



Lost worlds: how the  
museum remembers  
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This paper describes the creative and critical contexts that inform the interpretation of artifacts created during art practice, which are contextualized and interpreted as evidence for some phenomenon. Interpretive processes resist reductive analysis - there is no simple, underlying form to be found. Instead, the interpretive contexts that surround the theories and practices under review will invoke a series of fracturing, entwining, and repositioning processes. During this process the creative and critical contexts that inform practice-based research are deconstructed, braided, and repositioned during the inquiry process. These surrounding influences include Forming Contexts, Interpretive Contexts, and Critical Cultural Contexts. Consequently, artefacts created as a result of visual arts research have the capacity to be interpreted as evidence in a range of robust ways.

The methodological rationale here is that a research tradition of defining, from apriori perspectives, all the relevant theoretical contexts within which an inquiry is situated (eg historical, philosophical, cultural, political), is at best a limited position to frame any inquiry. Scholarship will always require diligence and vigilance in critiquing prevailing views and present practices. This awareness, however, needs to be equally directed towards what is unknown, rather than only what is known. The critical art researcher will also raise questions about omitted knowledge, content structure, modes of discourse, positions of privileged information and the like, as overall theories and practices are brought under scrutiny. But this is a messy process that requires a capacity to negotiate between complex and simple realities, often at the same time, for there may not be an elegant or parsimonious resolution - there rarely is. In all likelihood new insight is mostly particular rather than general, singular rather than plural, for this is a more realistic description of how experience is enlivened and knowledge is accrued.