
CONTEMPORARY

ART

ACADEMY

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Artist: Peter Leese

Prepared by: Zavier Ellis & Mathew Gibson

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INTRODUCTION

This development plan outlines a mentoring programme to support Peter Leese in building clarity, momentum, and visibility in his artistic work.

Based in Copenhagen, Peter works as both an artist and historian at the University of Copenhagen. Following an intensive period of study, including Turps mentoring and an MA in Fine Art, he is now in a transitional phase and seeking to re-establish direction and critical engagement around his practice.

The programme will focus on developing a sustainable working rhythm, sharpening project focus, and creating opportunities for dialogue and visibility.

CONTEXT

Peter's practice operates across painting, drawing, collage, and digital media, using iterative processes that move from small studies into larger, layered works.

He is currently developing a large-scale, modular floor-based piece composed of approximately fifty A3 sheets, combining collage, painting, and drawing within a reconfigurable structure.

His work engages with post-conflict and post-memory, often referencing architectural forms such as brutalism and the material traces of historical trauma. This is informed by his academic research and interdisciplinary work on creativity and therapeutic processes.

He has primarily shared work online and is interested in more interactive, discussion-led forms of presentation. Working within limited time and space, he is seeking to strengthen continuity in his practice.

AMBITION

Short-Term

- Establish a consistent rhythm and momentum within the studio despite time constraints.
 - Continue developing the large-scale floor-based collage and drawing work.
 - Clarify the conceptual framework surrounding themes of post-conflict and post-memory within the work.
 - Begin articulating a clearer project structure for the current body of work.
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Medium-Term

- Develop opportunities for dialogue and collaboration around the work.
- Expand Peter's professional network across artists, researchers, and cultural practitioners.
- Explore both physical and online platforms where the work can be presented or discussed.

Long-Term

- Establish a sustainable artistic practice alongside Peter's academic career.
- Develop collaborative or interdisciplinary contexts in which the work can operate.
- Present work in environments that encourage conversation, exchange, and reflection.
- Continue exploring the relationship between historical research, creative practice, and forms of public engagement.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Success for Peter is less defined by conventional art world markers and more by the development of meaningful engagement with his work.

Ultimately, success would mean that Peter's work is seen, discussed, and able to intervene meaningfully in conversations about history, memory, and creative practice.

CHALLENGES

- Peter identifies several practical and structural challenges that currently affect the development of his practice.
- The most significant barrier is time. His full-time role as a historian requires substantial commitment, limiting the amount of time available for sustained studio work. While Peter remains committed to maintaining his practice, this constraint makes it difficult to build consistent momentum.
- A second challenge relates to workspace. Peter currently works from home and does not have access to an ideal studio environment. This can restrict the scale and material possibilities of his work, particularly when developing larger or more physically demanding projects.
- Peter also notes that he feels less confident navigating the art world infrastructure, including exhibition opportunities, professional networks, and mechanisms for sharing work publicly.
- Following the intense period of study during his MA, Peter has taken some time away from structured feedback environments. As a result, he currently has limited opportunities for regular dialogue around his work. While he values critical engagement, he finds one-to-one discussions particularly productive compared to larger group critique formats.
- Finally, Peter identifies a need to reconnect with a support network of peers and collaborators who can contribute to ongoing dialogue about his work.

NEEDS

To support the development of his practice, Peter would benefit from a mentoring programme structured around the following areas:

Professional Development

- Guidance on navigating artistic networks, identifying opportunities for collaboration, and developing strategies for presenting work publicly.
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Studio Practice and Project Development

- Support in refining the conceptual direction of the current floor-based work and articulating it within a coherent project framework.

Critical Dialogue

- Ongoing conversations to test ideas, reflect on process, and deepen the relationship between his historical research and artistic practice.

Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Contexts

- Exploration of connections with other practitioners and disciplines, particularly in relation to research-led practice and creative therapeutics.

Peter has expressed interest in working with mentors such as David Risley and Liane Lang, whose approaches may offer productive dialogue and constructive challenge. There may also be value in engaging a mentor with a focus on writing or critical context as the project develops.

CAPACITY

A monthly mentoring structure represents a sustainable rhythm that allows sufficient time between sessions for reflection and studio development.

There are currently no fixed deadlines, exhibitions, or application timelines driving the programme. However, Peter anticipates travelling to New Zealand in the autumn, which may temporarily interrupt the continuity of his studio practice.

Given these conditions, the mentoring programme should remain flexible and focused on maintaining momentum while helping Peter move toward a clearly defined project direction.

WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS EXPERIENCE VALUABLE

The mentoring programme would be most valuable if it helps Peter:

- Develop a clearer conceptual direction for his current work.
- Maintain momentum in his practice despite professional constraints.
- Build opportunities for meaningful dialogue around his work.
- Expand his network of collaborators and peers.
- Move toward a defined project or body of work that can be shared and discussed publicly.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

MONTH 1 (APR)

WEEK 2 – Liane Lang (Artist)

- Artist crit
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 2 (MAY)

WEEK 2 – Sarah Kent (Art Critic, Curator, Artist)

- Analyse critical context of mentee's practice
 - Mentor to advise on research & furtherment of contextual awareness
 - Together decide on ongoing tasks/research
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MONTH 3 (JUN)

WEEK 2- Michael Petry (Curator, Writer, Artist)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
- Mentor presents summary of experience
- Explore exhibition ecosystem & opportunity
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 4 (JUL)

WEEK 2 - David Risley (Artist, Curator, Writer)

- Artist crit
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 5 (AUG)

WEEK 2 - Emily Steer (Art Writer)

- Analyse critical context of mentee's practice
- Mentor to advise on research & furtherment of contextual awareness
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 6 (SEP)

WEEK 2 - Max Presneill (Curator, Artist)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
- Mentor presents summary of experience
- Explore exhibition ecosystem & opportunity
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 7 (OCT)

WEEK 2 - Xavier Ellis (Co-founder)

- Review

CONCLUSION

The next stage of development focuses on consolidating Peter's practice and establishing a clearer project direction.

Through regular mentoring, the programme will support a more consistent rhythm of making, sharper articulation of ideas, and the identification of appropriate contexts for sharing the work.

The aim is to strengthen clarity, confidence, and visibility while maintaining an open and exploratory approach.

Investment Summary:

- 1-hour 1-2-1 mentoring sessions - £95 each (Fees are paid in monthly instalments starting two months ahead of the planned start date, or immediately if the programme begins sooner)
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- Start Date: April 2026
 - Session Frequency: Monthly
 - Optional supplementary 1-2-1 mentoring sessions - £95 each
 - Optional course add-ons - £95-£295

office@contemporaryartacademy.com
contemporaryartacademy.com
@contemporaryartacademy
