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Editorial

From Craft to Code and Back Again: Rethinking Art, Materiality and Exhibition Practices in the 21st Century

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1. Introduction

This Special Issue invited contributions that critically examine how exhibition practices are navigating the shifting space of materiality in an age defined by digital technology, algorithmic culture, and increasing socio-political instability. It emerged from an increasingly urgent proposition: matter matters. As immersive environments and generative AI become increasingly embedded in artistic and curatorial processes, we ask: what does it mean to create with and through matter today? How does this converse and critically interact with tools and platforms that are deeply entangled with extractive, corporate-military infrastructures and ideologies? Can the resurgence of craft, with its emphasis on process and embodied friction, be seen as an antipode to the automated solutions offered by machine-learning tools?

To say that matter matters is essentially to insist that the creative practice cannot be understood apart from the conditions through which it comes into being. This goes beyond merely romanticising the physical over the digital or to question whether digital technologies have displaced material practices. In any case, code constitutes a form of craft as well, and digital technologies are themselves deeply material: they rely on energy, servers, cables, buildings, people, and structures of extraction, which all add up to a highly material geopolitical infrastructure. Correspondingly, physical materials are not outside these infrastructures of power either: historically, analogue objects (paper, textiles, paint pigment, metals, etc.) carry their own histories of production, colonialism, environmental damage, and stock value (Malatsie and Xie 2025). In this context, we looked for contributions that explored what kind of worlds and relations new technologies can enable.

Throughout the editorial process, we have been particularly interested in scholarship and practice-based research that brings forward the ethics of working with digital technologies at a time when major tech corporations (often aligned with authoritarian, anti-democratic ideologies) continue to abandon commitments to equality, diversity, and social justice. In the wake of increasing far-right influence within AI development and the growing militarisation of digital infrastructures, we looked for contributions that did not treat technologies as neutral tools, but as politically charged agents with real-world implications for labour, the environment, and human rights. Moving beyond simplistic binaries of digital versus physical, or code versus craft, we thus invited authors to explore the creative possibilities and responsibilities that emerge in this complex space.

Within the curatorial field, we looked for possible forms of resistance, renewal, or reinvention when technological tools are themselves implicated in canonical structures of oppression. In this context, we questioned the extent to which the act of creation and

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exhibition can become a space to critically reclaim, reimagine, or subvert technological engagement through materiality and care.

Across the contributions gathered, a recurring concern is the conditions under which making itself takes place today: the temporalities of production/process, and the ethical stakes embedded in acts of mediation, translation, and display. The authors collectively foreground matter as a site of resistance, negotiation, and critical inquiry; materiality here appears as a mode of slowing down, attending, including others in the making process, and re-situating creative labour within different embodied, ecological, and political realities. What happens when artists and researchers slow down the apparent inevitability of technological acceleration? What happens when an artwork is not understood as an 'object' but as a duration, an archive, an unfinished process or a set of relations (as is the case with "We Are Making A Film About Mark Fisher" (Poulter 2026))? In addition, there is a shared interrogation of how artists, curators, and researchers are reclaiming processes of experimentation through touch, repetition, interruption, failure, collaborative practices, and situated forms of knowledge production. In this sense, the contributions position exhibition-making as a site where the conditions of culture can be made visible. The issue therefore proposes material engagement as a critical framework through which the infrastructures, ideologies, and violences embedded within contemporary digital systems may be confronted, reconfigured, or resisted.

Across the 15 papers published in this Special Issue, these questions are explored through different practices and frameworks. However, we could suggest that four interrelated themes provide a narrative through the publication: extraction, friction, time, and materiality as knowledge production. These four themes often overlap and fold into one another. We could say that extraction produces specific temporalities, friction can interrupt extraction, and attention is itself continuously commodified. These themes, however, allow us to group the submissions to map a wider narrative and to ask a larger question about the practices that might become possible when we focus on the material conditions of making. The papers in this edition aggregate to help us discover new questions many of us may not have previously considered, while some go beyond uncovering new questions to identify specific, actionable responses to 21st-century urgencies, often challenging the ideologies entangled with Big Tech hype cycles, not least, artificial intelligence.

