



Anita Sinner, Rita L. Irwin & Timo Jokela (Eds.)

VISUALLY PROVOKING

Dissertations in Art Education

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**VISUALLY PROVOKING:
DISSERTATIONS IN ART EDUCATION**



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EDITORIAL NOTE

Visually Provoking, Provoking Visually

This editorial note is intended to provide an overview of the genesis of *Visually Provoking*, a dynamic collection of visually oriented research about current doctoral studies from international art educators in Australia, Canada, China, Egypt, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Portugal, Spain, and the United States of America. Together we are thinking about, with and through the visual, focusing attention on practices that are reshaping our understandings of intellectual exchange in an effort to open deliberations, considerations, imaginations, and potentialities for different ways of doing research. This collection may be considered in tandem with our related book, *International Perspectives on Visual Arts PhDs in Education: Provoking the Field (Intellect)*, which explores theoretical, methodological and practice-based accounts of doctoral studies.

We begin with a proposition: visual inquiry is an interruption, a forum to deliberate upon and to critically consider the pedagogic turn to art as research that is underway across disciplines. In art education, the articulation of form and content, how the visual operates as representation, expression or an object of scholarship, along with the purpose and intent of the visual as data, has long been part of our ongoing practices. Yet visual in-

quiry presents educators with a number of challenges, as Nadine Kalin, in her well-considered introduction to this book, articulates by mapping the terrain of the visual essay in general, and through the contours of the collection, she shares her perspectives on how the visual operates as a site of knowledge construction through shifting academic practices and modes of expression.

The clusters that form our three sections in the book are predicated by ‘en,’ a prefix that resonates with concept creation underway in the chapters and which serves as an acknowledgement of the growing influence of post-qualitative dispositions, in particular, new materiality. This book is positioned as a deliberate effort to emphasize visual engagement, evident in the tone, content and movement of the chapters. The sections operate like a triptych, that is, the chapters can be read individually, partially, sequentially, or out of order, extending the premise of open cartographies by Dolphijn and van der Tuin (2012), where intra-actions provide orientations that are situated, relational, and arguably produce “creative alternatives to critique” in this case, in the process, practice and product of artwork scholarship (p. 14). *Visually Provoking* is intended to be a creative venue for innovative, experimental scholarship that is visually refined, yet contextual, in the interplay of images, ideas, design and layout. Such work is integrative,

blending textual-visual-sound-digital qualities to document, reflect and assess inquiry. Authors experiment with customary approaches to push the boundaries of scholarly conventions, appropriating terms, adapting the style guide and generating artful space as a distinction to traditional renderings. This is an articulation of research that invites and extends meaning-making and educative understandings with nuanced, textured, sensorial movements, embodied in the visual.

As advocates for advancing arts research, our embrace of the visual as a form of social practice suggests chapter authors are, as change-agents informed by art practice, charting approaches that broaden our views on the affective, sensorial and intuitive qualities underlying visual inquiry. In turn, these visual essays are akin to a laboratory for new ways to articulate such research. Therein lies an intensification, between the gradation of immaterial and material, with chapters operating as expressions of active practice that may remain in progress, while at the same time, performing as objects that form part of the product, such as a body of work for exhibition or a dissertation. By operating as a process and as a product, this disruption in academic protocol is reinforced in the multitude of approaches that are shared across the chapters, including but not limited to arts-based, a/r/tography, practice-based and numerous related methods.

Briefly, arts-based is commonly taken up as an extension of qualitative research, where a given question is based in the arts from the initial research design to the interpretations made; arts-informed provides creative responses to a traditional methodological study; practice-based locates research in the studio through art making; and artis-

tic inquiry is material-based, bringing studio art practices to the fore, and by often engaging with existing artworks or museum collections. Each given approach then informs visuals created for research, collected as data, presented as part of the outcomes, or created to document artistic processes, learning events, or as responses to wider social issues that permeate art education curriculum and instruction. However, framing these approaches with static definitions requires a cautionary note, for as the chapters demonstrate, each author brings their own technical elements to bear, much as is expected in their development of an artistic vision, making each iteration of inquiry uniquely singular. Because of this methodological feature, classification is difficult and open to debate. This is not to sidestep the matter of methodological structure, nor to avoid responsibility in defining research design with clarity and concise language in each study. Instead, we propose that individual orientations to research begin with affinity for concepts and practices, and that affinity motivates authors to undertake their adaptations of these general approaches based on situated needs. In this way, authors strive visually to achieve another mode, level or form of scholarly construction, and accountability, moving beyond the claim of scientific proof that has produced sedimentary boundaries of thought in the past, to a realm of speculative possibilities, where the visual is foremost a test site for experimentation.

