



**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**

KEF

ASHLEIGH ARMITAGE

MY CRAZY FAMILY GOLF

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK DATA COLLECTION

February 2023

The University's Research & Enterprise Service has requested information on knowledge exchange and engagement with the public and communities. Please complete the form below and return it to Professor Simon Morris (S.DC.Morris@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) and Dr Tina Conkar (t.conkar@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) by **21 February 2023**.

Many thanks for your support with information gathering for this submission.

Name:	Ashleigh Armitage
Job Title:	Lecturer
Email:	ashleigh.armitage@leedsbeckett.ac.uk
School:	Leeds School of Art

Please use the template below to detail information on all projects you have undertaken since 1 January 2019 that involved public and community engagement. Please use one form per project.

Project Title:	My Crazy Family Golf
Project Date(s):	1 June–10 July 2021 — John Hansard Gallery (Southampton) 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 May 2022 — Salts Mill (Saltaire) 16 July–28 August 2022— Fabrica (Brighton)
URL Link to Project:	#MyCrazyFamilyGolf (Includes visitor feedback videos) https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/mycrazyfamilygolf/ Venue Website https://jhg.art/events/lisa-watts-my-crazy-family-golf/ https://saltaireinspired.org.uk/event/lisa-watts-dad-my-crazy-family-golf/ https://www.fabrica.org.uk/my-crazy-family-golf Artist Website lisa-watts.co.uk Project Intro https://vimeo.com/774162918?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=50467709

Brief Description of Project (250-1000 words max.)

In the field below please give a brief outline of the project and what it entailed.

Design of exhibition identity, graphics, and printed pamphlet — Ashleigh Armitage.

My Crazy Family Golf is an UK touring exhibition by artist Lisa Watts (Watts) and her father Gordon Watts (Dad), produced collaboration in John Hansard Gallery and designer, Ashleigh Armitage.

My Crazy Family Golf tells Dad's story of being the primary carer for his wife (Lisa's Mum) for the majority of her adult life. Her complex mental illness has had profound effects on all the family and their relationships with each other. She has recently entered residential care and this project has grown from Lisa and Dad's mutual desire to build something new that brought them closer. Dad worked as a builder all his life and this is the first time he has been able to work with Lisa and use his skills within a contemporary art context.

The exhibition identity and graphics adapted for each venue, creating a home and introduction for Watts & Dads series of crazy golf holes. Each hole included audio recordings of the family made during Dad's years of caring. The course holes also act as playful sculptural objects in their own right, incorporating elements such as carpet and household objects.

Visitors to *My Crazy Family Golf* were invited to play five holes of crazy golf, with a handmade golf club and score card to complete. Both fun and poignant, this project inspires visitors to reflect on their own family relationships, the nature of care, and the significance of those personal interactions.

My Crazy Family Golf is a John Hansard Gallery exhibition presented in partnership with Fabrica Gallery & Salts Mill.

<p>Organisations Engaged with: Please list the names of any organisations engaged with, such as Schools or Community Groups.</p>	<p>John Hansard Gallery (Southampton) Salts Mill (Saltaire) Fabrica (Brighton)</p>	<p>Total participants: Please give an approximate figure for the number of people who engaged with your project.</p>	<p>John Hansard Gallery: 1,357 Exhibition Visitors</p> <p>Fabrica: 3055 Exhibition Visitors</p> <p>Salts Mill: 800 Exhibition Visitors (approximately)</p>
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<p>Knowledge Exchange Outcomes: If relevant, in brief, please describe any knowledge exchange outcomes such as new approaches to working with a community.</p>	<p>Exhibition and accompanying pamphlet.</p>
<p>Quotes In the field below please include any relevant quotes that you would like to share which evidence the knowledge exchange and engagement your project received.</p>	
<p>“This exhibition provides an uplifting diversion from stresses and strains associated with the pandemic and the toll of caring for a disabled family member. It raises questions about the role of collaboration in contemporary art, and the policing of terms such as ‘professional,’ ‘amateur,’ ‘artist’ and ‘craftsperson.’ <i>My Crazy Family Golf</i> celebrates the familiar in its choice of materials and the literal ‘family’ — as an affective and contradictory site of solace and tension. It celebrates interpersonal exchange and the human capacity for collaboration and play — its apparent frivolity challenges the gravitas and sanctity of the white cube gallery. <i>My Crazy Family Golf</i> invites participants to reflect upon distinctions between craftsmanship and artistry while appreciating the sculptural objects as a shared labour of love.” — Sarah Gorman (exhibition score care & pamphlet)</p>	
<p>Images In the field below please include any relevant images you would like to share.</p>	
<p>Shared via: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PMaiXaGw_pyEaSLvdkvCaS-NMtWTLDuS?usp=sharing</p>	











USED
GOLF BALLS

USED
GOLF CLUBS

my **CRAZY**
family
GOLF & **LISA WATTS**
& **DAD**

1 June -
10 July 2021

ARTISTS

My Crazy Family Golf is a participative project made by Lisa Watts and her father, Graham Watts (aka 'Dad'), which tells Dad's story of being the primary carer for his wife, Lisa Watts, for the majority of her adult life. Her complete mental illness has had profound effects on all the family and the project has grown from Lisa and Dad's desire to do something new that has brought them closer.

