

ABSTRACT

## Drawing on grief: Adapting heuristic inquiry in a practice led thesis

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In this presentation, I consider the role and the nature of heuristic inquiry in the creation of hybrid documentaries. These hybrid documentary artefacts combine interviews, observational video and various applications of animation to translate the narratives of grief into visual and sonic stories. In this research study, it is the grief we experience due to the loss of a loved one which is investigated. I am positioned as an 'inside researcher' (Kirpitchenko & Voloder, 2014) who examines a question that is both personally significant and existential. Using a heuristic inquiry through a self-investigation, a self-dialogue and a reflection, I build on my knowledge about the understanding of loss. This presentation uses my initial case studies of a practice-led inquiry to examine how a heuristic inquiry can be employed to enable a documentary maker to navigate internal pathways of the self, while interpreting other people's shared, reflective narratives of grief. I will demonstrate how a heuristic inquiry can activate plasticity in exploration and heighten the potentials for discovery in the pursuit of a creative practice. Building on Wood's (2004) assertion that heuristics is more concerned with discovery than the pursuit of proof, this research study considers a heuristic inquiry as a conceptual framework (Douglass & Moustakas, 1990), that engages intuitive questioning which enables similarities, analogies or homologies to surface while artistic data is being generated (Kleining and Witt, 2000). In the session, four novel processes of heuristic engagement will be discussed: maintaining a consciously poetic sensibility that embraces the vulnerability of the practitioner whilst protecting the interviewee; extending periods of indwelling and reflection on the artefacts produced; practicing aroha (showing consideration, connection, love and respect); and pursuing and embracing serendipity as a means of enhancing the possibilities for discovery and novel approaches to practice.

### References

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