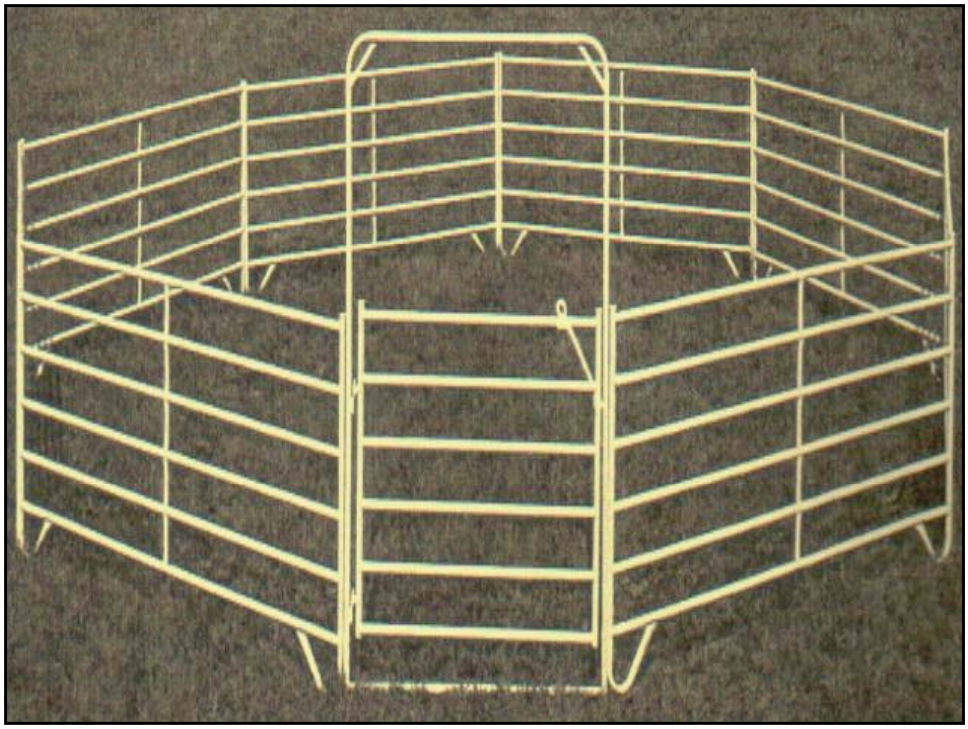
Innovative Studio Practice (ISP)
A Tasmanian School of Art (TSA) Sculpture Studio Initiative

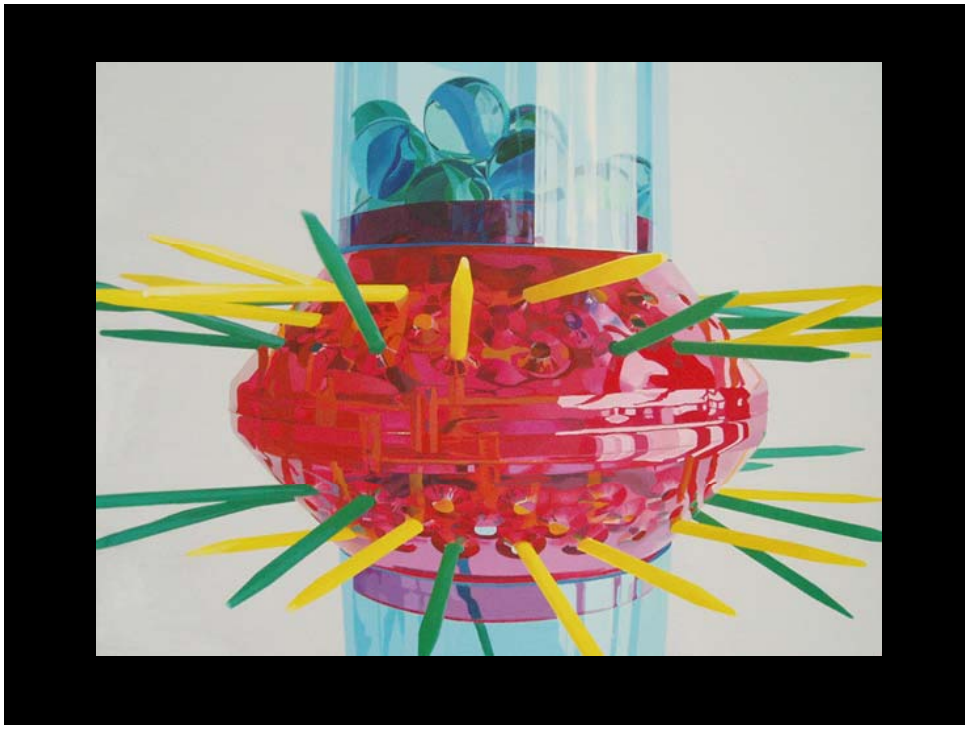
Learning through making in the studio is a fundamental component of learning about sculpture. Students learn through a combination of guided tasks (delivered in first year) through to self-driven projects (designed to develop their individual approaches) in third year. Second year studio units then operate as critical points of transition between a first-year-supported 'class' mode and a third year independently driven studio context.

