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## KEYWORDS

*Creative Collaborations, Trust, Reciprocal Understanding, Formative Experiences*

## ABSTRACT

*This paper is an autobiographical account of the author's experience of working in new creative partnerships. The paper specifically focuses upon how trust and shared understanding emerge in such partnerships particularly when collaborators had previously been strangers and work at a distance from one another.*

*Drawing on the author's experience of working in Portugal with three Portuguese practitioners (visual artist-producer and two architects) the outcomes of informal interviews held with the practitioners about their practice, training and individual cultural backgrounds is presented. From these interviews key descriptors emerged through which the author discusses the commonalities and differences between her own practice and that of her collaborators. These typological descriptors include: DIY Attitude, Work-Life Approach, Young Practitioners, Transdisciplinary, Day-to-Day Workers, Income Makers, Mobile Movers, Communicators, Players and Device Users. Further analysis the underlying influences upon ones practice also presents how formative teenage experiences influenced the development of the practitioner's aesthetic, style and attitude. The paper concludes with how these initial, exploratory findings and practitioner reflections could be extended through further in-depth research into the interrelations that influence the development of trust and understanding in distributed creative partnerships and networks.*

## INTRODUCTION

How in cases with relevantly little prior knowledge of our creative partners do we decide to work together and what influences such decisions? How does trust and understanding emerge in such partnerships?

In attempting to explain how people such make decisions, sociocultural theorists have explored how people coordinate their efforts or contributions when working together on shared tasks; that is, how they achieve intersubjectivity (Matusov, 2001; Smolka, De Goes, & Pino, 1995). Intersubjectivity focuses on how participants coordinate their contributions through joint activity, oriented either towards achieving consensus (e.g. agreements, positive support) or non-consensus (e.g. disputes, conflict) (Matusov, 2001). Intersubjectivity requires reciprocal understanding, where individuals establish a common understanding of the task (Edwards & Mercer, 1987), as well as an understanding of their individual differences (Kumpulainen & Mutanen, 1999; Littleton & Häkkinen, 1999, Matusov, 2001). One could argue that certain levels of intersubjectivity and reciprocal understanding take time to establish; it takes time to deeply understand another, to be able to respond appropriately under varying circumstances and to maintain and develop relations over differing contexts. Opportunities for establishing and maintaining intersubjectivity and reciprocal understanding are also influenced by varying psychological and physical tools, such as the languages that we speak and technologies we use.

Contemporary communication technologies such as the Internet, mobile telephony, online social networking software's (e.g. Flickr for photo sharing; Facebook the network and friendship platform) have changed the ways in which we interact, create and conduct our social and work life. This in turn has led to the formation and emergence of new social structures and networks (Castells, 1996; McCarthy, Miller, & Skidmore, 2004), which have increased our opportunities for expression as well as changing the duration, pace and quality of how we interact with one another. These resource changes in turn influence how we reach consensus, intersubjectivity and reciprocal understanding, particularly when working at a distance from each other. Complementing a sociocultural perspective Capra (2004) notes that understanding how trust emerges within networked partnerships requires understanding how meaning is constructed. For many years sociologists and psychologists have considered trust as one of the fundamental building blocks for our personal development and inter-group interactions (Brewer, 1997; Erikson, 1950; Kramer & Jost, 2003), as it supports social cohesion and mutual bonding (Durkheim, 1933; Giddens, 1984, 1990, 1991; Luhmann, 1988; Jalava, 2001). From this perspective one could argue that trust is potentially an inseparable aspect of intersubjectivity and reciprocal understanding. However within the literature on creative collaboration the question of how trust and understanding emerges within distributed creative networks and partnerships is seldom addressed. The question explored within this paper focuses on this issue by exploring what influences the development of trust and understanding within new creative partnerships, particularly in the situation where the partners had previously been strangers to one another and work at remote distances.

## METHODOLOGY

The paper draws on autobiographical and narrative approaches to understanding one's lived experience through the retelling of one's individual life story (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, Denzin, 1989, Riessman, 1993). The paper draws specifically on the authors experience by presenting an interpretative and self-reflective account of her

experience with working with three recent and new creative partners. Consequently it is necessary to acknowledge that the findings draw upon the author's personal experiences. Consequently although the findings are rich and descriptive, in their current form they are limiting in their applicability to other contexts and are best considered as the bases for further in-depth research. As a result, in reporting on this early stage reflective practitioner viewpoint an autobiographical and case study approach proved the best means of sharing the initial findings.