Within the collection are self-studies and participant research, including exploratory and systematic analysis, and observational, interpretative or nonrepresentational studies. In each case, the author provides methodological specificity to their research setting

and prerogatives, and, approaches including arts-based, artistic research, practice-based and more, may be used concurrently and interchangeably in the same chapter, making the genealogy of the approaches difficult to assess. This is both an ongoing and problematic issue for arts researchers, making art as research a messy and sometimes conflicting location of study. Concurrently, blending such approaches is a point of departure for democratizing methods in ways consistent with shifting paradigms, moving away from standardization to appreciate the distinctive characteristics that reside in each methodology case. Although we offer broad starting points as a way into this collection, among our tasks as we move forward with visual inquiry is to now unfold the plurality, to make the process of evolving, diverse modes of expression transparent and accessible by sharing sets of conditions that inform discretionary decision-making in the visual, as an artist, researcher and teacher.

As we enter into conversation with the authors in this book, we suggest that each such approach is always contingent on the individual reception of the work of art and scholarship, where the visual belongs to the context. We invite readers to engage in each chapter with curiosity, and to consider the depth of practice and articulation of methods to date. Some chapters offer initial considerations and early developments in methodology that rely more heavily on descriptive summaries across a spectrum of practice, to chapters that discuss comprehensive design considerations. If such an inquiry is premised on the integration of theory and practice, then we can enter each chapter as a situated dialogue between ethically bound issues, pedagogic challenges, and politics that the researcher

encounters in posing the research question. This is balanced with discussion about the representation of relationships, motivation for visual inquiry, and the implicatedness of the researcher in rendering their study visually. As part of creating, experimenting, collecting, interpreting, producing and communicating new approaches, it is vital that the scope of examples in this collection be inclusive of visual methods and techniques that offer great diversity and varied positionality from chapter to chapter as part of mapping how visual inquiry operates as an assemblage of active academic research practices.

And finally, reflecting on the chapters in this collection, we are presented with intricate, textured exemplars of living inquiry, where the joy of the researcher in making encourages a new scholarly *edge*. These chapters ground us in affirming, but not unproblematic visual thinking, in ways that spotlight artistic investigation for methodological practices that move in multiple directions and remain in movement. Much like the prefix 'en,' we are energized, enthused, engulfed, enamored, enlightened and enfolded, with provocative imaginaries for continued visual inquiry.

Anita Sinner
East Sooke, Canada
February 28, 2018

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ENTRIES INTO VISUALLY PROVOKING: DISSERTATIONS IN ART EDUCATION

Introductory Remarks

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This collection contains a compilation of visual essays that highlight advancements in the turn to the visual as evidenced and expanded through the creative potential of scholarship, either as a dissertation, exegesis, or body of creative work. It stands as testament to the variety of intertextual, literary, performative, digital, ethnographic, and visual renderings occurring at this time. The visual essay format offers a provocation for authors to dialogue across modes and texts. A distinguishing feature of this book is the core pedagogical purpose of the arts through their interpretive possibility along with the incor-

poration of learning and teaching related to the visual arts. Through the embracing of myriad practices, methods, concepts, materials, mediums, and methodologies in isolation or in hybridized forms as applied processes in art and in education, this book engages the reader as active participant and interpreter as each visual essay offers a portal into the experience of the visual art dissertation.

Over recent decades, visual essays have expanded from their origin as a sequence of photographs on a topic to include a creative balance of image and text-based compositions integrated to enhance understanding.

The modes of presentation are further stretched beyond the visual to encompass, for example, works created specifically for this collection, documentation of research data, or images of artistic process in the communication of creative inquiry. These components work together to relay the processes and products of research beyond the use of artistic means to illustrate a textual report toward embracing creative formats as essential in opening up meaning that eludes capture by mere language.