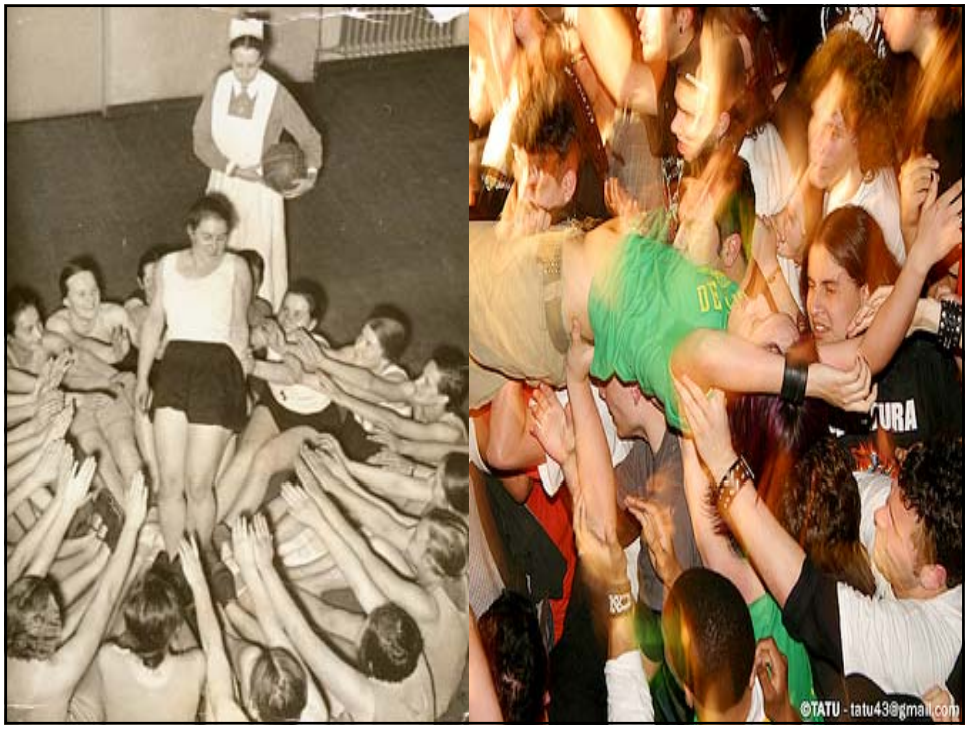
'… just imagine if we could get our sculpture students to work like that.'
Technician Stuart Houghton commenting on *GREENMACHINES* a 2009 school student sculpture workshop.



intentions (aims)
strategies (methodologies)
issues and challenges
progressive evaluation and refinement
outcomes

intentions (aims)

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Intended Learning Outcomes

On the completion of this unit you should, individually and in collaboration with others, be able to:

- **Explore diverse approaches to conceptual and practical experimentation in response to project briefs**

- **Apply knowledge and experience gained through group-centred learning and individual research to your practice**

- **Express ideas and processes through sculpture / installation, and via written, visual and oral presentation**

'I expected the unexpected, because I was primed by the lecturers that they too were experimenting. I found this exciting and encouraging, because I love the process of discovery'

2nd year sculpture student

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PROJECTS

TASK 1	**PUBLIC / PRIVATE (Semester 1)**	**SATELLITE (Semester 2)**	**30%**
EXPLORATION	**experimentation**	(with materials, processes and approaches)	
	reflection		
	development		
KNOWLEDGE	**research**	(form / content context)	
	evaluation		
EXPRESSION	**concept**		
	attunement	(your process of synthesizing concept and material)	
	resolution	(degree to which the content, form and context of the work are integrated)	
TASK 2	**PRESENTATION (Semester 1 and 2)**		**10%**
CONTENT	**research**	**resources** (the information that tracks your experience/activity)	
	interpretation	(how you process, absorb and apply this information)	
EXPRESSION	**presentation techniques**	(communication, audience engagement, time management)	
	documentation	(quality of images and sequencing)	
EXPLORATION	**experimentation**	(with materials, processes and approaches)	
	reflection		
FINAL TASK	**MAKER / NON MAKER (Semester 1)**	**SITE / NON SITE (Semester 2)**	**60%**
EXPLORATION	**experimentation**	(with materials, processes and approaches)	
	reflection		
	development		
KNOWLEDGE	**research**	(form, content, context)	
	evaluation		
EXPRESSION	**concept**		
	attunement	(your process of synthesizing concept and material)	
	resolution	(degree to which the content, form and context of the work are integrated)	
COMMUNICATION	**written**		

strategies (methodologies)

