Beryl Graham

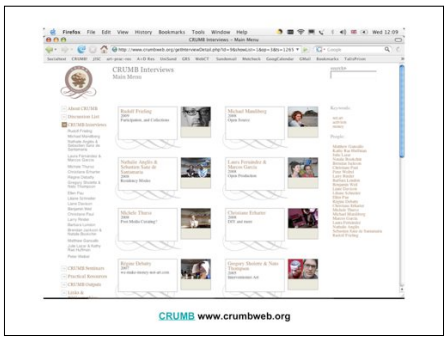
Art, Media, and Museums: The Word Art

Cultural Value and the Digital, Tate, 7 Jul 2014

beryl.graham@sunderland.ac.uk

www.crumbweb.org

1



2

Why exhibition histories?

For Curators to be able to deal with these different systems

Positve solutions of 'how'

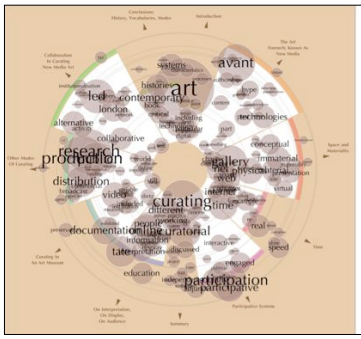
Discussion list – right now discourse.



Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media. MIT Press 2010

3

Some ends up in very slow books



Magnus Rembold, data analysis of book *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*. 2010

4

The issues are connected – documentation, distribution

if art is not historicised well, it is not criticised well, if not documented, can't be historicised, or collected, or exhibited from a collection.

1. The importance of developing a conceptual and practical knowledge, and understanding of **the wider historical development of computing** is recognised as a crucial step in being able to see how analogue cultural institutions sit within and are directly affected by computational systems.

"… my lack of success with the tools of art scholarship is in part responsible for this present book. Had the tools served their purpose, I might not have sought out others less respected" (p.48).

Shanken quoting curator Jack Burnham concerning the book *Beyond Modern Sculpture* from 1968

Shanken, Edward A. (2007) "Historicizing Art and Technology: Forging a Method and Firing a Cannon." In: Oliver Grau (ed.) ***MediaArtHistories.*** Cambridge: MIT Press. 43-70.



"The conventions for taking installation photographs are "modernist," in that there are "no subjects in the texts": exhibitions are pictured for posterity as empty, idealised, and uncluttered by men and women and children wandering through these carefully constructed interiors."
(xxiii-xxix)

Staniszewski, Mary Anne (1998) *The Power of Display: A History Of Exhibition Installations At The Museum of Modern Art.* Cambridge: MIT.

Digital Image ©2011 MoMA, N.Y.

Graham, Beryl (2013) "Exhibition Histories and New Media Behaviours." ***Journal of Curatorial Studies,*** **2 (2 (summer)). 242-262.**

Systems need to change

Hierarchy.

Art history and value.

What is documented and hence available to historians.

Audience is less respected, and audience studies about demographics not experience.

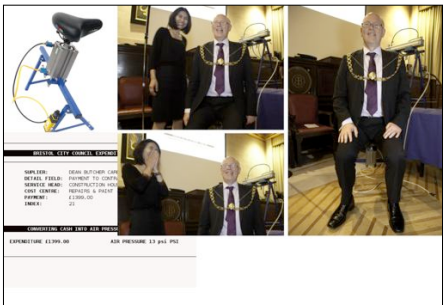
As covered in the other talks – methods might change,

Shanken new methodological tools



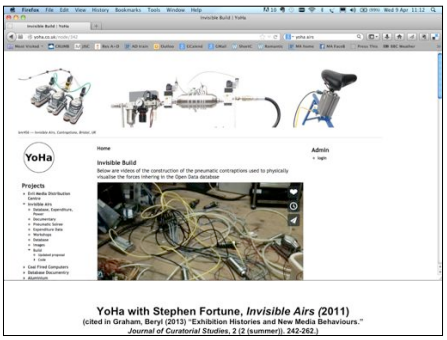
Installation shot from *Les Immatériaux* exhibition (1985). Pompidou Centre, Paris.