2. Extraction: Reclaiming the Politics of Process

Contemporary digital culture frequently presents itself as immaterial, but behind automated systems and (seemingly) instantaneous results are infrastructures of extraction, energy consumption, and human exploitation. Many, if not quite all, of the papers in this Special Issue "From Craft to Code and Back Again: Rethinking Art, Materiality and Exhibition Practices in the 21st Century" point towards what Adina-Iuliana Deacu calls 'post-extractive futures', confronting audiences with the material and affective violence of extraction (Deacu 2026) while emphasising materiality, the body, human and non-human life forms and curatorial processes of care as counter practices. Emmanuel Iduma writes of 'the archival imaginary of a post-digital era' (Iduma 2026) in which 'a relationally informed ethics of futurity' might enable us to 'imagine a network of care developed to cater to a parainstitutional cluster of photographers, who dialogue with each other or an external mediator to make sense of their images' (Iduma 2026). Iduma's 'Digitality and the African Photographic Archive: Towards a Practice of Futurity' provides us with a timely paper incorporating an ethics of care, in which curatorial methods are 'shaped by a polyphonic view of photographic practices' (Iduma 2026), engaging with a futurity that refers 'not simply to notions of a time to come but to a practice of flux and contingency that is aware of how images operate in a digital age' (Iduma 2026). For Iduma, "'After' is not used

to designate a collapse of theory or its impracticality but to point to a futurity in the discourse around archives and postcoloniality. As such, the theories and methodologies that might reasonably inform the constitution of an African photographic archive is one that accommodates forms of futurity, acknowledging both the capaciousness and insufficiency of the existing interrogatory toolkit" (Iduma 2026).

Like Iduma, Adina-Iuliana Deacu reminds us that exhibitions can offer a 'unique cultural platform for such interrogation. Unlike theoretical critique alone, curatorial practice creates embodied, sensory encounters that can both reveal hidden infrastructures and prototype regenerative alternatives. Within debates on algorithmic resistance and post-extractive futures, exhibitions have been positioned as sites where cultural narratives can be unsettled and remade (Bishop 2024; Lind 2012). Their spatial, temporal, and multisensory qualities allow visitors to confront the material realities that digital capitalism renders invisible, while simultaneously engaging in speculative modes of world-building. Exhibitions may thus be understood as laboratories for resistance: spaces where embodied attention interrupts algorithmic acceleration, where craft and care counter digital abstraction, and where public imagination can be redirected from extractivist futures toward more symbiotic ones (Deacu 2026).

The body and materiality are also often positioned as sites of resistance in this special edition. Adina-Iuliana Deacu's aforementioned paper, 'Algorithmic Resistance Through Material Praxis: Exhibiting Post-Extractive Futures in Digital Capitalism's Shadow' provides us with a call to symbiotic curation, asking how exhibition practices can function as forms of algorithmic resistance through material and embodied strategies countering "what Berardi (2009) describes as the "psychosphere" of late capitalism, where cognitive and emotional life are subsumed into circuits of value extraction. Beneath the rhetoric of efficiency and personalization lies an infrastructure of extraction: lithium and cobalt mines, energy-intensive server farms, exploitative supply chains, and resource-intensive cloud ecologies (Crawford 2021)" (Deacu 2026).

The question of what is kept or rendered invisible is developed by L. S. Nguyen and Elena Russo in "Presencing Echoes in the Archive: Material Voices Through Space and Time". Their collaborative workshop on collage and assemblage explores how objects are transformed through their encounters with people, other materials, and contexts. Personal objects thus become components of collective assemblages; in this respect, their concept of the "echo" challenges a linear and canonical understanding of archives as stable records of the past. They argue that materials carry traces which are continually reconfigured through new encounters. In this light, the archive is not merely something that we access but becomes something that we participate in making.

This has important implications for digital archives, as digitisation may as well increase access but does not eliminate the politics of selection and classification. What appears online as an image or a document is another material and infrastructural formation that is stored on servers, processed through specific software, and becoming searchable via particular systems. Nguyen and Russo (2026) invite us to consider what is actually being archived when an object becomes a PDF or a 3D scan, and whose histories remain hidden by these transformations. In this light, the digital archive goes beyond the disappearance of materiality by becoming its reconfiguration.

