71).



Figure 72: Ornamental assemblage from Pilkington's vase and De Morgan vase



Figure 73: Ornamental assemblage from Pilkington's vase and De Morgan vase



Figure 74: Ornamental assemblage from Pilkington's vase and De Morgan vase

This series of swatches was resolved into the assemblage shown in figure 72, combining successful elements from a range of swatches such as balanced placement of ornamental materials and the combining of material surfaces (ceramic/ plywood/ perspex/ fabric). It maintains a sense of Crane's original design controls whilst also disrupting formal repetition through the more sporadic placement of some 3D ornament.

These swatches developed using material elements from the Pilkington's vase and De Morgan's vase, demonstrating the potential to develop multiple ornamental assemblages from just two objects. I decided there were other elements of the swatches that could be developed to create an assemblage trio for the FTC4. These can be seen in figure 73 and 74.

Disrupting Ornamentation: De Morgan vase x Pilkington's Vase

(Extracts from 'Disrupting Ornamentation: Using Walter Crane's historical design methodologies to influence contemporary craft practice' Lawton, 2019: 3-4)

The three compositions were exhibited within wooden trays, with the title 'Disrupting Ornamentation: De Morgan vase x Pilkington's vase'. Each had a 2D fabric background of printed or stitched pattern, with a series of independent ornamental objects placed upon the surface. The trays referenced elements of Crane's design controls, including repeated forms; enclosures for smaller fields of pattern; and direction and symmetry within design. However, none were exact repeats. The trays explored the disruption of ornamentation; through distorted scales; ornament creeping out of boundaries and the layering of ornament over ornament (leading to visual conflicts).



Figure 75: Disrupting Ornamentation Display at Futurescan 4 Conference

The presentation of the work within wooden trays began as a method for containing and framing the compositions. The trays left the compositions open to interaction, as they were not shown under glass and ornament was not fixed in place. An additional ornament collection was included as a group of objects outside of the tray, to encourage interaction by adding to and taking from existing compositions (figure 75, bottom right).

The dark wooden trays, laid out upon a table top, gave the impression of drawers opened within an archive. This formed personal connections to previous archive visits at Wakefield Museum and Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, where archive material and objects are kept within boxes upon shelves. Looking down into the wooden trays echoes the excitement of looking into an un-lidded archive box to discover and interact with its precious contents, albeit with a gloved hand. (Lawton, 2019, 4) Caroline Bartlett discusses how her experience within archives informs the site-specific responses she goes on to create.

I...find that the manner in which I experience the object or collection,
(sometimes with privileged access not normally available to the public)
becomes the pivot on which to base my interrogations. (Bartlett 2016:26)

Although the ornamental compositions that appeared within the drawers delivered a contemporary craft response to historical objects, their presentation in this way retained a sense of the historic. I hoped that this display method would share my experience of interacting with archives with the exhibition audience and invoke a similar sense of privilege within them as they were invited to touch, feel and move the objects within the trays.

Chapter 10 Exhibition Report: Futurescan 4 Conference

(Extracts from 'Disrupting Ornamentation: Using Walter Crane's historical design methodologies to influence contemporary craft practice' Lawton, 2019: 4-9)

Audience Interaction at Futurescan 4 Conference

The Futurescan 4: Valuing Practice conference provided an opportunity to collect visual data regarding audience interaction with the display. The ornamental compositions were documented through photography at six points over the two-day period of display – five of these documentation periods are discussed in depth within the appendix as part of my paper 'Disrupting Ornamentation: Using Walter Crane's historical design methodologies to influence contemporary craft practice' (Lawton, 2019) (due to be published as part of the FTC4 conference publication).

Audience interaction with the work during the exhibition varied between compositions. The audience appeared hesitant to move the ornamental details initially, but by the end of day two the compositions had noticeably altered suggesting an increase in interaction, particularly in tray 2 (centre) and 3 (right) (see figures 76 and 77). I refer to the individuals who interacted with the work as one collective 'audience' as I did not collect data from individual participants. (Lawton, 2019, 4)



Figure 76: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1, 2 and 3 at the start of the conference 23/01/19 09.00



Figure 77: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1, 2 and 3 at the end of the conference 24/01/19 16.36

Futurescan 4 Exhibition Observations



Figure 78: Disrupting Ornamentation, 23/01/19 12:37.

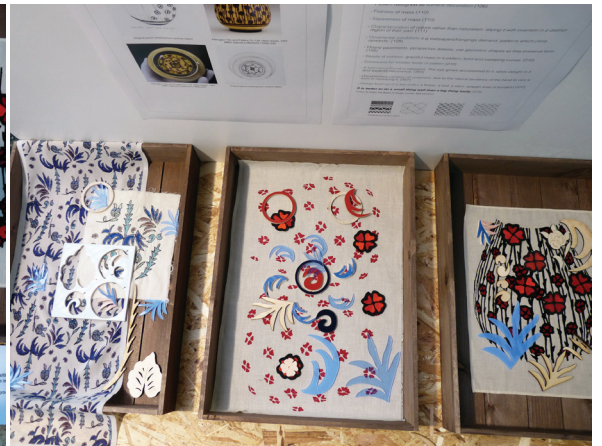


Figure 79: Disrupting Ornamentation, 23/01/19, 14:45



Figure 80: Disrupting Ornamentation, 23/01/19, 17:07



Figure 81: Disrupting Ornamentation, 24/01/19, 09:20

Crane's controls were reflected at various points throughout the two days of audience interaction. In figure 78 (tray 2 , centre), the audience arranged the composition into a circular form, echoing Crane's ideas of 'beauty of contour' and 'bold and sweeping curves' (Crane 1925: 210). There were points of regularity (figure 81, tray 2, centre) where Crane's control 'a form once found is repeated' (Crane 1898: 355) was echoed in repeated pairs of blue ornament. However, this idea, along with 'design built up of a few units', (Crane 1925: 372) was also contradicted, with compositions created from several separate ornament collections and periods of chaos where every element of ornament was placed within the trays (figure 80, tray 2 and 3, centre and left).