Written about but not many people know how it worked as an exhibition



YoHa with Stephen Fortune, *Invisible Airs* (2011)

The project *Invisible Airs* (2011) by YoHa, with assistance by Stephen Fortune, for example, was based on the expenditure database of the Bristol City Council, which in theory was open to the public, at least according to the rhetoric of "open government." However, the data was extremely difficult to read and unlikely to reach any kind of public audience. "After attempting to read 20,000 comma-separated lines of apparently open-data, we understood that power revealed itself through boredom" (reference). The artists decided to make interactive objects including a "riding machine" — a bicycle seat that pneumatically lurched the user up and down in response to higher or lower expenditure levels. The objects were placed in public places and dialogs with audience members were encouraged. A "Pneumatic Database Soiree" in the council chambers, which featured a lecture tracing the early formation of the database and its relation to power and governance and all five of the pneumatic machines, also was organized. Alistair Oldham independently produced a documentary of the project, which was informed by its processes of production, especially the workshops that took place as part of it. The web page of the project is explicitly aimed at cataloging resources that might be of use to others in investigating power, governance and data, and presents plenty of documentation of audience use, including splendid photographs of the Lord Mayor of Bristol using the riding machine. The site also includes video of the pneumatic construction workshops and, in line with open source ethics, the



YoHa with Stephen Fortune, *Invisible Airs (*2011)
(cited in Graham, Beryl (2013) "Exhibition Histories and New Media Behaviours." *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 2 (2 (summer)). 242-262.)

Connectivity

Computability

Interactivity

Dietz, Steve (1999) "Why have there been no great net artists?" Through the Looking Glass: Critical texts. Available from URL: <http://www.voyd.com/ttlg/textual/dietz.htm>.

"necessity to help develop the language and terms of reference so that a better quality discussion can be forged between practice, policy and theory."

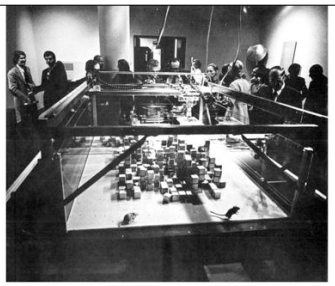
Not 'the digital' but behaviours, because that what is different for curators

Which histories …

9



Connectivity: Marcel Duchamp and John Cage play chess to generate a composition by Cage, whilst Alexina 'Teeny' Duchamp looks on. At event *Reunion in Toronto* (1968)



Computability: *Software* (1970) exhibition, Jewish Museum, New York, Jack Burnham curator. *Seek* by Nicolas Negroponte and MIT Architectural Machine Group. Histories of Technology? See Rewire

[robot arms moves blocks in response to gerbils' movements] like bronze casting.

11



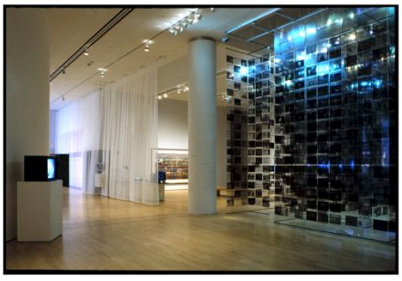
Interactivity: *Information* exhibition (1970) MOMA New York, Kynaston McShine. Chair is from Joseph Kosuth's artwork *One and Three Chairs* (1965).

Most challenging and exciting - audience as interactors, participants, collaborators in art, in documenting, in criticising, in marketing and in curating.

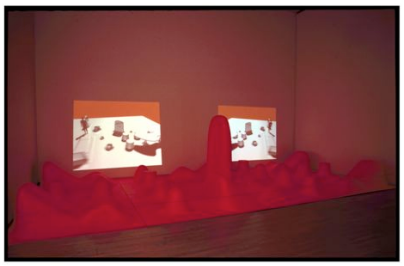


SFMOMA: *010101* installation shot (2001) [espace]

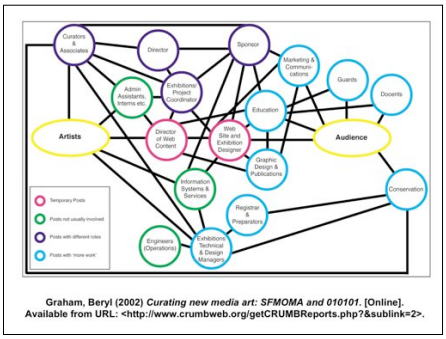
Museums are aware of and enthusiastic about the potential of extending their work through digital technology and online communication, but there are **organisational disconnections** in grasping the scale as well as the speed of network culture.



