Visualising the Unseen

Drawing the hidden aspects of neurological disorders

Rachel Daniel

1st Year PhD Student

Lancaster University
An ‘Alternative MRI’ created by participants at University College London’s Epilepsy Research Centre
Stills from a moving portrait of an epilepsy sufferer
Research Questions

How can drawing act as a common, shared language?

Can drawing be used as a tool with which to understand and record experience as well as engendering empathy?

How can the definition of drawing within medicine be extended to represent the non-physical aspects of neurological disorders?
Parkinson’s Disease

**Communication**
- Problems forming words
- Reduced facial expressions
- Small handwriting

**Movement**
- Tremor
- Affects automatic movement
- Rigidity and slowness of movement
‘Disability and art work together because in order to have a good life with a disability, you have to constantly, every day, learn to re-invent your world.’ (Participant in Workshop 2, 04/04/2016)

‘A child’s earliest drawings are not guided by visual exploration of space but an exploration of movement, at its origin graphic expression is blind.’ (Tisseron: 2012, p.33)
Drawing as a universal language and accessible research tool suited to multi-partner collaboration

Creating new neural pathways through purposeful, thoughtful movement

Kinaesthetic empathy: the ability to experience empathy merely by observing the movements of another human being
English National Ballet’s Dance for Parkinson’s programme
Example of Vanuatu Sand Drawing
Interrupted rhythms create visual equivalences for how cycles of breath, pulse and walking rhythms are affected by Parkinson’s.

Drawing as a calming focused activity that increases a sense of wellbeing. Drawings that disrupt and challenging force spontaneous movement.

Fleeting visual metaphors for illness in the form of natural images.

Impetus to move physical activity energy flow impetus to move

→  ➔  ➔  ➔
Email
racheldanielart@gmail.com

Website
www.racheldanielart.co.uk

Blog
www.racheldaniel17.wordpress.com