Together Lisa Watts & Dad have created a series of crazy golf tracks, each including audio recordings of the family made during Dad's period of caring. Visitors are invited to play the holes of crazy golf with a hand-made golf ball and score cards (including a family Social Contract), as well as an additional table top game. Balls are also engaged. The project invites visitors to reflect on their family relationships, the nature of care, and the significance of these personal interactions.

In the gallery space the project is accompanied by the film 'Dad's Care', which documents Dad and daughter as artists collaborating.

My Crazy Family Golf is a 2021 exhibition presented in partnership with Fabrice, England, and supported by research and development funding from Arts Council England.

With special thanks to: Lisa Watts, Graham Watts, James Brinkley, Sarah Connor, Angharad Jennings, Chris Hall, Brian McClean, Robert Taylor and Peter Padden.



John
Hansard
Gallery
University of
Southampton
FABRICA
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

HELLO!

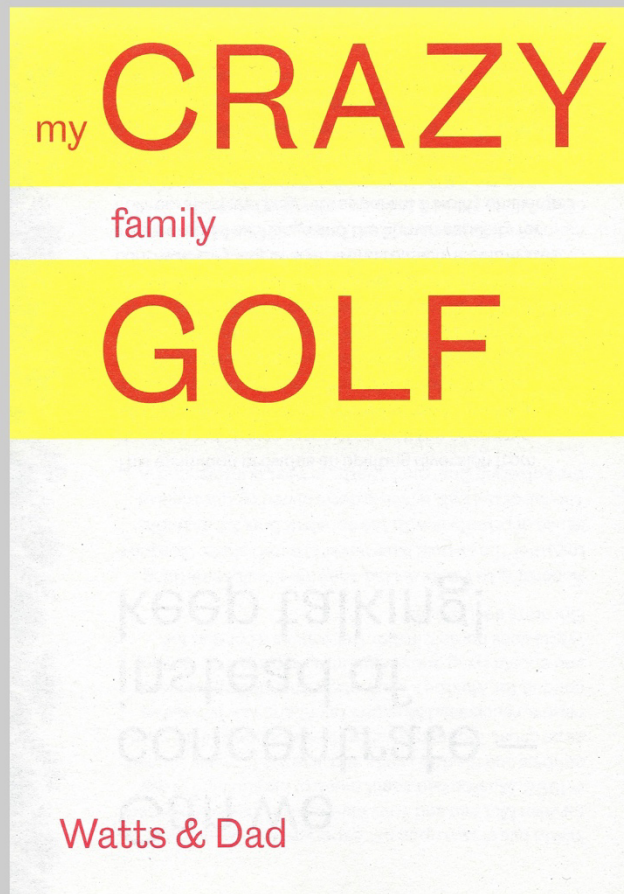
SCORECARDS
& PENCILS

GOLF CLUBS

GOLF BALLS







Watts & Dad

Watts & Dad is the daughter-father duo, Lisa Watts (Artist) & Gordon Watts (Carpenter & Joiner).

GOLF

WATTS

family

&

my CRAZY

DAD

That was awful, wasn't it!



With thanks to –

James Bradbury
Software & electronics engineer who programmed the sound triggers & proximity detectors and supported the making in general with ideas and research.

Brian McClave (Site Eye)
Video maker & photographer who set up the time lapse video for 'Dad Cares', and who photographed the project's development.

Chris Hall
Video editor, 'Dad Cares'.

Rupert Till
Sound composer, 'Dad Cares'.

Ashleigh Armitage & Laura Carnet (Dust Collective)
Designers of pamphlet and exhibition signage.

Pete Feldon
Consultant on adult social care for the video & author of 'The Social Worker's Guide to the Care Act 2014'.

A John Hansard Gallery exhibition presented in partnership with Fabrica, Brighton.

www.jhg.art
www.fabrica.org.uk

John
Hansard
Gallery

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FABRICA

CRAZY RULES

All holes must be played in the correct order ● All players must tee off before any second shot is played ● Write the number of strokes onto the scorecard below ● Move to the next hole as soon as your group has finished playing

The player with the **lowest score wins!**

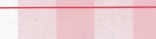
PLAYERS



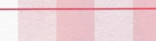
Grandad's Toy



The Doll

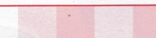


Windmill Banter



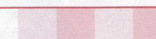
Hit the ball down the holes in the order of 1 to 8.

The Lost



Hit the ball into the cabinet. Gently pull the sliders and open drawers (listening carefully!) to allow the ball to roll out.

Roots Home



This time, turn your club around and hit the ball with the handle. Your aim is to avoid the holes along the way. If your ball drops down a hole, the next player starts their turn.