SFMOMA: *010101* installation shot (2001)



SFMOMA: *010101* installation shot, "Softscape," by Karim Rashid (2001)



Graham, Beryl (2002) *Curating new media art: SFMOMA and 010101*. [Online]. Available from URL: <http://www.crumbweb.org/getCRUMBReports.php?&sublink=2>.

3 "trace the connectors" latour

" 'hard-walled' separation between the values of collection and those of embodied audience, with exhibition and display acting as an interstitial zone of mediation." 177 dewdney

David Ross

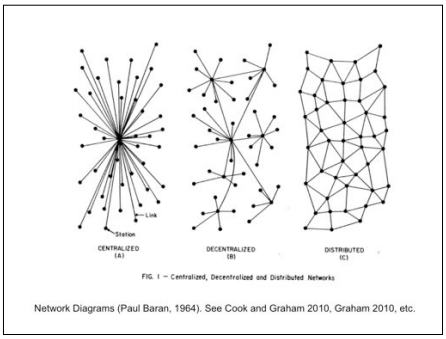


FIG. 1 — Centralized, Decentralized and Distributed Networks

Network Diagrams (Paul Baran, 1964). See Cook and Graham 2010, Graham 2010, etc.

3. National cultural organisations grasp the potential of digital tools and online platforms as a medium for **the broadcast** of high quality, medium specific content but struggles to engage with the **communities of network culture**.

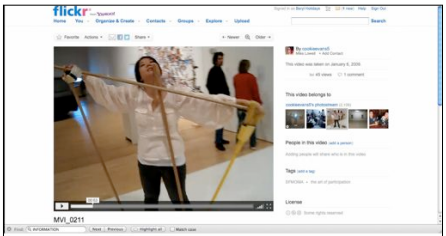
4. Network Culture is a separate 'ecology' characterised by **a decentralised**, anti-hierarchical means of dialogue that has developed other productive and creative sites, contexts and communities.



"To paraphrase a truism on art coined by the late German comedian Karl Valentin, participation is beautiful, but it's a lot of work."

Frieling, Rudolf (2008) "Introduction." In: Frieling, Rudolf (ed.) *The Art of Participation*. San Francisco: SFMOMA/Thames and Hudson, 12-17.

***The Art of Participation* (2010) Staged installation shot – *One Minute Sculptures* by Erwin Wurm**



"… what was wonderful to see was that we were learning through what people were posting online. We would see all kinds of documents come up either on Flickr or on YouTube and then say, 'Wait a minute, what actually happened in the galleries?'

Graham, Beryl (2009) " Interview with Rudolf Frieling". CRUMB.



Graham, Beryl (ed.) (2014) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.*

From Hans Haacke's Moma Poll in Information in 1970 to Hans Haacke's work in *The Art of Participation in 2010. "Performing a collection"*

1 Modes of Collection	Beryl Graham
2 Collecting New-Media Art: Just Like Anything Else, Only Different	Steve Dietz
3 Old media, new media? the conservation of software based art	Pip Laurenson
4 Self Collection, Self Exhibition? Rhizome and the New Museum	Heather Corcoran
5 From Exhibition to Collection: Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston	Lindsay Taylor
6 The Museum as Producer: Processing art and performing a collection	Rudolf Frieling
7 Objects, Intent and Authenticity: Producing, Selling and Conserving Media Art	Caitlin Jones
8 Curating emerging art and design at the Victoria and Albert Museum	Louise Shannon
9 Collecting Experience: The Multiple Incarnations of *Very Nervous System*	Lizzie Muller
10 Murky categorization and bearing witness	Sarah Cook

Graham, Beryl (ed.) (forthcoming 2014)
***New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.* London: Ashgate.**

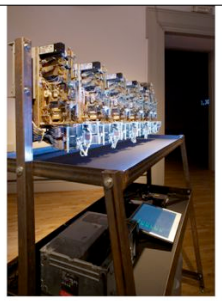
5. The commitment to the process of digitising analogue archives and collections is now being questioned in relation to its use-value and cultural-value. At the same time there is a gradual recognition that **museums have not paid sufficient attention to the collection and interpretation of new media artifacts.**

Ask working curators not academics



***Current* commissioning for exhibition and collection project, Harris Museum, Preston.**

There are examples



YoHa, *Current*, Harris Museum, Preston.