Visual essays act as portals into the dissertation process and product in this collection. Images offer multiple ways in and out of interpretation through their figurative and representational functions along with their unique and diverse modes of expression in materializing and curating narrative potential, localized views of experience, and complex reconsiderations of data, identities, and possibilities of form. The intertextual and purposeful placement of images in relation to written texts may extend, disrupt, ignore, interconnect, or present concepts and methods that ask the reader to open themselves up to alternative compositions of meaning making. In a sense, the form of visual essay opens alternative avenues of access to its own thread of attention, reasoning, and inbetweeness throughout the entire collection contained in this book. These portals that punctuate traditional texts and modes of reading invite further openings and spaces for viewing, sensing, interpreting, contemplating, imagining, intervening, and probing as uncontainable and unpredictable ruptures inherent in arts-based scholarship and creative works.

Visual essays offer a unique means for disseminating research. So much of the ad-

vancements forwarded in arts-based methodologies are displayed in their greatest artfulness through complete dissertations. Visual essays invite the multi-sensory and creative configurations not afforded by traditional text-based journal articles or book chapters. In our case, they are doors that invite participation into the full dissertation experience. While visual essays encompass visual expressions, arts-based research is not limited to the visual and this collection encompasses myriad forms including narrative, poetry and diagrams, among other modes.

In framing the chapters, each of the three sections has been titled – *encountering*, *enfleshing* and *entangling*. This trio of verbs in their gerund form take a noun, such as encounter, and turn it into an active verb with the addition of -ing at the end, or these words originated as verbs and are included here as present participles. The prefix ‘en’ can mean to put into or onto something, cause something to occur, or provide with something. ‘En’ may be used at the end of certain words as a suffix to increase a stated quality such as enliven. As necessarily provisional connective tissue, to my reading and viewing, the pieces do not neatly fit into just one section, nor are they intended to limit interpretive possibility. The section titles do act as prompts or possible passwords into portals of engagement and meaning making. They offer an anchor to hold onto, to question, and return to in the midst of methodological innovations, propositions, and challenges materialized through images, experiences, narratives, provocations, or poetic writings.

Visually Provoking is also a snapshot of the manifestations and materializations of arts-based dissertation projects in this contemporary moment – what arts-based re-

search entices, the forms it engages, and how it is enabled. The expansiveness presented in the chapters visualizes and narrates the international reach of arts-based research, but in this survey, the dissertation projects outlined in this book retain traces of their situations of incubation. One may read between the lines or intertextually interpret throughout the visual essays the influence of mentors, programs, communities, universities, regions and nations that weave residues of freedom and restriction concurrently throughout the possible limits of arts-based research. These idiosyncratic localizations may appear as the use of different terms, the (re)creation of new concepts and cultural modes of inquiry, as well as the limits and possibilities inherent across sites and purposes. In fact, as shared in a number of the visual essays, creative practices offer ways to explore how limits might be retooled as enabling.

While – *en* – may inspire, it may also act as a pause point for readers to ruminate over just how visually diverse and distinctive arts-based dissertations have become and how these methodological characteristics are always expanding in potentiality, even amidst calls for greater stability. Another connecting theme for this collection is the will to innovate. Yet, innovation at the dissertation research level can also inspire and be met with mistrust over struggles with assessment and validity of forms, as well as ‘silos’ of methodologies along disciplinary lines. Overall, the through-lines of diversity, tensions and extensions of current boundaries regarding institutional forms, protocols, assessments and techniques occur across this collection. Ultimately – *en* – also acts as a document of advocacy for reconceptualising and revisualising status quo traditions in its taking apart

of methodological touchstones through *encountering*, *enfleshing*, and *entangling*.

Section I – Encountering

Our first section opens with the title prompt of encountering. The stated definition implies unexpected or non-traditional meetings or intellectual exchanges. Additionally, encountering might be staged as an intense offering that provokes our emotions in raw, tense and confrontational ways. Visual essays enact a space of freedom to make or become, thereby centering the visual within scholarship in ways that might surprise and confront.

Encounters through visual essays help us to participate in the research process as images not only provide a snapshot of process but also always invite our emancipatory potential as active readers in determining our own understandings, findings, and flights of fancy. Visuals included in this section incorporate book-art installations, drawings, digital images, mixed media installations, video stills, landscapes and digital worlds. Interrelationships between language and text, image and line, research methodologies and doctoral programs, scholarly inquiry and creative processes are explored through new ways to conceptualize, act, voice, know, do, teach, present, journey and make. Visual essays as encountering may strengthen an inquiry, complicate the taken for granted, stretch the status quo, or detect alternative patterns, overlaps and habits through instruments, collections, diagrams, actions, field trips and embodied reflections.