TOTAL SCORE



WATTS

&

DAD



Text by Sarah Gorman

MY CRAZY FAMILY GOLF takes the form of a series of sculptures co-designed and built by Lisa Watts, artist, aged 52, and her Dad, Gordon Watts, carpenter and joiner/builder, aged 82. The sculptures are installed as an interactive crazy golf course. Visitors are given a wooden club, scorecard and dead-bounce golf ball, with which they aim for a winning hole, or door. Errant and misfired balls trigger sound recordings of Watts' mother's (Gordon's wife's) voice berating visitors for their 'awful' shots.

Watts has an especial interest in participatory arts whereby untrained participants work alongside professionals. *My Crazy Family Golf* extends this practice into a familial collaboration. The opportunity for the pair to collaborate arose in 2015 when Watts' mother moved to a nursing home, relieving Gordon of his duties as sole carer. In 2014 the UK government introduced The Care Act, a piece of legislation recognising the state's responsibility to informal carers such as Gordon. Lisa's father had cared for his wife single-handedly for over fifty years before the act, and support, came into force. In 2018, under the moniker, 'Watts & Dad' Lisa and Gordon set out to develop *My Crazy Family Golf* and become acquainted in the process.

Yeah
something
like that!

Watts has drawn upon her experience as technician for Alan McLean and Tony Mustoe's *Snoozyland* created in 1993. Mustoe had spent much of his adult life in day centres and disabled units and was not formally trained as an artist. McLean, as artist in residence at a daycare centre, recognised Mustoe's talent and saw himself as conduit for Mustoe's aesthetics, channelling his ideas and encouraging equal input into performance making. Watts sees herself, in a similar way, as a conduit for Gordon's aesthetics.

According to *Watts & Dad*, they have built something together they would have never created alone. Gordon's sense of priority is with the construction, for example, 'the fall of the ball', which is determined by the angle of the guttering (the 'run'). Watts, in turn, is interested in the activity of playing, the look and feel of the objects. This work with objects repeats preoccupations identified in Watts' previous touring exhibitions *Skittish* (2013-14) and *Not a Decorator* (2017-18). These pieces saw Watts experiment with everyday materials in order to study and understand their artistic and sculptural properties.

As well as exploiting found objects Watts contributes to the tradition of artists working alongside family members. Watts cites the influence of Sean Edwards' *Undo Things Done*, a sculptural installation shown as part of the Welsh Pavilion of the Venice Biennale in 2019 in which Sean's mother, Lily Edwards reads *Requiem* a bespoke play. Watts' current project also brings to mind Alexandrina Hemsley, Rosie Heafford and Helena Webb's *Dad Dancing*, a piece of live performance in which trained dancers entreat their fathers to take their best 'dad' moves out of retirement and join them on stage.

Meredith A. Brown, Oriana Fox and Frances Jacobus-Parker have queried why artists choose to incorporate family members. They suggest this work makes 'evident the porous boundary between art and life' and 'engage(s) with concepts such as maternal and paternal identity, parent-child relationality and mortality'.¹ Much collaborative family work, by artists such as Mierle Laderman Ukeles (*Manifesto for Maintenance Art*, 1969) and KwielKulik (*Activities with Dobromierz*, 1971) featured parents working with infants in order to raise questions about the perceived value of care and domestic labour. These projects provide a valuable opportunity to reflect upon how collaborative family art might challenge the modernist myth of the solitary, transcendental, artistic genius.

For Hemsley, Heafford and Webb the starting point for *Dad Dancing* stemmed from a shared desire to demystify their work at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance—they wanted to bring their 'befuddled' fathers into their 'realm'.² Watts confesses the drive to collaborate with her father came not so much from a desire to enlighten him about her practice but to channel, or provide a platform for his work in order to resist assumptions about the aesthetic sensibilities of a working-class builder. The process of making *My Crazy Family Golf* began in 2019 and continued throughout the Covid 19 pandemic. The duo exploited rare opportunities to work together physically in the spacious (and well-ventilated) front room of Gordon's house. This part of the process was supported by daily phone conversations and packages exchanged via Royal Mail.

Can we concentrate – instead of keep talking!

This exhibition provides an uplifting diversion from stresses and strains associated with the pandemic and the toll of caring for a disabled family member. It raises questions about the role of collaboration in contemporary art, and the policing of terms such as 'professional', 'amateur', 'artist' and 'craftsperson'. *My Crazy Family Golf* celebrates the familiar in its choice of materials and the literal 'family' – as an affective and contradictory site of solace and tension. It celebrates interpersonal exchange and the human capacity for collaboration and play – its apparent frivolity challenges the gravitas and sanctity of the white cube gallery. *My Crazy Family Golf* invites participants to reflect upon distinctions between craftsmanship and artistry while appreciating the sculptural objects as a shared labour of love.

1. 'Making Art with your Kids: Generation, Cooperation and Desire in Parent-Child Artwork of the 1970s' by Meredith A. Brown, Oriana Fox, and Frances Jacobus-Parker, pp. 134-157 in *Collaboration and its (Dis)Contents: Art, Architecture, and Photography since 1950* edited by Meredith A. Brown and Michelle Miller Fischer, Courtald Books Online, 2017 London.

2. Alexandrina Hemsley, Rosie Heafford and Helena Webb's *Dad Dancing*, touring performance, 2014: <https://www.dad-dancing.org>