Thomson and Craighead, *Current*, Harris Museum, Preston.



Thomson and Craighead—*The distance travelled through our solar system this year and all the barrels of oil remaining.* 2011.

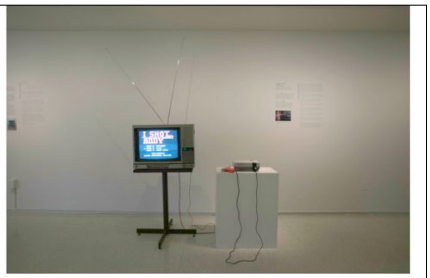
Suzanne Lacey Crystal Quilt



Rhizome's Artbase installed at The New Museum, New York

Corcoran, Heather (2014) "Self-Collection, Self-Exhibition? Rhizome and the New Museum." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.* Ashgate.

Open submission, taxonomy and folksonomy



Cory Arcangel's work in *Seeing Double* exhibition

Caitlin, Jones (2014) "Objects, Intent, and Authenticity: Producing, Selling, and Conserving Media Art." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.*

Integration of Conservation and exhibition



Decode exhibition at V&A

Shannon, Louise (2014) "Historic collection, contemporary audience: Victoria and Albert Museum." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.* Ashgate.

Just like anything else -documentation- Steve Dietz Library CDROms and DVDs.

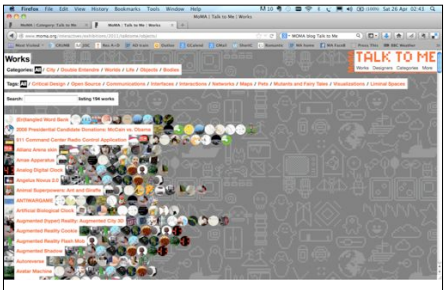


Decode exhibition at V&A

Shannon, Louise (2014) "Historic collection, contemporary audience: Victoria and Albert Museum." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.* Ashgate.

Based on education, through exhibition to collecting. Melanie and Doug. Ask curators.

Afterall.



Talk to Me **(2012) MOMA NY.**

Database sorted by categroires, background research.



Hans Haacke's work in *The Art of Participation* exhibition (2010)
Frieling, Rudolf (2014) "The Museum as Producer: Processing art and performing a collection." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art.* Ashgate.

From Hans Haacke's Moma Poll in Information in 1970 to Hans Haacke's work in *The Art of Participation in 2010. "Performing a collection"*



Rafael Lozano Hemmer's work in *Tate collection*

Laurenson, Pip (2014) "Old media, new media? Significant difference and the conservation of software based art." In: Graham, Beryl (ed.) *New Collecting: Exhibiting and Audiences after New Media Art*. Ashgate.

Behaviours. Conservation including software.,



***Bodyspacemotionthings* (1971) Robert Morris Retrospective at Tate Gallery, staged installation shot**



Assault course at Tate Gallery

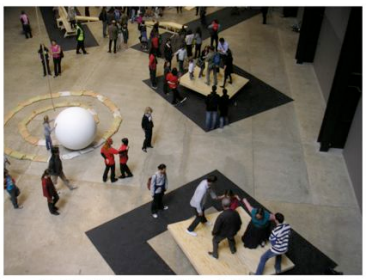
"The trouble with participation, it seems, is that apart from making us forget what art's all about, and inducing the very restlessness of mind which it's supposed to ease, **it makes people behave like wild beasts** …"

Michael Shepherd *Sunday Telegraph*, 9 May 1971.

in (Bird, 2000, p. 88)

***Bodyspacemotionthings* (1971) Robert Morris Retrospective at Tate Gallery, Press**

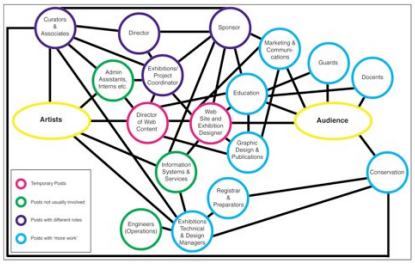
The trouble with press coverage as a historical source is the value judgements



Robert Morris *Bodyspacemotionthings* reinstalled at Tate Modern as part of *The Long Weekend* (2009)

6. The digital as an open, networked system is more effectively aligned with the practices of **museum learning and education departments** whose ethos and methods in many ways prefigured network culture of inclusion, participation, and distribution of cultural value.