Katerina Athanasopoulou's "Holy AI? Unveiling Magical Images via Photogrammetry" (2026) similarly explores the fantasy of immaterial or self-generating images. She places contemporary text-to-image AI within a much longer history of the 'not made by hand' image, from religious *acheiropoieta* through photography to computational image-making. Athanasopoulou thus reveals a cultural desire to believe in images that appear to generate themselves. Digital photogrammetry becomes (in her practice-as-research ap-

proach) a means of making this fantasy visible: the supposedly autonomous image remains dependent upon processes, apparatuses, and choices. The political importance of this point is essential for this argument. Generative AI is often described through metaphors of intelligence and magic. And yet the fantasy that an image simply appears conceals the labour and infrastructure that make its appearance possible. The question of agency (who or what makes?) thus returns us to materiality. To ask what an image is made of is also to ask who made it and under which conditions, i.e., from which resources, using whose labour, and according to what systems of classification.

Extraction is therefore not just about minerals, data, or energy, but also about the extraction of attention, creativity, and cultural value; the politics of process begins when these are brought into view.

3. Friction: Against Technological Seamlessness

If extraction depends upon seamlessness, friction offers a way of interrupting it. The contemporary discourse on technology is dominated by terms such as optimisation, automation, scalability, convenience, efficiency. The ideal system would thus be something that does not interrupt the flow: the interface disappears, and production becomes instantaneous. Against this logic, several contributions promote interruption, imperfection, slowness, and embodied labour. Akvile Terminaite shares the insight that in mediating our understanding of science, design often reflects neoliberal values (Terminaite 2026). Terminaite's paper, 'It's a Toyland!: Examining the Science Experience in Interactive Science Galleries' (2026) goes against the grain of neoliberal education and funded research specifications, which are themselves often entangled with extractive industries, making it all the more urgent for us to resist the narratives of marketing departments and spin doctors which do not serve either a healthy planet or critically vital arts practices. In a neoliberalised historical context, Terminaite's educational and design insights are urgent and critical: 'Neoliberal ideologies and the expansion of the leisure market', writes Terminaite, have 'driven a focus on the pleasantness of these experiences, rather than their scientific explanations or nuances of science. Consequently, designers of these galleries have to ensure that the experiences produced open up conversations for visitors and staff as to what science is and promote the questioning of our relationship with it' (2026). Friction, in this context, becomes pedagogical. The moment when the visitor is no longer simply consuming an experience but is asked to think about the structures through which this experience has been produced.

Along a similar line, Michael Szpakowski also refuses the smooth narratives of technological progress. In "Art and AI—Benjamin's 'aura' as a Locus of Resistance: Notes, Theses and Images", he exemplifies the political possibility of arts practice, reminding us, as a call to action, via Walter Benjamin that 'Crude thoughts have a special place in dialectical thinking because their sole function is to direct theory toward practice' (Eiland and Jennings 2006; Szpakowski 2026, p. 7). Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproduction' (1936) is refreshingly questioned by Szpakowski, who writes that it can 'usefully be read against the stream of Benjamin's argument to furnish a shield against the baleful influence of AI in the sphere of culture' (Szpakowski 2026). Benjamin, here, is employed as a resource for thinking against the ideological claims surrounding AI and an invitation to move away from abstract technological debate and towards situated artistic action. In this respect, Szpakowski challenges the tendency of AI discourse to transform culture into a series of decontextualised outputs rather than a continuous embodied and historical dialogue.

Alexandra Antonopoulou and Eleanor Dare take this challenge into the world of academic and artistic productivity in "Worldbuilding with Drawing and Words, an "Un-

productive" Counter to the Consumer-Driven, Extractive Models in Higher Education and the Cultural and Creative Industries" (2026). Their slow, open-ended processes of "Fictioning" (performing, drawing, assembling, writing) work deliberately against institutional demands for measurable productivity. Drawing here becomes a way of thinking, going beyond merely an illustration of a thought. Making requires time, knowledge, commitment, and produces forms of understanding that cannot always be extracted into measurable outputs. This is particularly significant at a time when university, museums, and cultural institutions are pressured to demonstrate impact and efficiency. The question of what counts as *productive* labour becomes inseparable from the question of what kinds of materials and methods are considered legitimate.

Dylan Yamada-Rice's "Controlling the Art School: Ideologies of Materials and a Speculative Vision for Hybrid Arts Education" (2026) moves this question directly into art education. Yamada-Rice demonstrates how neoliberal structures shape which art materials are valued or excluded, while digital tools are often privileged through the institutional agendas intertwined with Big Tech and (more recently) military interests. The use of analogue drawing, cutting, printing, sewing and writing thus becomes both methodological and political: the form of the research performs its critique. In this context, the author proposes a more hybrid arts education in which materials are not subordinated to institutionalised hierarchies of value.