Ju Hun’s opening chapter takes us on a poetic and visual *A/R/T Field Trip* through China’s historic Silk Road. It offers the twists

and turns associated with recontextualizing a preservice art education course around traditional Chinese art that incorporates the forms of poem-calligraphy-painting within a singular art work as assignment. The course extended a/r/tographical methodologies into pedagogical application as students were guided by their own living and artful inquiries in response to six Chinese couplets and assignments. Examples provide poetic and visual documentation of the transformation of thinking made possible when arts-based methods are adapted to pedagogical purposes associated with cultural priorities and traditions.

The following chapter, *Artistic Action for Sustainability* by Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, Allyson Macdonald and Timo Jokela, traces the development of practice-led and practice-based expertise through a joint doctoral degree from institutions in Iceland and Finland. By undertaking studies and research between two universities concerning the potential of art in education for sustainability, the differing core elements of each program and institution allowed for a complementary undertaking. The article-based dissertation focussing on action research was grounded and also extended by the arts-based research composed of three art exhibitions, with each intertwining the other.

In chapter 3, we encounter the Greek island of Lipsi as the site where (*h*)a/r/tography was enacted to explore the fluid *inbetween* of the boundaries of school art, sustainability and context. Sophia Chaitas, Georgia Liarakou and Vasilis Vasilakakis introduce us to the Cultural Ecology Framework (CEF), through which sustainable art education on a remote island is examining a/r/tography as a process to realize an epistemology of

presence and negotiate constraints. Visuals shared in this chapter offer glimpses into an a/r/tographic art project undertaken by students based on their lived experiences of the refugee crisis. This project was influenced by Picasso's *Guernica*, and used the traditional 'votsaloto' technique through sustainable materials (plastic water bottle caps).

In Kathryn Coleman's dissertation, we encounter the creation of new life stories crafted through critical auto-ethnography and a/r/tographic praxis exploring the self as a/r/tist. Her digital a/r/tographic thesis in the form of an online URL explores these rhizomatic spaces through inquiry into and with communities of practice associated with digital artist portfolios. Coleman's *A/R/T Portfolio* is an exhibition of identity a/r/tefacts, writings, videos, and a/r/tworks created by a/r/t selves associated with the inquiry.

In chapter 5, Samia El-Sheikh and Bilal Makled provide a survey and history of art education at all levels of Egyptian schooling including the requirements and general characteristics of this field. The chapter then delves into six different dissertation instances from art education. Interspersed within the piece are examples of how art is used as a tool to both experiment with technique while gaining information on a specific topic. The authors end with a call for greater alignment between art education research and schooling contexts.

Joaquin Roldan, Jaime Mena-de-Torres and Noemi Genaro-Garcia analyze the use of images in two dissertations in chapter 6 and make the case that a stable, perhaps systematized, visual form is appearing in studies using a/r/tography. Through the analysis of two dissertations, it is argued that objectives and justifications for including images,

along with the standards for using images in dissertations, are reproducible and often explicitly described in the dissertation. It is argued that efforts to define and validate the development of visual methods and images as research instruments in visual arts-based research may promote their use and justification in other research contexts.

Jason Cox's *Sounding Experiences* ends the first section. This dissertation embraces role-playing, freeform games as artistic medium and mode of collaborative and emergent arts-based research undertaken with a group of art educators in order to explore professional relationships in educational contexts. Acts of role playing culminated in participants collaboratively creating "The Indigo School" as a backdrop and extension to the embodied narrative emerging from the game playing. Cox maintains that these visual artifacts rendered in material form intuitive and interpretive data that acted as vehicles for growth in understanding how we engage with the world.

Section II – Enfleshing

Enfleshing acts as the title prompt for section II indicating the generation of insights through bodily form such as embodied engagement with writing and images that might offer insights to affective becomings and new understandings of materiality. As things come together in an enfleshing, the space in between can be erased as in the coupling of *arteducation* into one word, or relations among place and identity can be expanded through a socioecological understanding and relational view as in immersive art pedagogy. When modes, places, identities, disciplines and forms enflesh and

evolve together, alternative insights and constellations can be made possible through emerging intersections.

Section II commences with Maria Jesús Agra Pardiñas and Cristina Trigo Martínez's stories from C3, a cell of art/educational resistance started at the Faculty of Education of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) as a collective of teachers and investigators in 2012. 'Cell' is applied here as *arteducativism*: art and educational activism for any situation or context. Cell activists condemn the disciplinary divisions and knowledge fragmentation between art and education as separate entities and seek to en flesh these together through artistic action. To this end, C3 has created an Arteducation Survival Kit with multipurpose tools to aid the art educator as explorer through the process of change.