7. **Collaboration and partnership** is an established approach to cultural development, organisational management, and partnership building in museums – practices that underpin online networked culture, but there is a hesitancy to embrace the open-ended nature of online networks in the analogue museum.



Graham, Beryl (2002) *Curating new media art: SFMOMA and 010101*. [Online]. Available from URL: <http://www.crumbweb.org/getCRUMBReports.php?&sublink=2>.

Art or Design?

SFMOMA –curators from

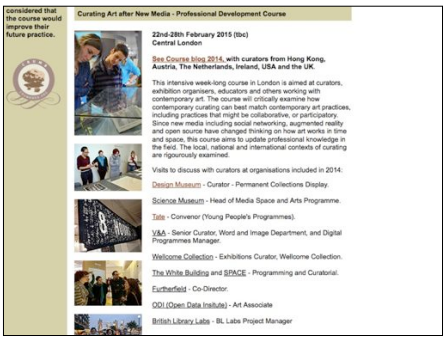
Department of Painting and Sculpture

Department of Photography

Department of Architecture and Design

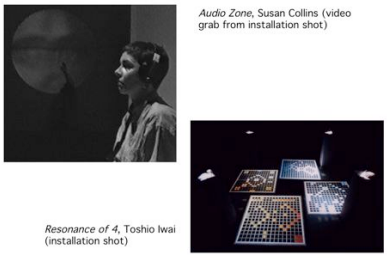
Department of Media Arts

Department of Education and Public Programs



8. New models of research, knowledge creation and cultural production are needed to link an engagement across digital tools, channels and cultures.

BL Labs and ODI, education staff, digital officers, and curators. Mark Miller - systems



Graham, Beryl (1997) *A study of audience relationships with interactive computer-based visual artworks in gallery settings, through observation, art practice, and curation*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Sunderland. Also available from URL: <http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/~as0bgr/cv/sub/phd.htm>.

8. New models of research, knowledge creation and cultural production are needed to link an engagement across digital tools, channels and cultures.

Because audience and interaction is important too important to be left to the kind of research that is only about numbers or focus groups.



Ritsuko Taho: *Zeromorphosis, Swans and Pigeons*, (1996) in *Serious Games* exhibition (1996-7)

Include both non-new media art, and …

New questions:

1. Should/could the museum recognise and work with provisionality, messiness and failure - elements which network culture can more easily reveal?

2. Should/could the analogue institution overcome its instrumentalised view of technology and become part of the extended network of technologists and producers of cultural value online?

3. With the use of the digital as a channel for the institution, should/could the museum as 'the television of the future' become a leading global media player in the near future?

4. Should/could the institution move towards a curated and more researched version of the web itself?



Harwood - Rehearsal of Memory in *Serious Games* exhibition (1996-7)

Graham, Beryl (2008) "Serious Games - case study." In: Christiane Paul (ed.) *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 191-206.

Reflect on process – other exhibitions, Jack Burnham, issues of:

Press and critical response.
Sponsors



Muller, Elizabeth (2008) *The experience of interactive art: A curatorial study.* PhD thesis. Sydney: University of Technology.

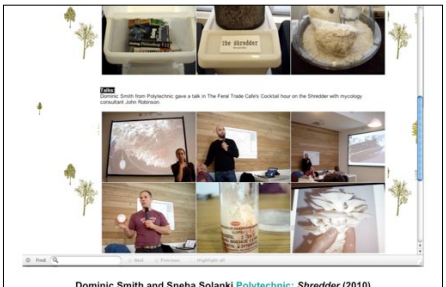
Audience experience- video-assisted recall.