There were various elements of creative exploration within the audience's interaction with the trays that brought new perspective to my research. These included thinking about ways of arranging ornament based on the relationship between their shapes; matching lines, curves and points together to form

alternative arrangements (figure 80, tray 2, centre). These arrangements also created a series of design compositions, echoing my research aims- this method of displaying multiple collections of ornament demonstrates the design potential of historic objects. The audience also explored material quality through the overlapping of ornament (figure 79, tray 2, centre); the stacking of ornament which revealed potential for 3D arrangements (water-jet cut circles, figure 81, tray 2, centre) and experimental approaches to creating assemblage which demonstrated how periods of chaos can lead to refined compositions.

During the process of developing and displaying the work, the significance of the archive experience became more apparent. My original research aims were to bring increased attention and appreciation to museum objects through contemporary craft practice, and I realised that my appreciation of these objects came from my privileged experiences. By presenting work in open trays and inviting interaction, I was able to share this experience with an audience and continue the cycle of interaction; as the audience handled and interacted with the elements of ornament that I had developed, from my own interactions with and handling of archive and museum objects. (Lawton, 2019, 9)

The display of work raised questions, particularly when I considered the lack of interaction with Tray 1. I considered possible reasons for this, for example the original composition appearing too “finished”, or the original composition standing alone due to colour and material, in contrast to Trays 2 and 3. I became curious as to whether displaying the work again in an alternative context would have the same level of interaction, or whether interaction would change. In Chapter 11 I document a workshop which was delivered at the Corridor Conversations design symposium (Manchester School of Art, 4th July 2019) which re-displayed this work and provided an opportunity to gather tangible feedback from an audience and helped answer further questions around interaction.

Chapter 11 Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop

Introduction

Following reflection on FTC4 it became clear that I needed to present work again in a context which allowed me to gather feedback from an audience. I decided to develop a workshop for the 'Corridor Conversations' design symposium at Manchester School of Art (July 2019) with the intention of interrogating the conclusions I had developed following the display of 'Disrupting Ornamentation'. This was an opportunity to interrogate the overall research argument that historical design pedagogies can support the creation of contemporary explorations of ornament.

I held the workshop in MMU Special Collections as it allowed me to utilise historical objects within the workshop and gather data first hand around the participants experience when working closely with historical objects (mirroring my own research process). The siting of the workshop within a museum space like those I had experienced introduced further experiential factors to the workshop assemblage. There were five participants who were design-focused researchers, and Louise Clennell, Special Collections Creative Engagement Officer, was also present. The workshop began with an introduction to the historical context of the objects from the Arts and Crafts Museum at MSoA. Participants had the opportunity to look at the Bradbury's work and I explained the basic principles of ornament art teaching with reference to Crane and his design lectures. Copies of the design controls developed from Crane were available for participants to read.

I had set up ornamental assemblages across two tables. The first included De Morgan's vase (1894) and the Pilkington's vase (1907), with two wooden trays of objects arranged in ornamental assemblages similar to those developed for the FTC4 (figure 82). The second displayed the Cantagalli mosque lamp (1898) and the Samson and Co. jar (1897), with two new ornamental assemblages in wooden trays (figure 83). Although I wanted this workshop to reflect on the display at FTC4, I also wanted to build on it through the creation of new assemblages and I felt the inclusion of the mosque lamp and flask jar would help to deliver a narrative to participants around ornament cycles and the making of replica objects.



Figure 82: Ornament trays with vase (De Morgan, 1894) and vase (Pilkington's, 1907), MMU Special Collections Study Room



Figure 83: Ornament trays with mosque lamp (Cantagalli, 1898) and jar (Samson and Co., 1897), MMU Special Collections Study Room

Participants were split into two small groups and asked to respond to the historical objects and ornamental assemblages in front of them. I invited participants to rearrange and disrupt the assemblages for approximately eight minutes in any way they wanted. I did not specify whether they should work together or individually. The time-length, defined by the constraints of the symposium structure, encouraged participants to work more instinctively. At the end of this period I documented outcomes through photography. The two groups then swapped over and were invited to rearrange, edit or disrupt the previous group's assemblage to create a new response. Participants provided feedback through written questionnaires and verbal discussion at the end of the workshop.

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Report

The aim of the Disrupting Ornamentation workshop was to demonstrate the importance of spending time with museum objects to participants, and to share my experience as a maker and researcher with privileged access to archives. I was particularly interested in participant responses to historical design pedagogies and the value of working from the physical object; along with their emotional and sensorial experiences when handling and arranging the ornamental objects. Participants were asked to fill in questionnaires at the end of the workshop, and these guided a discussion around their experiences. The questionnaires asked participants to reflect on three main areas: their creative process in the workshop; the historical focus of the workshop; and how the workshop made them feel. Sample questionnaires and a workshop transcript can be found in the appendix.

Creative Process

The workshop was split into 2 halves, with participants responding to one set of objects for 8 minutes before swapping over to respond to two new objects and the assemblages of the previous participants. It was particularly interesting to see different creative approaches between the participants and during the workshop itself.



Figure 84: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 3)



Figure 85: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 3)

Participant 4 fed back that they were conscious of following ‘design rules’ in the first part of the workshop, whilst Participant 1 mentioned using textile prints to guide their compositions. This focus on traditional pattern, symmetry and Crane’s design controls can be seen in a number of the assemblages that were created (figure 83 and 84).

In Figure 84 it appears that Participant 3 has tried to create a symmetrical piece, mirroring objects and turning objects upside down in order to create an almost perfect reflection. The same participant continued with this approach in part 2, creating the assemblage seen in figure 85. Again elements of symmetry appear, although the participant verbalised their intention to create something that was ‘random’ but still ended up with a result that was fairly geometric. This participant went on to discuss a theory they had heard during a radio programme about human attraction to both chaos and order, for example within music. Other participants mentioned how our brains look for patterns and try and find order within things that are more chaotic. This concept of chaos and order ties into ‘disrupted ornamentation’ which incorporates elements of order and rules of traditional ornamental design alongside chaos through the challenging of these rules, leading to disrupted ornament.