A case study approach allowed for the reporting of 'phenomenon within its real life context' (Robson 2002, p. 178), particularly when 'the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 2003, p. 2). The author's story of how she came to work in Portugal and how she met the creative collaborators is presented. This is supplemented by providing a summary of the Portuguese practitioners background.

Transcripts of recordings of informal interviews held with the participant practitioners are also presented. These informal interviews were held in partner's homes. The structure for each conversation was open and fluid. Prior to each conversation the author had explained that the conversation would be recorded and would be used as the bases for an exploratory research paper. A small set of primer questions were prepared and used as opening questions and/or prompts during the interviews, which included describing: 1. Your Practice and Current Work; 2. Your Educational background and Portuguese working context; 3. How we (*the author and practitioner*) met; 4. Our working relation.

Conversations recorded with MM (visual artist/curator) were recorded in her home in Lisbon on the 15 July 2008 and lasted 1hr. 01 mins. Conversations recorded with architects JT and PV (architects), who were interviewed together, were held on the balcony of PV's home in Barcelona on the 16 July 2008 and lasted 1hr. 27 mins. All conversations were digitally recorded as mp3., files and stored and played using Apple, iTunes software.

A pre-interview conversation, with MM, which was not recorded, but during which extensive notes were taken took place in a café in Lisbon on the 14 July 2008 and lasted 1hr. 02 mins. This pre-conversation also informed the findings presented in this paper.

Within the extracts provided in this paper, short punctuation marks such as (...) indicate pauses in the conversation as well as 'um' and 'yeah' responses, which for ease of reading, have been omitted. Longer breaks (.....) mark sections where some of the transcript has been cut, so as to provide the reader with a clearer sense of the overall ideas expressed. The extracts also keep to individuals original ways of expressing their opinions in English. The practitioners who took part in this case study were also given the opportunity to read the paper before it was submitted for publication, so they could provide comment and feedback.

## **CASE STUDIES: CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND - AUTHOR AND CREATIVE PARTNERS DISCIPLINARY HISTORIES AND INITIAL MEETINGS**

The following sections provide a summary introduction to the author's origin, educational and professional background and that of the Portuguese practitioners, MM (visual artist/curator) and JT and PV (architects).

### **TD Authors Background: Artist, Researcher and Director**

Born in Dublin, Ireland, the author was raised in the Irish countryside, where she attended primary and second school. She carried out her third level at the University of Glasgow, Scotland (completing her undergraduate in theatre studies and psychology and MA in psychology with a focus on music therapy). At The Open University, England, the author carried out her PhD study, which focused on the creative collaborative processes when using music technology in formal and informal settings. Since the age of 18 she has been involved in the arts directing and producing events and making live art and theatre. During her MA and PhD she worked professionally as a live and visual artist, working freelance with theatre companies and in collaboration with other artists.

On completing her PhD, the author went into applied research (2003-06) specialising in the uses of emerging technologies and media for learning. In 2005, she formally constituted an arts company she had set up as a student and she now directs and runs the company as a professional intermedia arts and research collective. The company is based in Bristol, where they have a hot-desk at a local media lab. The author also works extensively within other countries (mainly within Europe including Portugal, Finland and Spain). When working aboard libraries, friend's homes and lodgings and/or local studios or offices become ones base. Alongside working in the arts company, the author also works as an independent artist-research (mainly for broadcasters and the public sector). She also works as a part-time lecturer and MA supervisor. The authors transdisciplinary, intermedia practice bridges many fields mainly performance, visual and sound art, location art, design, social and educational psychology.

The reason that the author began to work in Portugal was due to meeting IF, an artist-musician and Creative Director of a leading Portuguese technology company. They met while participating in a location-media workshop in Finland (January 2006). At this workshop the author presented a project which IF recommend would be interesting and worth bringing to Portugal. Subsequently though the support of IF, the author brought this intermedia project to Portugal. In sum, since May 2007, the author has been living and working sporadically (1 week-3 months) in Portugal, developing and executing various independent, intermedia artist lead projects. The practitioners, whose conversations inform this paper, are those whom she met in the last year (from Feb 2008) and with whom she continues to work with.

### **MM Background: Visual Artist, Curator and Art Producer**

Born and raised in Lisbon, all MM's education (primary, secondary and third level) was carried out in Lisbon. A recent graduate (2008) from the Faculdade de Belas Artes, Da universidade de Lisboa, where she specialized in video, drawing and theory, she describes herself s 'artist-slash-producer-slash curator-slash...' (taken from conversations, on 15 July 08).