"Experiential Goals" of artists
Not simplistic, "cultivate difficulty"



Lizzie Muller in MCA (ed.), (2013) *Anish Kapoor ePublication.* Sydney: MCA Publications. http://www.mca.com.au/apps/mca-publications/anish-kapoor-epublication/

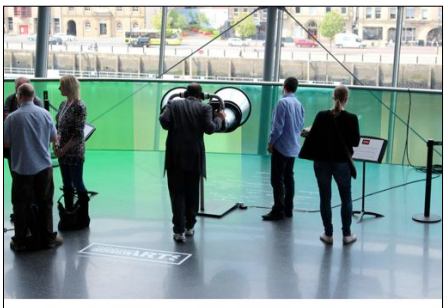
- different characters of interaction re Helen shy people.



Dominic Smith and Sneha Solanki Polytechnic: *Shredder* (2010)

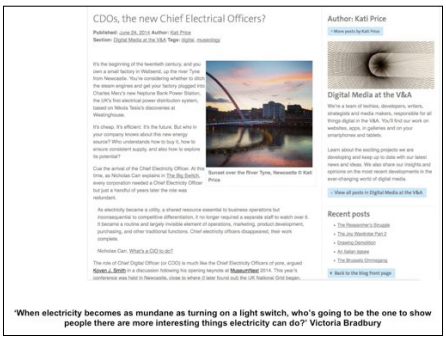
cited in Smith, Dominic (2011) *Models Of Open Source Production Compared To Participative Systems In New Media Art.* PhD Thesis: University of Sunderland.

Open source. New economic systems. Findings: Instigate or join in. Felix Stalder



Binaudios (2014) by artist Dominic Wilcox and creative technologist James Rutherford. Commissioned by Suzy O'Hara (CRUMB researcher) for Thinking Digital Arts.

Money, IP and authorship, methods of production, roles.



CDOs, the new Chief Electrical Officers?

Published: June 24, 2014 Author: Kati Price
Section: Digital Media at the V&A Tags: digital, museology

It's the beginning of the twentieth century, and you own a small factory in Wallsend, up the river Tyne from Newcastle. You're considering whether to ditch the steam engines and get your factory plugged into Charles Merz's new Neptune Bank Power Station, the UK's first electrical power distribution system, based on Nikola Tesla's discoveries at Westinghouse.

It's cheap. It's efficient. It's the future. But who in your company knows about this new energy source? Who understands how to buy it, how to ensure consistent supply, and also how to explore its potential?

Cue the arrival of the Chief Electricity Officer. At this time, as Nicholas Carr explains in The Big Switch, every corporation needed a Chief Electricity Officer but just a handful of years later the role was redundant.

As electricity became a utility, a shared resource essential to business operations but inconsequential to competitive differentiation, it no longer required a separate staff to watch over it. It became a routine and largely invisible element of operations, marketing, product development, purchasing, and other traditional functions. Chief electricity officers disappeared, their work complete.

Nicholas Carr, What's a CIO to do?

The role of Chief Digital Officer (or CDO) is much like the Chief Electricity Officers of yore, argued Koven J. Smith in a discussion following his opening keynote at Museums!ded 2014. This year's conference was held in Newcastle, close to where 2 later found out) the UK National Grid began.

Sunset over the River Tyne, Newcastle © Kati Price

Author: Kati Price

More posts by Kati Price

Digital Media at the V&A

We're a team of techies, developers, writers, strategists and media makers, responsible for all things digital in the V&A. You'll find our work on websites, apps, in galleries and on your smartphones and tablets.

Learn about the exciting projects we are developing and keep up to date with our latest news and ideas. We also share our insights and opinions on the most recent developments in the ever-changing world of digital media.

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- The Researcher's Struggle
- The Joy Wardrobe Part 2
- Drawing Demotion
- An Italian Jigsaw
- The Brussels Shmoopers

Back to the blog front page

'When electricity becomes as mundane as turning on a light switch, who's going to be the one to show people there are more interesting things electricity can do?' Victoria Bradbury

Convergence? Painting is not dead.

beryl.graham@sunderland.ac.uk
@berylgraham
www.crumbweb.org

Are good models of 'how' rather than should/could.

Research on how to do this **through practice.**

But does mean talking to each other, and challenging some hierarchies. Let the artists lead.

Ed Atkins