Friction is also evident in Simon Poulter's "Manifesting Mark Fisher: Instagram, Network Extension, and the Making of a Decapitalised Film". At first glance, *Instagram* might appear to represent exactly the kind of platform logic that this Special Issue questions. Poulter, however, explores how a social media network can be redirected towards communities of practice and physical artistic production. The platform, in this light, becomes a means of network extension that leads back into embodied collective activity and physical artwork outcomes. There is an important argument to be made here, as resistance does not necessarily mean refusing digital technologies. On the contrary, it can mean using them against their dominant logic. The questions then become: "what relations does a technology produce?", "does it intensify extraction, isolation, acceleration, or can it be part of a network that produces collective agency"?

This question also connects to Claire Bishop's *Disordered Attention* (Bishop 2024), which asks us to reconsider how contemporary audiences encounter art in a culture of mediation: smartphones, social media, skimming, sampling, scrolling. Bishop challenges the wider assumption that the ideal condition of spectatorship is full and undivided attention, while at the same time demonstrating how the state of technological mediation has fundamentally altered the status of the artwork and the conditions under which it is experienced.

For this Special Issue, Bishop's analysis is particularly useful because attention itself is material. To attend requires time, space, bodies, infrastructures. The question of *how we look* is thus directly connected to the question of *how we make*. If late (digital) capitalism organises attention through acceleration and fragmentation, then material practices can create different rhythms of encounter and some other forms of attention; attention that can be collective, tactile, repetitive, relational, embodied. Friction thus goes beyond the idea of resisting through difficulty and is presented as a way of making the conditions of production and perception perceptible.

4. Time: Temporalities of Making

Materiality matters because time matters. One of the most significant distinctions emerging across this Special Issue is between the accelerated temporality promised by computational culture and the often slower temporalities of material practices. This is not a

simple opposition between "fast digital" and "slow craft"; what matters is that different materials and technologies organise time differently.

Questioning ideologies of 'efficiency' as well as false discontinuities from previous technologies and materials features in a number of papers, for example, clay is positioned as a dynamic media beside augmented reality and other forms of computer vision by Atlavina (2026), in 'Activating Embodied Memory Through a Fusion of Clay and Augmented Reality', Atlavina writes that clay 'anchors memory through tactile containment, while AR mobilises it through spatial exploration' (2026), in which 'physical gestures, paired with the materiality of clay and the expansiveness of AR, acted as conduits for tacit knowledge, experiences that are lived but not easily verbalised' (2026). Altavina writes of finding themselves repeatedly returning to the idea that their practice was not about curating objects, 'but about curating encounters. That line, first written in my session notes, became the guiding principle of the whole process. The mental spaces discovered through the warmth of clay and shaped into real sculptures were also connected with the invisible pathways traced through augmented spaces. These outcomes emerged not through instruction, but through active presence, attention, and tuning into childhood frequencies of creativity and through the quiet openness to each other in the space' (2026).

Kaori Ueda's 'From Craft to Code and Back: Biodegradable Polyester, Institutional Co-Design, and Garment Practice in Nishijin Weaving' addresses the ethics of textile production, including circular models of material consumption and production, and the concept of "designed temporality", where 'clothing has the potential to develop into a design field focused on ethical ageing, in which changes in material over time (such as wear, decomposition, and fading) are actively incorporated as design elements.' Ueda shows us how this can contribute to 'the establishment of new aesthetics and a consumption ethic within sustainable textile culture' (Ueda 2026), while Designers Carolina Ramirez-Figueroa, Pei-Ying Lin and Antony Nevin write in 'Biological Otherness: Multispecies Agencies and Elastic Temporalities in Exhibition Practices' of biological otherness, radically framing viruses, microbial life, dust, and ash as co-authors in exhibition making. Their position is overtly posthumanist while acknowledging that digital technologies 'occupy an ambivalent position within this shift. They extend human perception into otherwise inaccessible scales and temporalities, yet they also carry inherited logics shaped by scientific, industrial, and biopolitical histories' (Ramirez-Figueroa et al. 2026). Ramirez et al. are careful to remind us that 'epistemic mechanisms of separation, abjection, hierarchy, and purification operate across human and nonhuman domains within Western humanism. The same binary logic that positioned certain humans as lesser-than has also rendered biological matter abject, contaminating, or expendable. Attending to biological otherness therefore does not flatten distinct histories of violence but exposes the structural operations of exclusion that shape both social and biological imaginaries (2026). Ramirez-Figueroa et al.'s refusal to occlude the tensions in their work stems in part from the radical ethics of a materialism which is dynamically attuned to socio-technical entanglement and new materialist ontologies, which, unlike transhumanism, cannot play into extractivist agendas.

