

RE: Infinite Dialogue

Richard Nash and Gary Clough

Richard.Nash@rca.ac.uk

Royal College of Art, UK

Abstract

The presentation outlines a novel method for practice-based research centred on the production of artists' books. It situates experimental approaches to foster co-production and collaboration in multidisciplinary contexts. Limited research exists in understanding how the unique qualities of the artists' book as a medium, and the processes and methods used in the creation, can be positioned to scaffold a process of mediating knowledge and hierarchies of practices. The insights from the study have significant benefits beyond art and design where it can be useful in STEAM contexts, especially where this involves diverse multidisciplinary groups and specialist/non-specialist participants.

The presentation will focus on a case study collaborative artists' book, *RE: Infinite Dialogue* (2023) and the background context and individual concerns. The research focused on designing a practice-based method centred on the artists' book edition as a visual verbatim facsimile. The initiating concept and conceptual anchor to the project centred on the etymology of the prefix Re-. As a facsimile, each iterative edition revisited, reused, and reassembled, making visible the traces of individual interpretations and interventions as well as the technologies and materials deployed in the process of collaboration. The collaboration started with Richard Nash, whose practice centres on artists' publishing, undertaking a process of analysing, documenting and decontextualising a cross-section of work spanning 15 years from Gary Clough's sketchbook practice. Taking a collaborative and multi-modal approach, a series of four iterative editions were developed following a cyclical method involving three phases: 1) transcription and documentation, 2) constellation and translation, and 3) publication.