MM is an active participant on the young and vibrant Lisbon and Portuguese art scene. During her studies she gained experience working as an associate executive producer and curator for the student-run, media art festival 'Bang'<sup>i</sup> (May, 2008). In 2008, she has also set up the Portuguese Video Art Archive<sup>ii</sup>, an initiative, which she developed in response to the lack of the awareness of this art forms history and accessibility, in Portugal. She runs the archive from her home, which is also the base for her main other projects, her freelance art productions and her own video arts practice.

On the 9 May 2008, the author met with MM for the first time. The introduction came through a mutual artistic colleague. At this meeting the author invited MM to work on an intermedia festival, which she had received

funding to direct in Lisbon in June 2008. At this first meeting MM agreed to work as immediately as a producer on the event.

### **JT and PV Background: Architects**

JT and PV are members of the same architecture collective, which PV established in 2006 with another colleague. Currently the collective includes four members and they describe their work as the combination of architecture and urbanism techniques with a focus on debating the relationships between humans and their environments, though the concepts of hospitality, property, continuity and permanence.

Two members of the collective are based in Lisbon, Portugal and two (JT and PV) in Barcelona, Spain. The group has no physical studio but work virtually (using email, Skype, Instant Message) to develop their projects, which include proposing ideas for new buildings, entering architectural competitions, public art and publications. They also met face-to-face when the opportunities emerge in Lisbon and when their paths cross in other places in the world. The collective recently won (June, 2008) their first architecture prize and also have had their work published in an online architecture magazine (mudot). For this paper, two members of the collective were interviewed JT and PV.

JT and PV were born and raised in Lisbon. They know each other since they were fourteen years old and attended the same secondary school. During the conversation, they described each other as 'brothers' where during this school period they 'shared' everything. Although they studied architecture in the same school, Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade, Técnica de Lisboa (FAUTL), they were in different years. JT, graduating in 2004; PV in 2005. Both JT and PV also worked and studied for periods in The Netherlands. JT spent a two-and-half years (between 2004-06) working in The Netherlands, completing during this period the one year internship, necessary for entering the professional body of architects, plus he also worked as a junior architect in two difference offices. PV spent six months (Jan-Aug, 2006) in The Netherlands, where he completed his internship as required for his undergraduate course. Currently JT and PV are living and working in Barcelona. JT works full-time in a local architecture firm, PV works full-time on the collective which he set up and which JT is a member. PV also works in other freelance jobs to support his income.

The author's relation with JT and PV began when she informally met PV, in Berlin, in February 2008. Shortly after this period they (the author and PV) exchanged work material, which lead to further conversations via Instant Messenger (IM), the online chat software, which allows for real-time text and dialogue. These conversations lead to the invitation (April 2008) to participate in the intermedia festival, which the author was directing in Lisbon and which MM was also working as a producer. In sum, the author commissioned JT and PV's architecture collective to make a public art piece for the festival. Due to the success of this first working relation they continue to work together.

### **COMMON CHARACTERISTICS**

In considering how trust forms in new creative partnerships the first stage of reflecting on this issue from a practitioners perspective considers the commonalities and differences between our working practices and how

our background experiences may have informed or supported the working bonds that developed between us. As PV reflected upon his past experiences in working in architectural offices:

*“...it’s about intimacy and this is something that fails a lot of times, in work groups, in offices..... I mean, that if you can not communicate freely with your partners, at work, the work will resent it, and communicate freely, is about speaking, somehow, languages, that are understood for everyone, and saying what you think, in a way that is not, destructive, you know and accepting what they say, and sharing, so eh, so when you have this, office, entrepreneur, company structure, sometimes, you don’t have this and I have this experience from working with people, where the communication was not so good, you know. And every time the communication was not so good, the work was not so good ....because then you start to put some personal things into this and this practice, and this daily life, and in that way it is about intimacy, it is about exposure, you know, its about trust also....” (Extract 1: PV, BCN, 16 July 2008)*

What PV raises in this extract is how intimacy can break down when we can not communicate ‘freely’ with our partners, when there is a lack of a critically supportative context in the work environment which in turn blocks the development and formation of certain intimacies, which can be necessary for good work to develop. The question is how such intimacies develop and what influences their formation particularly in new creative partnerships and when working at a distance. To address this question the following section summaries potential *attitude*, *practitioner profile* and *communication* descriptors that emerged from the data and support a first stage analysis of how we understood the differences and similarities between our creative practices.