Such practices complicate the human-centred exhibition: if matter has its own temporalities, then the curator cannot simply determine when an exhibition begins and when it ends. This temporal complexity is also central to Nguyen and Russo's posthuman archive (Nguyen and Russo 2026). Their concept of the echo resists a linear chronological movement. Instead, memory is reconfigured through encounters between bodies, objects, spaces, and materials. Their workshop makes this visible through the iterative processes of making. Time, therefore, becomes something that art *does.* To make time visible is to challenge the assumption that faster is necessarily (and always) better.

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5. Materiality: Thinking Through Matter

Materiality is not simply what art is made from but a way of knowing. Across the contributions, sketches, prints, photographs, installations, workshops, comics, archive, clay, textiles, fungi, collage, sound, performance, and digital environments operate as epistemological tools. They enable ideas to emerge and produce knowledge.

John Wild and Shira Wachsmann also invoke symbiosis with non-human life, asking us in 'Rethinking AI with Mycelium' to question the trajectories of an ideologically infused construct of evolution and intelligence which we now see manifest in the hyperbolic, eugenic narratives of Big Technology. What Wild and Wachsmann call 'critical unknowing' entails the opposite of extractive AI industries via a 'material engagement and situated ecology' (Wild and Wachsmann 2026). Rather than relying upon immaterial exegesis, Wild and Wachsmann describe collaborating with mycelium and emerging technologies. Their practice, as outlined in this paper, presents an alternative framework for understanding intelligence, 'one that foregrounds interdependence, adaptation, and distributed agency. This synthesis of organic and machinic systems functions both materially and theoretically, opening a space to investigate intelligence as a relational and ecological process emerging through artistic practice' (2026). For Wild and Wachsmann, the mycelium organism 'requires specific environmental conditions, protection from dehydration and contamination, appropriate temperature ranges, and suitable substrates for growth. These are not merely technical requirements. They are ethical obligations that arise from the conceptual framework of symbiosis. Our research is consequently grounded in an ethics of care, using a practice-led, philosophical, and discursive methodology of thinking-through-making (2026). In this radical framework, care is understood 'not as an external value applied to intelligence, but as a constitutive condition of its emergence as a relational and ecological process emerging through artistic practice' (2026).

Anju Kinoshita's 'Reimagining Aesthetics and Labor in the Japanese Manga Industry: A Case Study of Arts-Based Research at Artist Village Aso 096k' addresses hand-drawn comics as sites of critical and creative resistance via an Arts-Based Research methodology, producing forms of knowledge 'that extend beyond textual analysis through embodied and material engagement' (Kinoshita 2025). By situating hand-drawn comics as both method and object of study, Kinoshita foregrounds the 'affective, embodied, and political dimensions of international artists' labor' (2025).

In Kinoshita's research, a shift from digital tools to analogue drawing functions as a mode of care and creative resistance against state systems. Collaborative hand-drawn comics created richer dialogs than interviews alone, transforming the research site into a space of collective critique' (2025). Kinoshita contends that hand-drawn comics serve as 'a powerful medium for resisting xenophobic discourse' (2025). Kinoshita's acknowledgment of the means and conditions of production in an era of *fauxtomation* (fake automation using often very poor labour conditions) is an urgency which informs much of the thinking and practice surfaced in these papers. Conditions of making and curating come with friction and tense knowledge(s) which none of these writers occlude. The shift from digital tools to analogue drawing becomes a mode of care and creative resistance, enabling collective dialogue.

Molly Rosabelle Ackhurst's "In the Texture of Things: Collage as a Site of Material Constraint and Possibility" (2026) pushes this argument into the terrain of sexual violence and feminist justice. Ackhurst demonstrates that materials do not simply enable but also constrain expression. Collage here becomes a site of tension where imaginative possibility is materially negotiated. This is a crucial qualification to celebratory accounts of materiality. To say that "matter matters" is not to claim that analogue practices are inherently progressive or that materials are automatically liberatory. As aforementioned, materials are embedded

in economies and ideologies and can reproduce dominant narratives. Ackhurst's analysis explores how even a practice that is associated with rupture and reassembly can reproduce established discourses while opening possibilities for alternative futures. The question therefore becomes: "what relations become possible through the particular conditions of the use of a material"? The same issue arises in Yamada-Rice's examination of the art school: materials are institutionally organised, and so decisions about them are decisions about the type of artistic knowledge and labour that are considered legitimate (Yamada-Rice 2026). In this respect, the politics of materiality extends from the studio and into the institution.