‘It was interesting to see ‘behind the scenes’,
what goes into preparing and teaching a visual arts subject.
Also group making without pressures of assessment’

2nd year sculpture student

'(this program/studio) provides a 'safe' environment…
other studios feel competitive, where your work will be highly judged'

2nd year sculpture student

Has the group experience contributed to your learning?

'Immensely! Week 1 – disparate interests/personalities provided movement; Week 2 – contention brought unexpected and new springboards; Week 3 – the 'shaking down' (settling process) brought a shower of ideas'

2nd year sculpture student

'Groups provided great platform for idea generation and also whilst people have different ideas which can be hard to combine, you learn what materials, objects etc, mean to different people, and this feeds into your work/research'

2nd year sculpture student

The free thinking experimentation meant any pre-constructed ideas didn't hinder the development of work, and narrow ideas about what the subject means, or has to look like, disappears.

2nd year sculpture student

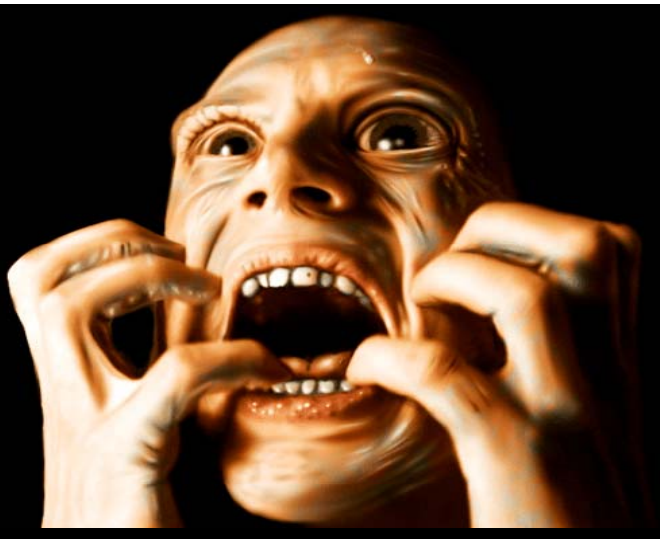
'Not being assessed on the group work has allowed us to feel more able/free to experiment because you're not thinking about what if it fails.'

2nd year sculpture student

'I have sensed a level of energy amongst the group that perhaps was missing from the last second year group. Perhaps throwing them in at the deep end has allowed them to discover what a valuable resource the others students around them can be.'

