

In-Habit.

In-Habit happened because I took a step in the right direction.
Rather than moving forward I went back. I returned.

On a June day in 2007, following a talk I'd given at the Abbotsford Convent about Punctum's arts incubator, as I was just about to walk out the front gate I stopped, and turned back.

I walked to the office and asked to speak with the convent's CEO, Maggie Maguire, who'd that day taken a group of us on a convent tour.
As luck would have it, she was free.

Three months later we were travelling to France together to investigate the operations of a 35 year old network of arts research and cultural exchange centres based in 40 classified buildings operating across 20 countries.
Our candidature as members was invited - despite Australia not existing on the network's Charter map.

In February 2010, following two years of research and the piloting of a model that would inform and shape a specific arts and cultural research mission emanating from the convent, and two official presentations later, our candidature will be voted upon in France at the same time our investigation is unveiled here in Australia.

In-Habit is this investigation and what follows is an account of our research. It's an on line archive which is by no means all encompassing; more a sketching of processes, papers, notes, ideas, thoughts, questions and responses, evaluations; a mapping of the paths walked since 2007 and a celebration of the people encountered along the way.

In-Habit comes from the verb *abitare*: to inhabit.

To inhabit a place is to return to it.

I've returned to the convent 78 times since that day in June 2007.

7,000 people pass through the convent's gates each week – many of them returning.

© Jude Anderson – Punctum 2009