

**Inhabiting the language of the Institution; How artists, teachers and students are occupying the institutional rhetoric which surrounds them.**

I aim to discuss a recent rise in the number of artists and artists groups who are setting themselves up as some form of variation of an educational model, i.e. as an Institute, a Faculty, a Museum, a Department or even a University. I will suggest how this may impact upon the ongoing debates about the Art School, its survival ( or indeed demise ) and its challenges.

Projects such as my own Institute of Beasts ( Dutton and Swindells ), suggest a slight subversion. In effect, where artist-teachers may have rubbed up against the institution from within and encouraged students to do the same, in the age of extreme institutionalization and hyper-instrumentalisation this playful/ironic approach may no longer be possible. Instead the artist- student- teachers are taking the 'mantle' of the institution and occupying its linguistical and rhetorical frameworks instead of its architecture, and by doing so, are attempting to unravel and explore what might be meant by an institution in the first place.

This may have profound possibilities within the 'walls' and traditions of the art school where, the power of the institution becomes not only something 'lessened' but also something existing 'in quotes', thus empowering both staff and students to occupy and produce the 'institution' on their own terms. By creating and inhabiting these equivalents, in effect by inhabiting institutional terminology, change may take place from within. Students and staff no longer attend the institution, but attend to it by inhabiting it.

The art educational institutions may have no alternative but to 'listen' to art/practice or dismiss it from the curriculum entirely.

I will outline what could be described as an attempt at a form of reverse interpellation and possible neutralisation of the neo-liberal educational project by using other examples of artists' projects, such as Inga Zimprich's, Faculty of Invisibility , Wysings Art Centre's The Department of Wrong Answers, Anton Vidolke's Night School or The University of Incidental Knowledge and in which the nomenclature of the educational/research institution of knowledge production is often inhabited by production of a different and less quantifiable sort.

Inga Zimprich's Faculty of Invisibility ( [www.ingazimprich.net](http://www.ingazimprich.net) ),  
The Department of Wrong Answers  
(<http://www.wysingartscentre.org/programmes/exhibitions/141.html> )  
The University of Incidental Knowledge  
(<http://universityincidentalknowledge.wordpress.com> )

Steve Dutton  
Professor in Contemporary Art Practice  
Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design, The University of Lincoln Brayford Pool  
LN6 7TS  
United Kingdom

tel +44 (0)1522 837131  
+44 (0)1522 886816  
mobile 07825 098805