Mike Singe, Sessional Lecturer

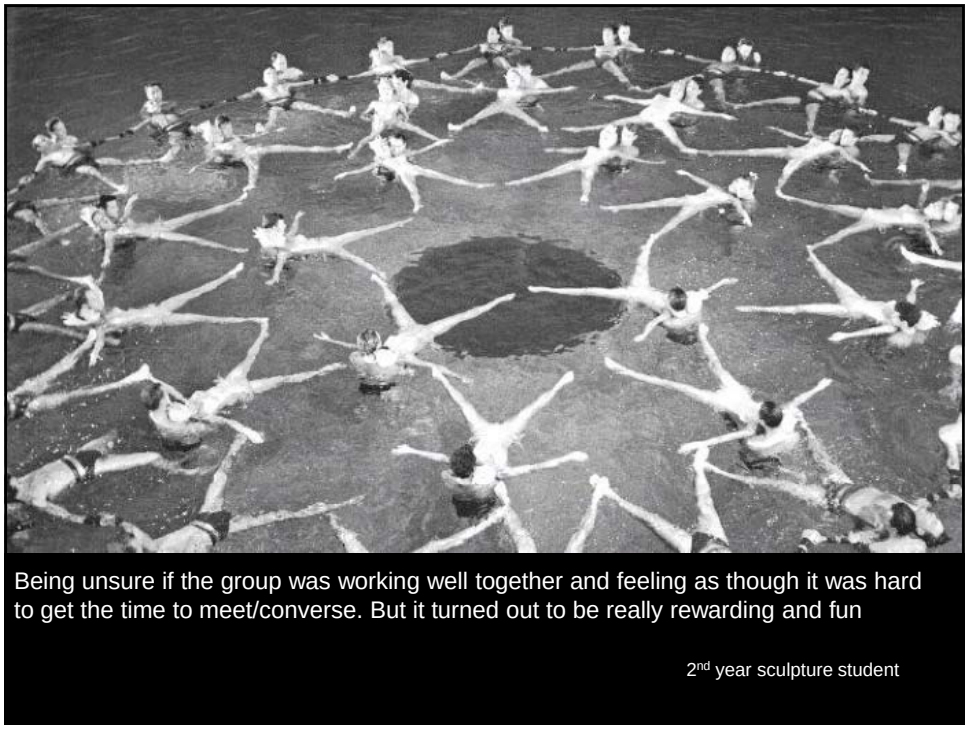
issues and challenges



Anxious about whether everyone would contribute.
I have previous experience in group work where the members didn't get together…
Anxious that assessment would be made on group work – not equitable'

2nd year sculpture student

'I am not often a team player except between equals: for example I wrote and performed in a revue often collaborating with people of equal talent... Collaboration only makes sense when it is voluntary and between equals. It makes no sense at all when there is a yawning, nay insurmountable intellectual and artistic gulf.'
2nd year sculpture student


Being unsure if the group was working well together and feeling as though it was hard to get the time to meet/converse. But it turned out to be really rewarding and fun
2nd year sculpture student

progressive evaluation and refinement

SECOND YEAR SCULPTURE FEEDBACK SHEET ONE –2010 (WEEK 3)

This feedback is designed to assist us in developing this unit. All feedback is anonymous. Try to outline your experience (including how you felt about the tasks and collaboration etc.) across the three weeks. Please use the back of this sheet if you run out of space. Thanks for your time.

- Briefly describe any expectations you had before commencing this unit?

- What has been the most challenging / rewarding / useful aspect of your experience in this unit? Week 1 / Week 2 / Week 3

- Has the group experience contributed to your learning?
Please describe Week 1 / Week 2 / Week 3

- How has the group experience affected how you experiment and research?
Week 1 / Week 2 / Week 3

- Any other comments

FEEDBACK/REFLECTION FOR 2ND YR SCULPTURE SEMESTER 1

What we have been impressed with
- Your capacity to embrace the situation and own it

What we want to attend
- Ways to channel your practice so you are supported to become an independent learner

What we observed
- Bonding
- Loosening up
- Playful experimentation
- Lack of assessment allowed for freedom in investigation

What we evaluated
- Valuable experience in discovery and group research
- Great way to start a semester
- More stress when it came to individual projects, as there was suddenly a rush to make OWN work that WAS assessed
- Quality of work for 1st task was exceptional for this level at the stage of the semester
- We noted that many people felt the freedom of the non-assessed tasks
- Fantastic to pair students up and swap works, let each other play with the development of the work. This brought up issues of preciousness etc
- Quality of work for first assessment was of an exceptional level

Reflection
- We will reduce the thematic components from 2 to 1 within the semester
- privilege your individual practice
- focus on learning through offsite exhibition opportunities
- deliver group activities choreographed to directly enrich and inspire your individual projects and research

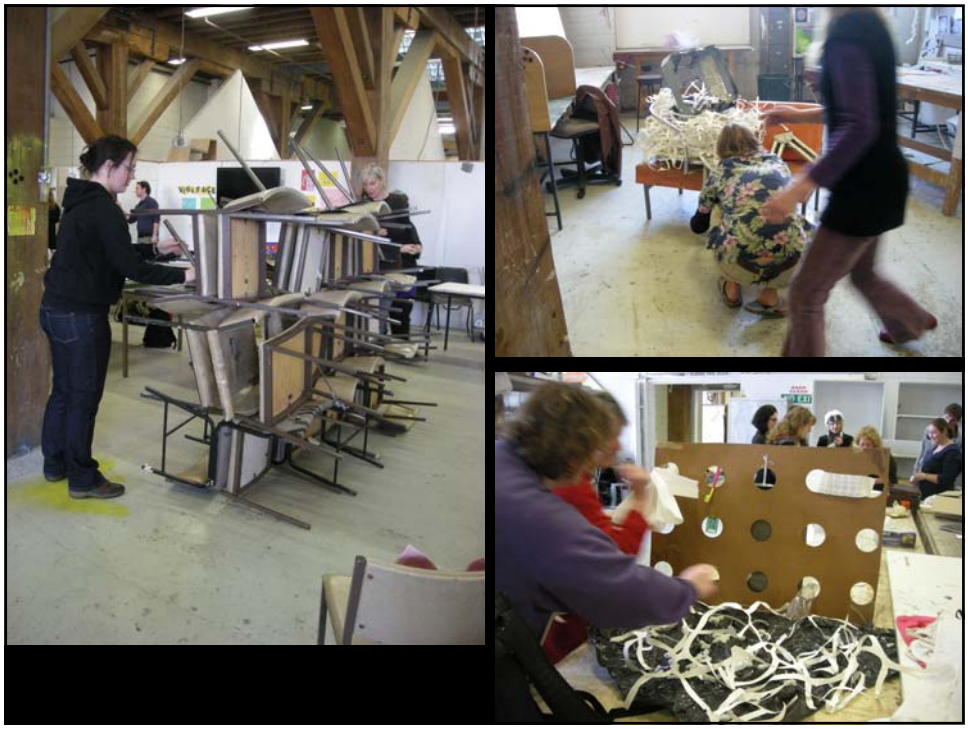
'Just a quick observation regarding perceived differences in the current 2nd year intake in Sculpture:

As a group they seem very focused and self-reliant, as individuals they appear self-directed and capable of "rising to the challenge" of producing work in a tertiary environment.'

Ian Munday
Sculpture Technician

EGGS

Experimental Greater Group Sessions



'I have found the EGGS program to be very helpful with my Metal and Wood sculpture classes.

The main things I have noticed that have changed are that the students appear to be creatively warmed up to the project when we start. They appear to have already broken down barriers to lateral thinking processes and are ready to respond to the project breif in an open minded fashion. This speeds up the early stages of a project and takes them to a position where they are ready to begin making their sculpture earlier than usual. '

Dr Colin Langridge, Sessional Lecturer

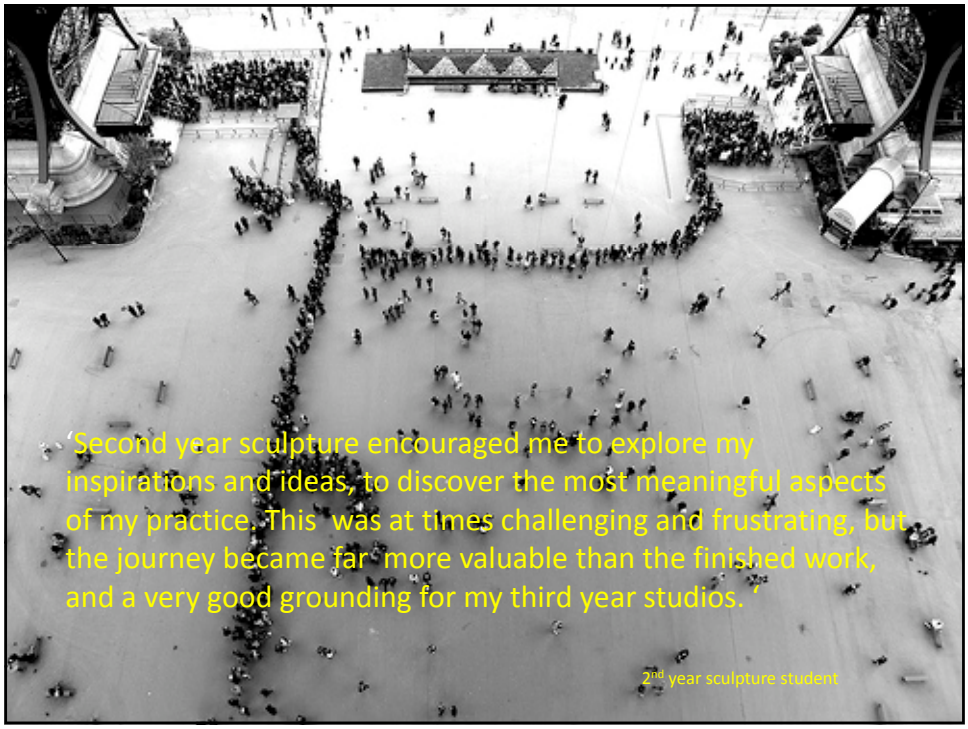
outcomes

**'I was impressed by the level of conceptual development in their work - the program allowed/forced them to let go of their 'standard' approach to making work.
The early emphasis on group work without the pressure of individual assessment I think was a key to developing the students confidence to not focus on an end product outcome and allow the work to develop through experimentation.'**

Mike Singe, Sessional Lecturer

EXIT

Nonlinear Book
Samara McIlroy


'Second year sculpture encouraged me to explore my inspirations and ideas, to discover the most meaningful aspects of my practice. This was at times challenging and frustrating, but the journey became far more valuable than the finished work, and a very good grounding for my third year studios.'
2nd year sculpture student