#### **Attitude Descriptors:**

1. *DIY Attitude* – All the practitioners whose work is presented in this paper could be described as having a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) attitude. We have all independently set up and created our own companies, productions, working contexts and conditions. MM has set up the Portuguese Video Art Archive and is deeply involved in several art initiatives in Portugal. JT and PV, despite the lack of opportunities in Portugal for young architects and general economic conditions within the country (e.g., low wages in comparison to the rest of Europe, but some similar living costs, current recession in the building and construction business), have set up their own virtual studio and are actively creating work. The author since her teenage years has set up and established various arts initiatives, including an arts company, European intermedia art network and art festivals in the UK and in Portugal. Although we can all be identified as sharing a DIY spirit there are differences between our practices in relation to the content and form of these DIY experiences. For example there are differences in *scale and reach* (e.g., the author has worked across local, national and international levels; MM, JT and PVs more at a local and national level; variations also occur in audiences and numbers participating in these projects) and *execution and support* (e.g., private or publicly funded, commercial enterprises etc).
2. *Work-Life Approach* – We share a similar work-life attitude where the boundaries between what is work and what is life, are not so clear-cut. We do not have 9-to-5 jobs; nor do we always have the weekend free and we often work individual and together quite late into the night. However we all like to socialize and we share similar energies and passions (music, cooking, sport, traveling etc). When working face-to-face we also spend much time socializing together, which further supports and enhances the bonds that we have formed. As we predominantly live and work apart from each other the influence of these social occasions further support our understandings of each other’s personal viewpoints and attitudes.

### Practitioner Profile Descriptors:

1. *Young Practitioners* – Professional speaking we can all be identified as young practitioners. MM has just completed university; the architecture collective which JT and PV are members is just over a year old and the arts company, which the author runs is constituted and running in its current form, only three years. Collectively we are between the ages of 23-31 years and aside from our own personal life and work; we do not have dependents, such as partners or children. We all have similar socioeconomic backgrounds and have all received third level education, with our study periods ranging from 5 years (undergraduate) – 7 years (this includes for some undergraduate, architectural training, Master and /or Doctoral thesis).
2. *Transdisciplinary* – Within our practice we all draw upon and mix several disciplinary perspectives. However JT and PV (architects) are the most 'traditional' in that they are both only formally trained in architecture, although PV spent one year in art school. MM's formal training was a combination of a variety of visual arts disciplines including painting, sculpture, video and film. The author has the most cross-disciplinary training, studying theatre studies and psychology, which has led to a specific art-social science transdisciplinary practice. Despite these formal educational differences our day-to-day practice demands that we all engage with a cross sector of professionals. Consequently the realities of our day-to-day working context are best described as transdisciplinary with multiple professional inputs.
3. *Day-to-day Workers* – MM and TD work on a daily bases within the arts. JT and PV work daily on their architecture practice, JT working full-time in an architecture firm in Barcelona, PV working full time on projects he runs through the architecture collective he set up and which JT is also a member. PV supplements his income by also working in various freelance jobs from translating, to conference administration. To support their art practices MM and TD both work as freelance producers, MM for other art companies, TD in broadcasting and for the public sector. This mix of working experiences and livelihoods is an outcome of the living and career choices that we have made but also a functional outcome that is driven in part by economic necessity.
4. *Income Makers* - As well as simultaneously juggling varying working positions the range of how we earn our income varies from paid, waged work gained through working in part or full time employment; to paid contractual freelance work; to funded work received through public bodies, local, national and/or international institutions and trusts; to in-kind supports from sponsors; to self-supported work, which is unwaged or carried out without any direct financial gain. The latter form of work often has other intrinsic motivational, professional or exploratory values associated with it.