Figure 86: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 5)



Figure 87: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 1)

Participant 3 described their desire to go for patterns that were ‘more swirly’ in their written questionnaire, and this idea of circular forms or contours appeared in the assemblages of other participants. Participant 5 created the composition shown in Figure 86 in the first part of the workshop, and although initially it seems fairly abstracted, the ornamental arrangements mirror the ceramic ring as ornaments set around a central point (similar to arrangements seen at FTC4, Chapter 10). Participant 1 also used this approach in the second part of the workshop, arranging the blue ornamental details around a circular central piece (figure 87, left). As well as embedding Crane’s idea of ‘beauty of contour’, they have also touched upon ‘enclosures for smaller fields of pattern’ (Crane, 1898, 210) by placing the spiral at the centre of the assemblage. Both participants also appear to be colour and material conscious at this point, using limited colour palettes or palettes that linked to the objects or fabrics in front of them.



Figure 88: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 5)

Participant 5 described in their questionnaire how it was ‘fun to break out of the rules of the patterns you can see in front of you’, linking directly to the idea of disruption. This breaking of rules appeared much more in the second half of the workshop, and it is interesting to compare this participant’s first assemblage (figure 86) to their second response (figure 88). In both assemblages they have explored the sculptural quality of fabric, folding it to make it a 3D form. There are also a series of design compositions within each piece, with ornament arranged in small groups, but the second composition feels more abstracted with limited elements of design rules apparent and less restraint in colour palettes and material choices, suggesting an increased willingness to experiment.

Collaborative Design

It was interesting to observe the way participants worked alongside each other. Although each participant worked independently, there was a sense of collaboration as they explored objects on the table, offered advice and negotiated with each other. Participants swapped objects and negotiated deals to get the best objects for their assemblage.

In the second half of the workshop, there was a sense of collaboration as participants swapped tables and began to rearrange the assemblages of the other group. Participant 4 described how in the second section they were ‘inspired by patterns and themes that (they) could see in other people’s assemblages’. This can be seen in their assemblage in Figure 90, made in response to Figure 89. As the participants swapped tables Participant 4 immediately spotted a face within the arrangement in Figure 89, so rearranged this further to make a figurative assemblage (figure 90).



Figure 89: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 2)



Figure 90: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 4)

Interaction with Objects

Participants shared their feedback on the sensorial and emotional impact of working with and from historical objects in this way. A key positive response was expressed by the group as the 'special' feeling of getting 'up close and personal' with the original historical objects. Participant 3 described the value of being able to view the objects in this way and 'see the little patterns on the base, the signatures and scratches', contrasting this experience to viewing objects in museums behind reflective glass.

During the workshop the participants were able to pick up the majority of the objects (excluding the Cantagalli mosque lamp due to its fragility and scale), and touch each object whilst wearing gloves. Participant 3 was intrigued by the object surfaces and wanted to explore their textures and paint work, in particular the surface of the Samson jar. Unfortunately, they also described how it was hard to feel this through the gloves, and how they wished they could use their nail instead to feel the surface. This reminded me of Caroline Bartlett's descriptions of exploring archive objects and the way in which museum systems can obstruct this exploration (Bartlett, 2009: 25) as discussed in Chapter 2.

The workshop sparked participant's curiosity and inspired them to find out more about the objects. Participant 2 enquired about the script on the Cantagalli mosque lamp which they were using within their assemblage, and I shared my knowledge of the lamp being made as an imitation of a traditional mosque lamp, with the script appearing as a decorative element devoid of meaning. Other participants also fed back new learning around ornament art, including that the workshop had changed their way of viewing and interpreting ornament and design.

The value of handling was apparent in participant feedback. In our discussion Participant 3 and 4 agreed that they had enjoyed being able to place the ornamental elements in a playful way. Participant 2 spoke about her attraction to the fragile materials, such as the ceramic pieces. It is interesting to consider this attraction to the fragile pieces, perhaps related to the fact that ordinarily these are not allowed to be touched or handled. The handling element of the workshop was clearly a key factor for the participants and one which I think helps to counteract the limitations of wearing gloves when exploring the museum objects. Although they were unable to touch the objects directly, they were able to view them closely and handle ornamental objects created from similar materials with bare hands.

Reflecting on Assemblage

Although the workshop was focused upon the creation of assemblages in response to objects, there are several elements that contribute to the view of the workshop as one whole process of assemblage. The parts that were arranged can be considered as the 'actual components' ((Deleuze & Parnet 1987, 34) but there are several elements that contribute to a virtual 'And'.

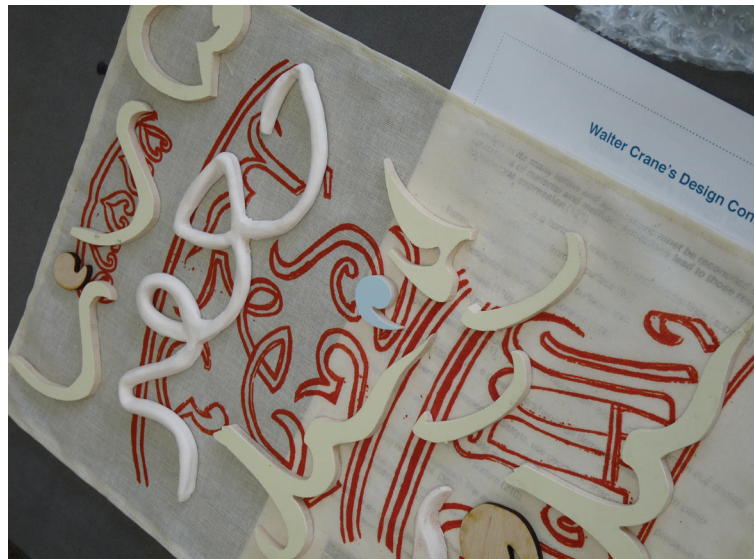


Figure 91: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Outcome (Participant 2)

Just as participants responded to each other's assemblages, Crane and Bradbury's influence was apparent. Figure 91 shows Participant 2 building an assemblage over the top of a printed copy of Crane's design controls, illustrating a literal response to the historical pedagogy at the centre of the workshop. I became increasingly aware of the multiple hands involved in each assemblage, from the participants'; to my own; to the curator's; to previous students' who have handled, looked at and created from each object.

