

Mentor's Introduction for Laia Sole

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Visual arts research has taken many and unpredictable twists and turns as it has sought to stabilize its purposes and processes. Writing from the inside rather than the outside of “making” researchers have often struggled to translate complex visual subtleties into forms of language that capture the depth and integrity of practices of other artists as refracted through their own artistic sensibilities. In this short paper Laia Sole, an internationally respected community artist, enters the experiences of three visual artists as both researcher and artistic colleague. In the three vignettes that compose her paper, she explores the interweaving of significant social issues and practices of play: hide and seek, block building and sliding, that catapult to the fore the disturbing nature of the too often taken for granted and unnoticed. Laia Sole enters her inquiry as an artist-researcher asking important questions about what art is and can become in the grand scheme of contemporary change. She asks how the natural impulses of play can propel into consciousness experiences that while often understated become so aesthetically powerful in the hands of artists that they confront us with significant new knowledge, insights and, yes, responsibilities.

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