### Communication Descriptors:

1. *Mobile Movers* – Although originally coming from small countries on the edge of Europe (e.g., Ireland and Portugal), within our personal histories we have all chosen to carry out periods of our education abroad. TD has carried out all her higher education outside of Ireland (where she was born), choosing instead to study in Scotland and the UK. MM spent an Erasmus year in Poland and JT and PV both spent periods of their education and training in The Netherlands. In addition all participants travel regularly, at least within Europe, availing of cheap air fares, which allows relevantly easy travel between the cities and countries that participants have choose to live and work within. Of the people whose thoughts informed this paper, currently, three of the participants are not living in the countries of their birth – the author, JT and PV all currently live and work in Barcelona. In this respect there is a certain experience of mobility and other cultures, which we share. On this bases one could argue we identify ourselves, not simply through our country of origin but through a wider, European identity and sensibility. This in turn, supports our modes of communication, with the English language having

become the core means through which we speak. It is important to note that although English is our common language, the author is the only person within this sample group who cannot speak any other language, fluently (e.g., JT and PV speak Spanish fluently and MM, PV and JT also speak some French).

2. *Communicators* –the sample group could be described as natural communicators. We all like to talk, debate and discuss ideas and that this is one of the initial attractors, which may have encouraged us to continue to work together. It could be argued that the desire as well as the ability to critically engage and push each other's viewpoints, in a constructive rather than destructive way, has enabled us individually, to arrive at deeper understandings of what we are doing or trying achieve within our own practice and collectively.
3. *Players and Device Users* - We are consummate, daily, users of various communication devices, particularly those that are online, free and/or cheap. We have all grown up within the cultures of television, home videos and cameras, computers and computer games, which no matter how direct our experiences with these tools, has informed our ways of thinking and communicating. For example, currently, the architecture collective communicate remotely with each other via Skype, an online free text messaging and cheap phone call software and Instant Messenger, free online text messaging tool. The author also uses both these software's to communicate with JT and PV, while MM, predominantly uses email to communicate at a distance. Daily, we all use computers and mobile phones. Computers been central too all our practices not just as devices for communicating but also devices through which we create our work, with various software's been the material or canvas of our practice. Computers are also portal entertainment units through which we play games, music, movies etc and they play a role not just in our work, but also in how we socialize and share references. For the most we use mobile phones to text each other, as it is cheaper than calling, as we live in different countries. In addition to chat-based tools, we all use blogging software, which again is free. Blog tools have allowed us to create our own websites and online project spaces, through which we can publish and disseminate our work. Aside from these tools been free, the advantage of blogs is that we can independently control and manage our own online presence. The importance of these communication and publication devices for supporting distributed communication and young practitioners work is paramount and cannot be neglected. As MM discusses, when describing her working style (Extract 1):

*"Emails, they are great... blogs... they are perfect, you don't pay for a website, everybody sees your work, every art scene, all the art scene in Porto is founded on blogs... and it works... shhh (making the sound) – it's just lightnings happening... so I like to use the free supports..."* (Extract 1, Margarida, LIS: 15.06.08)

In the above extract MM indicates how online services that 'you don't pay for' are essential to her practice, allowing her to work independently and at a with limited resource publish and advertise her work and that of others. The 'lightening' speed of tools such as blogging allows for independents to extend their reach far beyond their immediate locality and market their work on a global interconnected platform, the web. The accessibility provided by the web potentially extends the critical development one practice as you can immediate view the work of others, which in turn pushes your own ideas and critical facilities. The importance of peer-to-peer networks, particularly in formative teenage years is extended in the following section.



## FORMATIVE EXPERIENCES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON DEVELOPING ONES STYLE

*“.....I remember, like, that when I started to go out, in Bairro Alto (central, going-out area of Lisbon), it was not to drink, it was to drink but to talk, we'd spend hours and hours talking, it was until I entered university, where one of my best friends, that, we grew up in this way.....this way of being, we helped each other to grow up in this direction.....this group that used to discuss and used to bring these things up, and trying to resolve these things .....one is a musician, one is a artist, and the other is an architect.....in a way these, years were very important, from 15-18 years.....I think these were very important.....these are things, I will never forget, these belong to my education, more than maybe some years of university, was these years....of talking hours, and hours with these people.....” (Extract 2: JT, BCN: 16 July 2008)*

In Extract 2, JT is referring to formative, teenage experiences with friends, with whom he shared an intimacy and who in his own words 'helped' him to 'grow', informing what he called his 'attitude' his aesthetic direction and approach as an architect. In acknowledging this formative experience, he also notes how 'important' this period was and learning how to 'discuss' and 'resolve' ideas. For him, this period of his life formed part of his conceptual training ground, which he considers as 'belonging' to his education and in some ways, as relevant if not more important than his years at university.