By inviting the participants to take part in the workshop, they became a part of the assemblage process and a part of my research. Their creative, written and verbal outcomes reflect the achievement of workshop aims, as participants gained a new sense of appreciation for objects and the history of design pedagogy. They shared in my emotional and sensory experiences, including the privilege of looking at and handling archive objects at close proximity, and the enjoyment of using historical objects to inspire design.

Research Conclusions

The original aim of this research project was to explore how traditions of ornamental art, particularly Walter Crane's teaching practices, could influence the contemporary craft and design process, through making and written response. The motivation for the research was to draw attention to objects within the MSoA collection of the MMU Special Collections archive. My intention was to explore Crane's teaching in order to guide making, and encourage meaningful interactions between object and viewer.

Adolf Loos stated that 'we have gone beyond ornament, we have achieved plain, undecorated simplicity'. He believed that people of the 20th century were unable to create 'new ornament' and that ornament had ceased to be an accurate expression of the culture of that time (Loos, 1908:168). This research project aimed to challenge Loos' statements through the exploration of ornament within practice-based research and the study of contemporary practitioners who were exploring objects and ornament. Research demonstrated the cyclical nature of ornament art, celebrated within this research through the placing of historical ornament at the centre of practice. Practice-based research resulted in a series of 'new' ornamental assemblages which respond to the historical objects through contemporary methods of making and arrangement. Whilst Crane's design controls are observed they are also frequently broken, with ornament from multiple object surfaces appearing within unfixed arrangements that stray from traditional design rules and embrace chaos and order in partnership. Ornament is taken from its original surface through a range of processes which embrace both traditional and digital methods, and this helps to explore what ornament has the potential to be when allowed to become an independent object as well as surface adornment.

Ornament art teaching has been the basis for practice-based research. Through the exploration of this teaching tradition, in particular Crane's teaching during his time as Director of Design at MSoA from 1893, I have established a methodology for working with this collection of historical objects in order to inform contemporary craft and design practice. I was inspired by the work of Bradbury and Slotte, along with Crane's teaching, to spend time visually exploring the objects. Crane's idea of 'ornament made up of a few units' helped to dissect initial object drawings in order to form a new palette for design; and also helped to begin to see how combinations of ornament could be brought together to create contemporary ornamental arrangements.

My practice-based research developed through visual exploration of objects into material exploration and the building of ornamental assemblage. There is potential to continue exploring making, building upon strong elements of the work such as the development of repeated ornament for display, and spending time on under-developed areas such as colour application. There is also potential to continue to exploit ornament and explore material and process to further extremes, for example pushing scale and material beyond the limited amount of experimentation that an MA by research study allows.

The Corridor Conversations workshop was an appropriate conclusion to the MA by Research as it supported the interrogation of research methods and outcomes, bringing together the practice-based research with the project's pedagogical influences. It proved that the historical design pedagogy and the contemporary craft responses could inspire meaningful engagement between a group of design-focused researchers and selected object's from the MSoA archive. It also supported new discoveries into the value of sharing the privileged maker's experience with students to alter their archive experience. One conclusion that was drawn within the workshop was that although the close proximity and opportunity to pick up and explore objects was valuable, the gloved hand still created a barrier of separation between object and viewer. The participants reflected positively on the opportunity to feel, handle and place the ornamental elements that I had created, mirroring ideas within Grimshaw and Boydell's research and development of the Materials and Innovation collection at MSoA. They suggest that a physical handling archive of contemporary design objects helps students to understand an object's materiality, and my research conclusions prove that this is also relevant when using historical objects. (Boydell, S and Grimshaw, D (2018)

Opportunity for Further Research

The key discovery within this research project is the method for making and exploring historical objects based on Crane's historical teaching. This exploration into historical pedagogy to inspire contemporary craft and design practice could be developed, either as part of a doctoral study or within future creative practice.

The thesis has re-evaluated an historical design pedagogy which was lost during the rise of modernism and through changes in design teaching in British Art Schools. My research has updated this pedagogy into a relevant model for design teaching today which utilises Crane's controls and Bradbury's work to guide object interaction with a small group of historical objects. Through my work as an artist educator I have had the opportunity to begin testing this pedagogy

within a workshop setting. Two workshops, at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), Preston and Harewood House, Leeds, are documented within the research journal included at the end of this thesis. The UCLAN workshop encouraged textile students to dissect ceramic objects, drawing from the whole object and then breaking it down into units of ornament, illustrated in figures 92 and 93. The workshop at Harewood house was delivered as a CPD session for art teachers involved in the Crafts Council's 'Make Your Future' project. This workshop focused on Harewood as an ornamental environment and encouraged participants to gather patterns from it's interiors and objects. These were built up into a mood board and informed a repeat wallpaper design (figure 94), combining historical elements of ornament art pedagogy with contemporary design teaching.



Figure 92: Student work illustrating an ornamental object, UCLAN, 2019



Figure 93: Student work illustrating an ornamental object, UCLAN, 2019



Figure 94: Participant work, pattern mood board and wallpaper, Harewood House, 2019

The research could be broadened within a doctoral study which interrogates the developed design pedagogy based on Crane's historical teaching. A wider contextual investigation into similar pedagogical research into museum objects or the design process would help to interrogate and extend the pedagogy, for example increased research into the existing development of the Materials and Innovations collection at MSoA (Boydell, S and Grimshaw, D (2018), and other parallel projects such as Mitchell and Blakey's work with MSoA students and the Mary Greg archive (Manchester Art Gallery, 2020), and Lindy Richardson's development of the Embroidered Stories project at the Edinburgh School of Art (Richardson, 2019). Projects such as these would enable me to investigate alternative methods of exploring historical objects with a range of student groups.

The project focused on a very small number of objects, mainly as a method to ensure focused research was achieved within the parameters of an MA by

research study. This leaves potential for further research into other objects, initially extending the pedagogical methods to objects across the MSoA archive, but also to other collections. These could be objects collections in other art schools or museum institutions. My research into the context of ornament art revealed that this was a phenomenon which happened throughout British Art Schools, and it would be interesting to explore other object groups that were brought together for a similar purpose to the MSoA archive, as well as any pedagogical methods that were used alongside them. I would like to test Crane's controls through workshops with a range of participant groups and in response to a variety of object collections.

