

Primary Sources

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This assignment is based on the activities of an informal collective of which I am a member, 'Studio Group'. Our collective explores new possibilities for how, when, and where artwork is made, all inquiries motivated by our questioning the role of the artist's studio. By situating temporary group 'studio' sessions in unorthodox settings, often in public spaces, we have aimed at taking ourselves and our work into new areas, to breach the boundaries of what we think we are each capable of doing and what we believe our work to be about. As a result of these 'interventions', we have discovered that our approach to making art can take a parallel leap into new territories.

Each 'Studio Group' session is followed by a discussion and sharing of the work that each person has made during the time.

Materials

- Yourself
- A few simple tools or materials of your own choosing that you can carry easily
- A camera/notebook to document the activity

Instructions

1. Organise into a group, with no fewer than two people.
2. Suggest some spaces for the group to work. After drawing up a list of potential sites, choose one as a group. This site can be anywhere that you find interesting, and that is safe and accessible to the group. Try to think of a space that is unlike your studio or the place where you work now.
3. Bring a few things with you that you might be able to use, but don't over-prepare in advance. The point of the activity is to be intentionally unprepared and to allow this emphasis on spontaneity to inform your group's work.
4. Think of the space as your shared studio for the time that you are there. You should respond to the space as you find it, working with whatever comes to hand and is nearby. Try to do things quickly without pausing to consider why you are doing them or even if it is worth doing. You can work by yourself or with others. Try to make or do at least one thing while you are there, no matter how straightforward or simple it might seem. If the space feels inspiring, do as many things as you can. If you can't think of anything to do, don't worry about what the others are doing, just enjoy being in a different place for a while. Try to get a 'feel' for the place by exploring every part of it, looking at it closely. The point of this is not to make 'finished' works but simply to generate new ideas and ways of working; these can always be developed later.
5. The working session should last for approximately two hours (depending on the

space you choose).

6. Photograph or document everything you do, especially if you are leaving your work there and not taking it away with you.
7. For the discussion afterwards, find somewhere comfortable nearby where you can sit down to talk. If there are more than ten of you, split up into smaller groups. It is useful to hear how each person felt about working at and exploring the space. Discuss what each person has made during the time. Are there ideas to be developed? What could it lead to next?
8. If you've been inspired, choose a space for the next session. If you found this one more of a challenge than you would have liked, try it another time to see if you feel differently.

Sessions have been held in places as varied as a 19th century municipal dumping ground, a ‘Poundland’ £1 shop and a derelict train station. It is based on an idea that there are potentially rich sources of inspiration all around us that mostly go unseen and underused.

Going to a space with a different purpose and intention for being there means that you naturally look and absorb your surroundings in a way that you might not do otherwise. From a sensation of being ‘intentionally unprepared’, new ideas and approaches to making are generated. A more spontaneous approach is brought about by giving up some control of the working environment and by responding to the natural limitations and possibilities of a space.