In a similar way MM also acknowledged how formative experiences also shaped her approach. Specifically she referred to Lisbon's independent art scene, which as a teenager in the late 1990s-early 2000's, she would go out and 'give it a try' – often on her own, to new places, such as the independent cinema screening, which took place in the shopping centre, in the immigrant quarter of Lisbon. The producers, which screened works here later, developed into the IndieLisboa, Festival for International Independent Cinema. MM also recalled attending concerts in independent artist run space such as, Estúdio da Bomba Suicida and Zé dos Bois (ZDB) in Bairro Alto and shows by theatre companies such as Casa Conveniente and Teatro Praga. In recalling these experiences MM from a young age was exposed to a strong counter-culture, where she seen the growth and transformative power of independent art initiatives within her locality.

What JT and MM's experiences reveal is how early pivotal moments, in their teenage years, were central to the development of their 'attitude' (JT) and 'DIY spirit' (MM). People and places supported their thinking and provided intimate atmospheres where as young people, they could take risks and through conversation, debating of ideas or though the attending independent artist initiatives. Similarly the author's early experiences at university and specifically in Glasgow provided fertile ground to test and explore ideas. Although JT and MM drew on formative experiences where they were debating with peers or viewing the work of others, which they found inspiring. The author found that the practical formative experiences which she received through putting on events with peers in Glasgow, writing applications, managing projects and carrying out public art projects were in comparison direct hands-on experiences which fundamentally allowed one to test ideas in public, receive peer critique, practically build skills necessary for professional life, learn how to deal with successes as well as failures and learn how to administer and manage a project (e.g, apply for licences, source materials etc). It could be argued that such early experiences have been influential in shaping the DIY spirit and working attitude that we may recognise in each other and which in some ways forms the building blocks which grounds our current professional working relations.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper presented an autobiographical account of the author's reflections on recent professional creative partnerships with Portuguese practitioners. The paper emerged from consideration of these relations and specifically how trust and understanding emerge within new partnerships, where partners had previously been strangers.

Taking a sociocultural perspective, which emphasises the importance of intersubjectivity and reciprocal understanding in collaboration, it was argued that trust could be considered as an essential and inseparable component of such relations. In exploring this issue it became apparent that there is a dearth of work or knowledge on the role of trust particularly in distributed creative collaborations. Consequently this paper provided an opportunity to examine this issue drawing on the author's experience. This led to reporting the outcomes of an initial first stage analysis of interviews held with three Portuguese colleagues through which analysis of our professional practice was made.

Primary analysis of these interviews provided a typology of key descriptors, which it could be argued, grounded the success of these first time collaborations. In clustering these descriptors under the themes of: *Attitude, Practitioner Profile* and *Communication*, one could see how 'labels' such as: *DIY Attitude, Work-Life Approach, Young Practitioners, Transdisciplinary, Day-to-Day Workers, Income Makers, Mobile Movers, Communicators, Players and Device Users*, provided a common scaffold through which we implicitly recognized each other. This in turn provided some common ground through which understanding and trust could emerge. In addition despite our physical distance tools such as Skype, blogs, Instant Message played a fundamental role in allowing our initial meetings and connections to continue. This was further supported by opportunities, which the author had to work in Lisbon and Barcelona and met with the partners face-to-face.

In sum what has emerged from this exploratory study is a typology through which further research questions can be defined and the role of trust further examined in relation to the authors professional practice and her position in working with other artists in distributed, technically mediated networks. Although further work is necessary the paper contributes to the field by providing an intimate account of the interrelations that informs professional artistic practice. The implications for this work potentially can lead to a greater understanding of how meaning, trust and understanding is co-constructed and fostered within distributed artistic networks and the contextual interrelations that are called upon to maintain and sustain them.

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## NOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Bang – Media Art Festival, Lisbon (May 2008) was established by the students of the Faculdade de Belas Artes, Da Universidade de Lisboa. Initially the programme aimed at providing students with software workshops, which they did not receive during their schooling but developed into a larger event, which include performances, workshops and concerts, with many of the key members of the Lisbon media art scene participating.

<http://www.bangfestival.net/>

<sup>ii</sup> The Portuguese Video Art Archive was established by MM, in 2008 to support the understanding, promotion, history and accessibility of cotemporary video art practice in Portugal. <http://ptvideoartarchive.blogspot.com/>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thanks Professor Pam Burnard for her invitation to submit work for this publication and to the reviewers comments and feedback. I would also like to thank my colleagues Maragrida, Viana and João for giving the permission to record our conversations and discuss the intimates of our collaborations.