Concluding Statement

Ultimately, this research study has demonstrated that historical museum objects and their ornamented surfaces can have visual relevance within contemporary craft and design practice; and that the methods I have developed can facilitate meaningful interaction between object and student with a museum setting. I hope that the publication of this thesis, future displays of practice and workshop delivery will bring increased awareness of the historical ornament art teaching at MSoA and to the objects of the MSoA collection in MMU Special Collections.

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Appendix

Extract from ‘Disrupting Ornamentation: Using Walter Crane’s historical design methodologies to influence contemporary craft practice’ Lawton, 2019 pp 4-7

Audience Interaction at Futurescan 4: Valuing Practice

The Futurescan 4: Valuing Practice conference exhibition provided an opportunity to collect visual data regarding audience interaction with the displays. The ornament compositions were documented at six points over the two-day period of display – five of these documentation periods are discussed below. Audience interaction with the work during the exhibition varied between compositions. There was a hesitant approach to moving the ornamental details to begin with, but by the end of day two there had been high levels of interaction between two of the trays.

Figure 6: Disrupting Ornamentation, Tray 2 23/01/19 12:37

During the first day of the exhibition prior to lunch break, it was recorded that only the central tray 2 had been interacted with. Although the ornament within the tray has been moved around, the audience appear to have been hesitant in their interaction as they have not strayed outside the boundaries of the tray in order to bring new ornament in or take ornament out. With this interaction (figure 6), it is interesting to see an echoing of Crane’s design controls in which he refers to the ‘beauty of contour’ and ‘bold and sweeping curves’ (Crane 1898: 210). The composition has a circular form, with the blue objects placed around the darker blue ring and red spiral. Key points of interest within the arrangement are the attempt to make the pattern more regular by placing the blue objects at regular intervals around the circle; and the identification of relationships between different objects. At the bottom left of the composition a wooden leaf form is matched to the curve of the blue ornament, and the point of this object touches with the darker blue spiral.

(Figure 6: Disrupting Ornamentation, Tray 2 (centre) 23/01/19 12:37.)

Figure 7: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1, 2 and 3, 23/01/19 14.45

On the first day, after the break, all of the trays had now experienced some interaction, with the ornament moving around within and between trays. There is a sense of the compositions becoming busier and the space within the trays becoming fuller.

In Tray 1 (figure 7, left), the interaction is subtle but changes do occur. The audience have identified opportunities for repeat and introduced a new shape to

the tray, increasing the number of blue objects to five and rearranging the layout. They are thinking about traditional pattern-making methods, flipping or reflecting the wooden stem object horizontally; and placing similar materials together with the movement of the wooden leaf out of its ceramic enclosure to join the stem in the bottom right corner of the tray. This could also be interpreted as an effort to fill or balance the tray, in opposition to the original composition (figure 4) which was weighted to the left of the tray.

(Figure 7: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 23/01/19 14.45.)

In Tray 2 (figure 7, centre), several shapes have been introduced, including some which have been taken from other trays. The scale has increased with the introduction of much larger ornamental elements. The audience have begun to explore material qualities with the overlapping of ornament, including the placing of the hand-built ceramic flower on top of the embroidered object in the bottom left of the tray.

In Tray 3 (figure 7, right), there is a marked contrast from the lack of movement earlier, again with several new elements of ornament introduced to the composition in a range of colours and materials. The composition becomes busy, with the fabric screen print peeking out from below the chaotic spread of ornament. Within this, the audience have begun to think about the physical position of ornament in some instances, for example at the bottom right of the vase print where one wooden object within the series of four has been rotated upright onto its side.

Figure 8: Disrupting Ornamentation, 23/01/19 17.07

The photograph shown in figure 8 was taken during the opening event of the exhibition. There appears to be a marked increase in confidence from the audience with every element of ornament now appearing inside a tray. On initial viewing the arrangement of ornament appears chaotic, particularly in Tray 3 (figure 8, right), but on closer inspection, thought and design process can be identified within the arrangements.

(Figure 8: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 23/01/19 17.07.)

In Tray 2 (figure 8, centre), the ornament has been organised into a series of separate design compositions. These compositions sit separately and there is less

interaction between ornament across the whole tray. There is a sense of the forms spanning out from a central point, almost as though they are based around a pivot point and could spin.

Within Tray 3 (figure 8, right) the viewer has made a conscious effort to focus the majority of the composition within the bottom left corner of the tray. Many of the shapes are in contact with each other, forcing new relationships between objects unlike in my original, spaced-out arrangement (figure 5, right). The ornament is also beginning to creep beyond the boundaries of the fabric slightly.

Figure 9: Disrupting Ornamentation, 24/01/19 09.20

From this point onwards, movement within and between the trays becomes calmer and more considered. Links are beginning to form between each of the trays, with similar shapes placed together in similar ways, such as two blue objects placed together at a central pivot point on the top right of Tray 1 (figure 9, left), and centre of Tray 2 (figure 9, centre).

This was the only change within Tray 1, along with the returning of the wooden leaf to its ceramic enclosure.

(Figure 9: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 24/01/19 09.20.)

In Tray 2 (figure 9, centre), the sense of a series of design compositions remains, but these have altered from figure 8. The audience focus on bringing similar elements together and limit object collections to specific colour or material; such as multiple pairs of blue ornament, or embroidered poppy motifs placed together with wooden ornament in the top right of the tray (figure 9, centre). The stacking of water-jet cut circles demonstrates the audience moving from the work being arranged largely as flat pieces to a new potential for 3D arrangements or building upwards/outwards.

Tray 3 (figure 9, right) has moved further out of the boundaries of the screen-printed fabric. It is moving towards a more formal arrangement with a considered placement of ornament, for example with wooden and perspex ornaments appearing to rise out of the top of the vase form.

Figure 10: Disrupting Ornamentation, 24/01/19 16.36

The image in figure 10 shows the final arrangements of the compositions at the end of the two-day conference. Tray 2 (figure 10, centre) and Tray 3 (figure 10, right) have changed significantly from my original arrangement (figure 5 left and

right) and you can see clear relationships between these trays within colour and material use. However, Tray 1 (figure 10, left) has barely changed and has almost returned to my original arrangement (figure 4).

