

Issues in Contemporary Craft

PGVC1028

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

ECTS credits ¹	5	Programme	MA Design History & Material Culture MREs PhD
NQF level	9	School	School of Visual Culture
Stage	1	Module Co-ordinator	Dr Anna Moran
Trimester	2	Module Team	Dr Anna Moran
Contact	Neasa Travers, School of Visual Culture Secretary: visualculture@staff.ncad.ie		
Responsibility	The NCAD Academic Council and the School of Visual Culture Board have responsibility for this module.		

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades many makers working with media traditionally associated with craft – such as wood, clay, glass, metals and jewellery – have expanded the range of materials, ways of making, conceptual thinking and forms of display that are integral to their practice. In so doing they are contesting and questioning many of the expectations, assumptions, and ideologies surrounding craft. Drawing on key readings and case studies from the worlds of craft and making, this module invites students to explore critical understandings of the ways in which meaning is formed through choices of materials, processes and modes of display.

The aims of this module are to:

- Explore the most topical and pressing concerns in the field of contemporary craft practice and theory today;
- To support learners to make sophisticated and critical analysis of works of contemporary craft;
- To engage with the most sophisticated articulations craft theory and critique today.

2. What will I learn?

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

1. RESEARCH: Employ an appropriate range of sources that relate current practices in craft practice to broader cultural and critical issues.
2. EXPLORE the effects of technological innovation and developments in materials on contemporary craft.

¹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year (two trimesters)

3. ANALYSE: Demonstrate a critical understanding of several areas of contemporary craft practice.
4. COMMUNICATE these critical perspectives in an appropriate form determined by the student.

Module content

The module will take the form of classes which will combine presentations by the lead tutor and guest speakers (including contemporary craft practitioners), seminar discussions of pre-circulated texts and object analysis. Classes may take place *in situ* in key sites of contemporary craft such as museums and galleries, as well as maker’s workshops. Going beyond a survey course approach, seminars will be oriented to ensure that students develop essential interpretative tools and engage critically with specific themes which are pertinent to makers today, such as craft as resistance; time, materiality and making; craft, tradition and intangible cultural heritage; and the intersection of digital and material craft.

3. How will I learn?

The module will be delivered through a series of five 3-hour classes.

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures and seminars	15
Specified Learning Activities	15
Autonomous Student Learning	70
Total Workload	100

4. What learning supports are provided?

Bibliographic sources and models of writing / research practice will be supplied.

The course may include visits to museums, galleries and studios.

Indicative bibliography

Key sources for classes in this module include the following:

- Adamson, Glenn. 2018. *Fewer, Better Things : The Hidden Wisdom of Objects*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, Bloomsbury Publishing, Inc.
- Adamson, Glenn. 2018. *The Craft Reader*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
- Adamson, Glenn. 2013. *The Invention of Craft*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Adamson, Glenn. 2007. *Thinking through Craft*. Oxford: Berg.
- Adamson, Glenn, and Julia Bryan-Wilson. 2016. *Art in the Making : Artists and Their Materials from the Studio to Crowdsourcing*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Adamson, Glenn, and Victoria Kelley, eds. 2013. *Surface Tensions : Surface, Finish and the Meaning of Objects*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

- Adamson, Glenn, Martina Droth, and Simon Olding, eds. 2017. *Things of Beauty Growing : British Studio Pottery*. New Haven, Cambridge [UK], New Haven: Yale Center for British Art ; The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge ; Yale University Press.
- Bull, Knut Astrup, and André Gali, eds. 2018. *Material Perceptions*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche.
- Bunn, Stephanie J. 2016. "Who Designs Scottish Vernacular Baskets?" *Journal of Design History* 29 (1): 24–42. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/epv027>.
- Buszek, Maria Elena. 2011. *Extra/Ordinary : Craft and Contemporary Art*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Cheasley Paterson, Elaine, and Susan Surette. 2015. *Sloppy Craft. Post-Disciplinarity and Craft*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd.
- Coatts, Margot, ed. 1997. *Pioneers of Modern Craft : Twelve Essays Profiling Key Figures in the History of Twentieth-Century Craft*. Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press ; Distributed exclusively in the USA by St. Martin's Press.
- Elizabeth Garber. 2013. "Craft as Activism." *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* 33 (1).
- Fariello, M. Anna, and Paula Owen. 2004. *Objects and Meaning : New Perspectives on Art and Craft*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press.
- Harrod, Tanya. 2012. *The Last Sane Man : Michael Cardew, Craft, Colonialism and Counter-Culture in the 20th Century*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Harrod, Tanya. 2015. *The Real Thing : Essays on Making in the Modern World*. London: Hyphen Press.
- Harrod, Tanya, ed. 2018. *Craft*. London, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Whitechapel Gallery ; The MIT Press.
- Johnson, Jean. 2011. *Exploring Contemporary Craft : History, Theory and Critical Writing*. New York: Coach House Books.
<https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=760317>.
- Knott, Stephen. 2015. *Amateur Craft : History and Theory*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Moore, Jennifer Grayer, ed. 2019. *Patternmaking History and Theory*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
- Myzelev, Alla. 2015. "Creating Digital Materiality: Third-Wave Feminism, Public Art, and Yarn Bombing." *Material Culture* 47 (1): 58–78.
- Skelly, Julia. 2020. *Radical Decadence Excess in Contemporary Feminist Textiles and Craft*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474284981>.
- Vaananen N., Pollanen S., Kaipainen M., and Vartiainen L. 2017. "Sustainable Craft in Practice: From Practice to Theory." *Craft Research* 8 (2): 257–84.
https://doi.org/10.1386/crre.8.2.257_1.
- Wilkinson-Weber, Clare M., and Alicia Ory DeNicola, eds. 2016. *Critical Craft : Technology, Globalization, and Capitalism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Wood, D, ed. 2023. *Craft Is Political*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

5. Am I eligible to take this module?

Module Requisites and Incompatibles

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Incompatibles	None
Prior learning	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
Recommended	None

6. How will I be assessed?

The assignment for this module involves a critical engagement with a contemporary craft practitioner. Students will have the option to deliver their research in a range of appropriate formats including a podcast, transcription of an interview in the format of article or essay. The format will be proposed by the student and agreed by the module co-ordinator by the end of the second seminar. The format should support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment tool	% of final grade	Timing
Agreed format (see above)	100	End of Trimester
Total	100%	

Assessment tool	Learning outcomes assessed
Agreed format (see above)	All learning outcomes

7. Feedback, results and grading

Feedback

Written feedback will be given at the end of the module.

Grading

Students' assessments will be graded using the [NCAD Grade Descriptors](#).

8. What happens if I fail?

Students who do not complete the assessment task will have further opportunities to undertake this work in the following trimester. Students will not be able to qualify for the award on completion of this programme until the learning outcomes of this module have been met.

9. When and where is this module offered?

The module is delivered in Trimester 2 of the second year of the parttime programme. Classes take place in one of the School of Visual Culture seminar rooms at NCAD's Thomas St Campus.

10. How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the year, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. Students are also encouraged to complete the Irish Student Survey of Engagement. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, students are invited to discuss their experience on the module with their lecturers at any point during the year. Students can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate their comments to the staff.

**For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements,
consult your Programme or Module Handbook**