Laura Lee McCartney's visual essay reconceptualizes the dissertation as exhibition catalogue through exploring cartography or mapping the curation. The basis for this innovation was McCartney's curating of her own clothing collections within the exhibition, *Dress Stories*. While the exhibition offered ways to reimagine curating, the dissertation as exhibition catalogue furthered her understanding of curating as living inquiry. Within the chapter, renderings as modes of engagement with pieces of clothing, personal narratives, artworks and theoretical framings enact autobiographical curating as an arts-based form.

In *An Alarming Journey*, Jackie Batey and Linda Knight are two academics who each completed PhDs in illustration through practice-based or practice-led approaches tied to a conventional science model. This chapter retrospectively considers their experiences of doing research in illustration, namely mak-

ing art for a PhD, as a 'fraught' undertaking of radical and sudden change in regards to purposes and audiences. Their reminiscing of how practice-based inquiry can be morphed to meet differing contexts and priorities also allowed for experimental reclaiming, re-portioning and reconfiguration of illustration as a practice of self-description – a description of practice itself that is at once technological, intellectual and critical activity.

Geraldine Burke's chapter articulates the photo book genre from a *pracademic* sensibility bridging the academic-practitioner divide within an Australian arts-based PhD. The dissertation proposes Immersive Art Pedagogy as Burke's philosophy of practice and as a mode of arts-based research seeking to reconnect the identities of artist, researcher and teacher. Through the desire to explore the creative core of her pedagogy, Burke documents her efforts to make and remake, produce and reproduce the artist/researcher/teacher self into discourse within the hybrid form of a photo book.

Maria Ezcurra's dissertation employs visual, material, performative, written, verbal and participatory research modes to offer diverse responses to heteronormative connotations of bridal fashions. The chapter specifically focuses on Ezcurra's wedding dress and the visual documentation of the technical, conceptual and material processes of imagining, creating and performing her gown out of an integration of her varied identities and several different white garments. Ezcurra shares how the act of sewing became a pedagogical experience of the creative transformation of her identities – a writing of self through fabric.

Caught in the Middle describes how a life might be art and how we may think

within art. Yoriko Gillard reflects on the use of art employing a/r/tographic insights to trust and relate to communities and contexts through a contemplation of belonging from liminal spaces in-between cultural binaries. This liminal space allows Gillard to explore past creative works through self-study in order to examine how she connects to others and difference through creative acts. The visual essay is offered as a storybook to track her a/r/tographic practices as modes of connecting with society.

In the final dissertation of section II, Alison Shields proposes conversation as a creative medium and explores relationships between art making and the ethnographic interview as conversation. Through analysis of interviews with 125 artists in their studios and photographic documentation, data came together in this dissertation as a mapping process that permits the open-ended, non-linear, non-reductive and emergent qualities of art making and conversation to coalesce in new pathways and connections.

Section III – Entangling

As the title prompt for section III, entangling impedes movement or escape as it causes something to be held in perhaps compromising or difficult relational circumstances. The impossibility or resistance to disentangling implies the seduction of interlacings and mingling so that the meshing of separate entities hold their interconnectedness. Visual techniques, once re-entangled within social science priorities, may be rearticulated and stabilized for re-entry into established understandings. Conversely, visual arts dissertations may not be able to disentangle themselves from traditional assessments and

ways of knowing causing vexations whose compromises may inspire us back into art practices with renewed convictions. For example, visual interventions into abandoned schools offer spaces of omission and decompositions that entangle the elements of arts-based research into alternative structures. Stitching may enable a disentangling of confusion within research itself based on interlacing the modes of quilt-making with qualitative research in ways that reinvent both creative practices.

This third section opens with a visual essay by Ricardo Marin-Viadel, Rafael Genet and Xabier Molinet-Medina, who analyze two dissertations that both use digital color photography created by the respective researchers and participants. Chapter authors deduce the three main research techniques used in these dissertations as Visual Quotation, Comparative Photo Series, and Visual Average. In contrast to arts-based research, which the authors claim combine scientific research methods with artistic creation methods, the chapter proposes Artistic Teaching Methodologies which combine teaching and artistic creation methodologies.