(Figure 10: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 24/01/19 16.36.)

In Tray 2 (figure 10, centre), all of the elements have come back together into one composition. The blue ornament becomes the focus and base for the arrangement, with other elements acting as embellishments. There is a heightened sense of control along with considered material placement and use of colour. The circles appear to be dismissed at the top left of the tray, showing a sense of refinement from the audience as they select key elements and dismiss others, echoing Crane's idea of 'design built up of a few units.' (Crane 1925: 372)

In Tray 3 (figure 10, right) a similar sense of refinement can be seen, with ornament discarded at the top of the tray, away from the boundaries of the screen-printed fabric. New pieces of ornament such as the dark blue spiral appear within the tray for the first time, illustrating the viewer's confidence in moving ornament between trays. There is a sense of this composition feeling more complete than some of the earlier chaotic arrangements (figure 8), through the grouping of ornament into design compositions or small object collections. This grouping also feels more considered in relation to the screen-printed fabric detail, with ornament placed in relation to the vase-form of the screen print or carefully around the fabric's boundaries.

Figures for Extract from 'Disrupting Ornamentation: Using Walter Crane's historical design methodologies to influence contemporary craft practice' Lawton, 2019 pp 4-7



Figure 6: Disrupting Ornamentation, Tray 2 (centre)
23/01/19 12:37



Figure 7: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 23/01/19 14.45.



Figure 8: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 23/01/19 17.07



Figure 9: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 24/01/19 09.20.



Figure 10: Disrupting Ornamentation, Trays 1 (left), 2 (centre) and 3 (right), 24/01/19 16.36.

Participant Information Sheet

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop (within an MA by Research study investigating how the study of ornament at Manchester School of Art can inform contemporary craft making and design practices)

1. Invitation to research

I would like to invite you to take part in the Disrupting Ornamentation workshop. My name is Harriet Lawton and my research project is investigating how the historical study of ornament art at Manchester school of Art can inform contemporary craft making and design practices. This workshop will explore the value of spending time with historical museum objects, and the emotional and sensorial impact of interacting with craft objects within an archive setting.

2. Why have I been invited?

You have been invited as an attendee of the Corridor Conversations design symposium, and specifically as a design-focused researcher.

3. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide. We will describe the study and go through the information sheet, which we will give to you. We will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

4. What will I be asked to do?

The workshop will be held in MMU Special Collections and will last half an hour. You will be asked to work within a small group to disrupt and rearrange an ornamental assemblage, in response to a given design control and the historical objects on display. These assemblage responses will be documented through photography. At the end of the workshop you will be asked to share your responses to the historical design pedagogies and the value of working from the physical object; along with your emotional and sensorial experiences when handling and arranging the ornamental objects. This response will be recorded through a written questionnaire and verbal discussion.

The information will be used within a workshop report following the Corridor Conversations symposium. This will be included in my final MA by Research thesis.

5. Are there any risks if I participate?

There is a risk of damage occurring to the ornamental objects and surfaces provided, through their handling. A members of the Special Collections staff team will advise on best handling practices.

6. Are there any advantages if I participate?

There are no direct advantages, although the workshop will give you the opportunity to gain insight into Ornament Art teaching at Manchester School of Art. Your participation will give useful insights for my MA by Research study into how other design-focused researchers respond to this pedagogy.

7. What will happen with the data I provide?

When you agree to participate in this research, we will collect from you personally-identifiable information.

The Manchester Metropolitan University ('the University') is the Data Controller in respect of this research and any personal data that you provide as a research participant.

The University is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's Data Protection Policy.

We collect personal data as part of this research (such as name, telephone numbers or age). As a public authority acting in the public interest we rely upon the 'public task' lawful basis. When we collect special category data (such as medical information or ethnicity) we rely upon the research and archiving purposes in the public interest lawful basis.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained.

We will not share your personal data collected in this form with any third parties.

If your data is shared this will be under the terms of a Research Collaboration Agreement which defines use, and agrees confidentiality and information security provisions. It is the University's policy to only publish anonymised data unless you have given your explicit written consent to be identified in the research. **The University never sells personal data to third parties.**

We will only retain your personal data for as long as is necessary to achieve the research purpose. Written information will be scanned in and kept within an encrypted digital file, with all original paper documents being destroyed. Audio files will be transcribed and

subsequently destroyed. The written, recorded and photographic data collected will be used within a report, to be included within my MA by Research thesis. Participants names will be excluded from this report, they will only be referred to as 'Participant 1' etc. A copy of this report will be sent to participants on or before 29/07/19. All digital data stored will be kept for a maximum of 12 months following submission of the MA by Research on 1st October 2019, and will be destroyed following the conferment of my award on or before 1st October 2020.

For further information about use of your personal data and your data protection rights please see the [University's Data Protection Pages](#).

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The information will be used within a workshop report following the Corridor Conversations symposium. This will only be included in my final MA by Research thesis.

Who has reviewed this research project?

Stephen Dixon, Supervisor

Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

Harriet lawton, Researcher

harriet.lawton@mmu.ac.uk 07414500669

Stephen Dixon, Supervisor

s.dixon@mmu.ac.uk 0161 247 1298

Righton Building, Room 108, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH

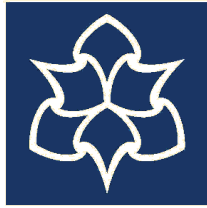
Susan Baines, Faculty Head of Research Ethics and Governance

s.baines@mmu.ac.uk, 0161 247 2511

If you have any concerns regarding the personal data collected from you, our Data Protection Officer can be contacted using the legal@mmu.ac.uk e-mail address, by calling 0161 247 3331 or in writing to: Data Protection Officer, Legal Services, All Saints Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH. You also have a right to lodge a complaint in respect of the processing of your personal data with the Information Commissioner's Office as the supervisory authority. Please see:

<https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT



**Manchester
Metropolitan
University**

Consent Form

04/07/19
Harriet Lawton
MA by Research
Art and Design
Righton Building
Manchester Metropolitan University
Tel: 07414500669

Title of Project: Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop

Name of Researcher: Harriet Lawton

Participant Identification Code for this project: 11457

Please initial box

- 1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated 04/07/19 for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the workshop procedure.
- 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason to the named researcher.
- 3. I understand that my responses will be sound recorded and used for analysis for this research project.
- 4. I understand that my written responses will be digitally recorded and used for analysis for this research project.
- 5. I understand that my responses will be photographed and used for analysis of this research project.
- 6. I understand that my responses will remain anonymous.
- 7. I agree to take part in the above research project.
- 8. I understand that at my request a transcript of the recording, written responses and photographs can be made available to me.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire: Participant 1

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire

Please share your reflections on your creative process during the workshop (e.g What factors led to the ornamental assemblage you created / Did Walter Crane's design controls affect your creative process?)

