

Abandoned Chairs

These photos are currently homeless.

They are casually exhibited today to give them something to do.

You can pick them up and move them about.

Practice? Or Documentation of Practice?

It feels like the photos should go somewhere in my PhD thesis.

I haven't quite figured out how, where, and why they feature in my thesis. Do they play a significant role? Or are they a support act? An appendix?

They are a representation of the messiness of research, and the decisions practice researchers make about what to include, the prominence of inclusion, and what to discard.

I am a dance artist, a movement worker. My research has been driven by practices of walking-wandering, pausing-resting, and writing. I am not a *trained* photographer.

What constitutes practice? And what constitutes documentation of practice?

In their simplest form these are photos of abandoned chairs that I took while wandering in Woolwich for my PhD research – so, they're a form of documentation then?

Yes. Maybe.

In my thesis, I have written: "Patterns of spontaneous pausing started to emerge in the form of unexpected encounters with abandoned chairs, and other discarded material items that social and cultural geographer Tim Edensor calls 'accidental sculptures'. Happily immersed in my wanderings, these unexpected chairs in peculiar situations interrupted my flow and thoughts. I paused for a while, wondering about the chair's position in the world. Some had been recklessly tossed and landed in the wild predicament of other fly tipped, soggy paraphernalia which almost always included a mattress or shopping trolley. Some were injured; without a leg or padded seat. Others were placed more carefully, perhaps in the hope of rehoming. It was often hard to tell if some sites were legitimate places for refuse collection or the result of careless and lazy fly tipping; or just poor borough refuse management systems that leave residents with little choice."

So the photos are a documentation of a type of *pausing* that emerged as a practice? The *pausing* is the practice. The photos are documentation of the *pausing*?

Yes. Maybe.

But what if the act of noticing the chairs, taking the photos and critically engaging with the photos is couched as another practice of this PhD?

Oh geez.