Nguyen and Russo (2026) similarly demonstrate how materials shape the knowledge produced through the archives. The choice of paper, software, metadata, storage systems, and classification structure affects what can be encountered and how it will be contextualised. As their workshop demonstrates, even seemingly minor decisions on materials can change the stories that emerge. This also explains why this Special Issue constantly returns to the act of making; making is thinking.

6. Matter Matters

What we have learnt from these papers and their diversity of responses to our parlous times is that addressing the materiality of arts practices, curation and curatorial infrastructure via paintings, journals, photographs, writing, movement, drawings, comics, installation, performance, sculpture, sound, archives, clay and augmented reality, fungi and textiles and many other interdisciplinary approaches is an act of situated resistance and care.

As Szpakowski reminds us: 'AI renders culture a succession of isolated and static (and largely digital) objects rather than an ongoing dynamic and historical dialogic expression of our embodied and reflecting humanity' (Szpakowski 2026), while Ramirez-Figueroa et al. articulate how the complex epistemic and biopolitical dynamics of all technology are implicated in 'raise ethical and curatorial questions about care, responsibility, and the translation of life into exhibition formats.

The exhibition is often seen, here, as a site of re-materialisation. Traditionally, exhibitions were seen as spaces where objects are gathered and presented. However, the contributions in this Special Issue suggest that they can instead be understood as assemblages of material, ecological, technological, and temporal relations. Deacu presents exhibitions as laboratories of resistance. Atlavina perceives the curatorial praxis as the creation of encounters. Ramirez-Figueroa et al. ask what it means to exhibit biological processes whose temporalities go beyond human control. Iduma reimagines the archival practice as a relational network. Nguyen and Russo (2026) explore how the structures through which materials are held shape the meanings that they produce. The above practices move the curator towards the role of 'facilitator' of encounters: between materials, histories, points of view, infrastructures.

Technology here serves as a supporting structure to mediate the encounter rather than being the main focus. Living systems, biological matter and microscopic processes not only require attentiveness to the conditions that sustain them, along with the risks they pose or endure, but also the temporalities which they transform' (Ramirez-Figueroa et al. 2026). These and other spaces and materialities are the embodied, materially grounded zones of encounter which the papers curated here invite readers to investigate.

Having said that, they do not offer a single solution to the technological, ecological, cultural, and political crises of the present. What they do, however, is to complicate the terms of the debate by collectively demonstrating that materiality is an urgent critical framework that we need to understand the present. The contributors to this Special Issue ask what happens in the spaces between code and craft, the digital and the analogue, the

hand and the machine. Athanasopoulou (2026) reveals the historical persistence of the fantasy of the self-generating image, Nguyen and Russo (2026) demonstrate how digital and analogue archives remain entangled, Poulter (2026) shows how a digital social media platform can be redirected towards physical and collective outcomes. Antonopoulou and Dare (2026) reclaim *fictioning* as a form of deliberately "unproductive" knowledge, Yamada-Rice (2026) exposes the institutional politics that govern the materials that are valued in arts education, whilst ackhurst (2026) presents how material processes can both constrain and expand political imagination. Read alongside Deacu, Iduma, Terminaite, Szpakowski, Atlavina, Ueda, Ramirez-Figueroa et al., Wild and Wachsmann, Kinoshita, these contributions share a belief that the conditions of making cannot be separated from the meaning(s) of what is made.

This belief is particularly urgent in the present moment, and craft can be seen as a critical proposition about process. Craft insists that something happened between the intention and the outcome, thus making labour visible. At the same time, the papers in this Special Issue remind us that material practices must remain self-reflexive and critical. Materials carry their own histories of extraction, analogue is not necessarily synonymous with ethical practices, and digital does not equal immaterial. Craft can reproduce (and *has* reproduced) hierarchies just as technology can be employed for acts of resistance. In this light, the most productive question would be around what we might learn from moving between craft and code. At a moment when so much cultural production is re-organised around automation and acceleration, we can suggest that one of the most radical things that art can do is to insist that processes, labour, bodies, attention, time matter; and above all, that matter matters.

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