The second chapter in this section considers how artistic methods might generate pedagogical knowledge based on analyzing images from a doctoral thesis employing arts-based research undertaken at the University of Barcelona by Mariane Blotta Abakerli Baptista. Visual methods were used in the research process to visualize research experiences as a form of narrative so that the images themselves do not reinforce other forms of data such as written reflections, but promote their own voice, power and theory in the research. The visual essay shares example pages from the dissertation that high-

light the construction of each page for deeper meaning and dialogue among forms.

The third visual essay, set in Australia, artfully interrogates the frustrations and vexations specifically related to visual arts dissertations in faculties of education where rigor and validity of art-based educational research (ABER) remains largely misunderstood. Inspired by the potential of art as educational research to unearth ways forward, Alexandra Lasczik offers a call/response, visual/verbal poetic portrayal that critically reflects, interrupts and constructively destabilizes present discourses associated with the evaluation of ABER dissertations in the Australian academy while concurrently creating an alternative scope and sequence for the purposes of assessing ABER PhDs in Australian contexts.

Chapter 4 offers a visual essay as counter narrative, alternative history and critical creative practice in resistance to dominant discourses contained and relayed through more imperialistic and dominant forms of self-representation and positioning in the world. It is through sharing, claiming and honoring narratives emerging from critical creative practice that we may learn how to (re)construct relationships with the Earth, ourselves and others. St. George demonstrates her methods of interruption in her visual essay through the sharing of her creative research on pages inviting the evolving performative inter-textuality between poetry, narrative, quotes, digital images, goals and epiphanies which create openings for emergent and radically alternative forms of knowing and hope.

Performing Interventions offers a practice-led approach to arts-based research and dissertation formats. The visual essay

is contextualized within Natalie LeBlanc's doctoral research that uses photography and social practice art to open abandoned schools across Canada as artistic, conceptual, theoretical and autobiographic sites of inquiry through artistic acts of encounter, intervention, interaction and reterritorialization. LeBlanc invites the reader to pause and examine her images of abandoned schools as visual (de)compositions, while she punctuates her pages with negative space in order to provoke readers to affect by work of omission.

The last chapter in this collection effectively embraces the materials, processes and identities associated with quilt-making and researching in order to construct the dissertation metaphorically visualized as patchwork quilt. Gai Lindsay used familiar quilting terms along with her strengths as a quilter to help demystify and embrace her identity as researcher. The researcher voice is only rendered through the stitch holding the assemblage of research together, albeit intentionally hidden into the in-between seams of the research.

I

Encountering

encounter / in'kaunter, en/ n. [Also encountering, gerund or present participle, v.] **1 a** To encounter is the act of meeting with, by chance or unexpectedly, and experiencing by participating in an intellectual exchange a manner that counters traditional understandings of dissertation research. **b** An offering an intense engagement of our wits, our emotions, our manners in ways that are provocative, rawer, tensive, even adversarial, confronting **c** Researchers who contend with artful practices that bring conditions of, into and onto, the places that centre visual arts as scholarship and create the enfreedom that offers a means to make or become.

**PEDAGOGICAL REFORM:
FROM A FIELD TRIP TO
AN A/R/T FIELD TRIP**

JUN HU
Hangzhou Normal University, China

Pedagogic Reform

For my dissertation research, I am undertaking pedagogic reform of an annual art field trip in a required course called Art Expedition (艺术考察) that is part of our undergraduate art teacher-training program at Hangzhou Normal University (HNU), China. I introduced an a/r/tography component to improve pedagogical effectiveness through what is often referred to as “poetic inquiry.” Partly because A/R/T intertwines “art” and “graphy,” it was renamed “the A/R/T field trip.” Proposing that poetry can make complex thinking sensible and holistic, the course curriculum is now guided by six Chinese couplets. Structured in this way, the intent is that the poetic effect of each couplet triggers students’ memories to activate specific embodied cognition that leads to more targeted critical thinking. This curricular reform operates as an experiment, first conducted with 40 junior undergraduate students in 2015, and then 38 in 2016. Each offering of the course took around three weeks to travel 5,500 kilometres along a route rich in cultural heritage and natural wonder – the historic Silk Road.¹

¹ The field trip of this course goes through five provinces, three national parks, three ethnic areas, including the mysterious Tibetan region, transgressing the prairie, the Gobi desert, the plateau and the snow mountain with over 4000 meters of difference in altitude along its 5500 km route; and has visited three historic capitals, three provincial museums, Terracotta Warriors, two Buddhist grottoes of sculptures and paintings and the Great Wall along the Silk Road.