In the first one I used the textile sheet to guide my pattern & during the second I tried to freeform

Please share your reflections on the historical focus of the workshop (e.g Has the workshop increased your understanding of Ornament Art / Did the workshop alter the way you view museum objects?)

It was very special to be able to touch the objects and discover the secret pattern on the base of one.

How did the workshop make you feel?

Creative, I enjoy touching different fabric/materials
Playful

Any other comments or reflections:

Thank you!

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire: Participant 2

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire

Please share your reflections on your creative process during the workshop (e.g. What factors led to the ornamental assemblage you created / Did Walter Crane's design controls affect your creative process?)

My initial thoughts were on the materials of the pieces. Some were wood, others ceramic, textile - Ceramic pieces resonated more so I chose the fragile 'text' samples and instinctively started to compose a 'text' without coming what to textual elements next. next

Please share your reflections on the historical focus of the workshop (e.g. Has the workshop increased your understanding of Ornament Art / Did the workshop alter the way you view museum objects?)

It sparked my curiosity, specifically the Islamic replica vase and the concept of cultural appropriation.

How did the workshop make you feel?

Curious,

Any other comments or reflections:

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire: Participant 3

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire

Please share your reflections on your creative process during the workshop (e.g. What factors led to the ornamental assemblage you created / Did Walter Crane's design controls affect your creative process?)

I really enjoyed symmetry and circular patterns
It was really fun to play with pattern and shape
+ have an interactive workshop.
I went for patterns that were more swirly...

Please share your reflections on the historical focus of the workshop (e.g. Has the workshop increased your understanding of Ornament Art / Did the workshop alter the way you view museum objects?)

I didn't realise (a bit naively) how much work went into the planning ~~of~~ of pattern.
(design controls)

How did the workshop make you feel?

Relaxed, playful - peaceful to create/form order

Any other comments or reflections:

Great fun - thank you!

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire: Participant 4

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire

Please share your reflections on your creative process during the workshop (e.g. What factors led to the ornamental assemblage you created / Did Walter Crane's design controls affect your creative process?)

In the first part I felt very conscious of following design rules I could see in the objects but in the second part I was inspired by patterns + lines that I could see in other people's assemblages.

Please share your reflections on the historical focus of the workshop (e.g. Has the workshop increased your understanding of Ornament Art / Did the workshop alter the way you view museum objects?)

I have always had a desire to work with museum objects + regularly do but I wasn't aware of specific teachings of ornamentation.

How did the workshop make you feel?

cautious at first, conscious of producing something acceptable but then relaxed and enjoyed the approach, found it freeing.

Any other comments or reflections:

A preferable approach than being asked to draw an object - I liked having something existing to work with

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire: Participant 5

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Questionnaire

Please share your reflections on your creative process during the workshop (e.g What factors led to the ornamental assemblage you created / Did Walter Crane's design controls affect your creative process?)

Fun to break out of the patterns you can see in front of you but also see the objects in front of you to compare the outcome to the original.

Please share your reflections on the historical focus of the workshop (e.g Has the workshop increased your understanding of Ornament Art / Did the workshop alter the way you view museum objects?)

Yes - it changed the way I view ornament & how to interpret design.
The use of different materials is effective & the use of touch.

How did the workshop make you feel?

Excited, free, inspired, responsible and in control.

Any other comments or reflections:

Disrupting Ornamentation Workshop Transcript

24 mins 16 seconds in total

(Please note that the recording was taken in an informal way, picking up conversations during the workshop. The transcript is a summary of key elements of conversation, some background discussions were difficult to make out and therefore have not been recorded.)

(Discussions around swapping ornament at the start of the recording, hard to make out).

Participant 3: Yeh there's too much stuff on here...

Participant 2: How about that one?

Participant 1: Do you want these?

Participant 3: I want one facing the other way, but I'll just have to use it upside down.

HL: So I'm just going to give you a couple more minutes on this one

Participant 3: (Participant 1) are you using the parts here?

Participant 1: No, you carry on.

Participant 3: I'm done

HL: Yeah sometimes you need to make yourself stop as well don't you.

Participant 3: Yeh, no I'm done.

HL: Different approaches are interesting to see as well, everyone's methods.

Participant 3: I'd just like to touch that one, to see the texture.

(Participant 3 tried gloves on and had go at touching the Cantagalli mosque lamp.)

HL: (Discussing carrying the Cantagalli mosque lamp on a previous visit.)

HL: Okay let's stop there then guys. So I'm just going to quickly document your final things, you can have a look what each other's done, on your table, on each other's table, its quite interesting to see. Everyone responds in completely different ways.

Participant 4: I can see a face

Participant 3: Your one is really nice.

Participant 5: I thought that

(Laughter)

Participant 5: I can see that now. Ears.

Participant 1: Are you stealing bits?

Participant 3: I am!

(Laughter)

HL: You guys get to come over here now anyway. So yeah you can swap over, just make sure I've got my photographs of the first set and then you can start rearranging, changing the last groups assemblage.

Participant 2: Oh I see where it comes from now.

Participant 3: Oh look its so cute.... Its adorable

HL: So we'll do a similar length of time for this one, about 7 or 8 minutes again.

HL: Its funny how much more confident you are actually now that you've already disrupted it.

Participant: Yeah, yeah.

HL: I feel like you were more hesitant before and then now you've gone right we'll get that one out and just start again.

Participant 1: Is there another one of these?

Participant 3: Yeh there's a few.

(Background discussions)

HL: I did a conference in January, it was interesting to see what other people were doing and made me think of things I could be doing with the objects.

(Background discussions, relaxed atmosphere while making)

Participant 1: There's not another one of these

Participant 3: Try the other table.

(Discussions around trying to find objects to match, whether they could take objects from different tables etc)

Participant 2: ...geometry...

Participant 3: It wasn't intentional. I thought I was being random. But I'm not.

HL: Okay guys do you just want to take a couple of minutes to get things refined. If you feel like you're done, that's fine.

Participant 3: (Discussing radio programme) Humans really like chaos and order at the same time, which is why we like music, because its really chaotic but there's an order to it. It does something to our brains, we like that. I think that looks chaotic but actually it doesn't. That's probably why we like patterns.

Participant 2: When we see non-sequential or non-symmetrical we try and make sense of it anyway, we try and reason with it.

Participant 1: It's as though it takes longer to process, but therefore we've taken time to actually work it out?

Participant 3: That's nice to look at, because its symmetrical. I can switch away my mind.

Participant 1: I'll spend time trying to see if its actually perfectly symmetrical.

Curator: These seem even more abstracted.

HL: Yeh its braver I think, like we've managed to get over, like we had to touch them and change them etc (discussion about how the first pieces were more hesitant).

HL: So guys I think we can do a bit of reflecting, what i'll do is give you the questionnaires and if you can make some little notes just quickly. You can elaborate on them, what i'd like to do is have a chat with you as well. I've tried to put a few prompts down but I didn't want to lead it to much, so I've talked about your reflections on the actual creative process, your reflections on the historical and then how the workshop made you feel. So you can answer them as you like.

HL: So if you'd like to grab a questionnaire. Do you want to grab a consent form as well? Then in the last 5 minutes I'll have a chat with you as sometimes you can verbalise stuff easier than writing.

(Explaining how report will feedback about the outcomes mainly and they will be anonymised in writing)

Participant 4: Have you done anything with it when people have created the parts?

HL: No, because its an MA by research its so small but I think that's where it will go.

Participant 4: Yeh if people made the objects I think it would be something completely different.

HL: Yeh I think that pedagogy or drawing from objects is where it will go.

HL: The writing doesn't actually mean anything on the mosque lamp.

Curator: Its based on Islamic calligraphy

HL: I thought it was based on an Islamic mosque lamp but it doesn't actually make sense.

Curator: On the catalogue record it just says Islamic calligraphic pattern, so yeah it might be that its just based.

HL: Yeh its like gibberish basically. Cantagalli used to make a lot of replicas, so for art schools when they couldn't afford the really bespoke objects companies would make these replica objects. I always think its an interesting one that we've looked at this Islamic object but we've created our own version of it, but actually its pretty disrespectful because you've not actually followed those traditions and its just turning the script into a pattern.

Participant 3: Like old school cultural appropriation.

HL: Yeh totally.

Curator: I mean they would have never thought it, whereas now people would be horrified.

HL: Did Samson do replicas as well? That was some of my focusing at the start, I was trying to look for pattern and ornament and I found the replica pieces interesting.

Curator: Yeh. The original of that is in France.

HL: So that piece is a replica as well. Someone used to make silver replicas as well. People used to have licenses to use museum pieces and then make replicas for art schools.

HL: It was around the first world war and I had to look at Modernism a lot because thats when it declined and that ornament art teaching stopped happening with the move of modernism. They stopped a lot of the collecting around that time here and started again in the 60s with studio pottery, Bernard Leach, from the ceramics college in Didsbury.

HL: (*Explaining Loos theories*)

HL: Okay does anyone want to quickly share anything? How did you feel about the creative process?

Participant 4: I just wrote down, considering I've run workshops and asked people to draw things, I said I preferred it than being asked to draw the objects, because we already had something there. But I constantly

go nobody's drawing it!

HL: Yeh I was just saying to you it would be nice to get people to draw from them!

Participant 4: Something nice about placing.

Participant 3: There's something about just placing things that already exist. Its very playful. I did like that.

Participant 2: I think the materials caught my eye, because some of them are more fragile. I don't know why but I had an inclination towards the really fragile.

HL: That's interesting. I think part of what I'm doing, is about trying to... I had this realisation that I have a privilege because I get to work in archives and with these historical object collections and i've done that in my practice before this project, and its kind of about trying to get people to get that feeling and that sense of, rather than seeing the objects behind glass in a museum, being able to interact with things.

Participant 2: Yes the sensorial.

HL: Its interesting that you went for the fragile rather than being scared of it because obviously normally you wouldn't be able to pick that bit of ceramic up.

HL: Anything else from the actual process, or shall we move onto the next question- the historical focus? Anything about whether it increased your understanding, or did it alter the way you looked at the objects, or both?

Participant 4: You know I've worked with ceramic objects before but...

Participant 3: Its just quite nice to get up close and personal with them and see the little patterns on the base, the little signatures and scratches, and have that interaction. Just have the... when its in a vitrine you don't get to see the... you're looking through a piece of glass which has usually got some sort of reflection on it.

HL: Was it that one (gesturing to Samson jar) that you were feeling as well?

Participant 4: Yeh I just really wanted to touch it because I've seen a lot of the pots, whatever their called, and I'm always like is it textured, is it not textured, is it the paint that makes it look like that or is it like... so I wanted to get... but actually I couldn't feel very well through the gloves. So I'm sad, I kind of want to use my nail, obviously I won't!

HL: You got slightly closer to them.

Participant 4: I got a little bit closer to them and I got to have a little feel and I was like oh I can feel a little bit here.

HL: That's still part of the thing within my work, there's a quote from a textile artist, and she talks about the privilege but then says in brackets (albeit with a gloved hand) and its... we have to have that separation but it is difficult if you want to be able to actually feel..

Participant 4: Really get in, up close and personal with it.

HL: How did you feel during the workshop? I guess I'm thinking about that sensorial effect or the emotional effect of all of this, we've probably touched on some of it. How was it to just be asked to kind of rearrange?

Participant 3: Bit playful

Participant 4: I said I felt cautious at first, but then it became quite freeing.

HL: Okay, that's great, really positive feedback thanks guys.