For a thousand years of rich cultural history, Chinese artists have taken “poetry as hidden painting, and painting as visual poetry” (Guo Si, 11th century, translated in Lin, 1969, pp. 81–92).² This tradition has culminated in *Literati Painting*, the highest genre of traditional Chinese art, by showcasing *Poem-Calligraphy-Painting* in one piece of work, which not only took poetry as a theme, but also as an immediate indicator of depth of learning, intellectual maturity and creativity of the artist. In this sense, poetic inquiry as it is articulated in the West (see for example Wiebe & Guiney Yallop, 2010) was arguably familiar to ancient Chinese artists, and these parallels, such as conveying complexity in a minimalist way and through embodied aesthetics (White, 2011), are the basis of my dissertation and this chapter. In line with this tradition, poetry has also served as an assessment for art learning. For example, as recorded in Ching Hao’s (10th century) *A Conversation on Method* (Lin, 1969, p. 92), when the old master decided to test the learner’s maturity in painting skills, the master assigned him the task of improvising a poem. In the Chinese tradition, visual art and poetry are intertwined in an intricate, balanced and very meaningful way. So my question is: Can this tradition be contextualized as arts-based educational research (ABER) in a contemporary context?

I propose that poetry can contribute to visual art-based educational research and teacher education by advancing that poetry not only provides visual art with thematic inspiration, but also with embodied criteria of assessment.

For the A/R/T Field Trip experiment, I wrote four couplets in classic style in addition to the two well-known ones written by ancient poets, each guiding one of the six controlled steps³ of the ABER learning process for junior undergraduate students majoring in Art Education. It was expected that during the tight schedule of the three-week field trip, they would carry out the a/r/tographic mission of intertwined art-making/researching/teaching with the couplets to guide thinking and as a means of self-assessment. In this way, a/r/tography is a critical entry point for teacher candidates to rethink the many spaces in-between East-West, student-teacher, poetry-visual art, history-contemporary culture and more.

In 2015, I first reformed the pedagogy of this field trip course to include a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Carter & Irwin, 2014; Leggo, Sinner,

² 郭思《林泉高致》：诗是无形画，画是有形诗，Quoted by Guo Si in *A Father’s Instructions*, 11th century, incomplete translation by Lin (1969) in *The Chinese Theory of Art* (pp. 81–92).

³ The design of the six steps of curriculum is inspired by the I Ching (易经) or Book of Change (see Wilhelm, 1950), Chinese classics that diagrammatically abstracts all possibilities of change into 64 hexagrams (卦). Each hexagram is a figure of six broken and/or unbroken lines placed in sequential order, representing the six steps of interaction between Ying (--) and Yang (-).

Irwin, Pantaleo, & Gouzouasis, 2011) as the core method of inquiry in order to develop students' creativity and art teacher identity beyond its traditional aim to enrich knowledge of art heritage and to experience natural wonders. What I anticipated from this reform was that the students would develop deeper critical thinking through a/r/tography to generate practical and creative art-making strategies together with direct pedagogical application. To test the validity of this theory in an a/r/tographic way, the students were asked to share their approach in a workshop, collaborating with a group of peers. Finally, the students were required to exchange their findings and experience with classroom presentations.⁴

Not to spoil the relaxed mood of traveling by introducing wordy explanations, academic readings and puzzling technical terms, I decided to use poetry as an alternative to enhance critical thinking in an arts-based way. This "contiguity" of the visual and the textual is a typical "rendering" of a/r/tography (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005). Instead, the six couplets take water-and-moon as a metaphor, and are composed based on traditional Chinese literature and life experience that students are familiar with in their cultural context, adapting a/r/tography to a Chinese pedagogic purpose. With very limited art media during the trip and the tight schedule, students have to use unconventional art strategies (e.g. they are encouraged to use their smart phone applications as art media), that are easy and quick, and generate art effects attractive enough for peers to try their hand on in resulting workshops, which forces the students to think outside of the box.

As students reflected on the first course offering in 2015, this pedagogy seemed beyond their comfort zone before they tried it, but soon after they started, they found it was akin to a game, that is fun, challenging and attractive. Why so? I believe it is because the A/R/T Field Trip took the a/r/tography method as a conceptual and material construct that maps the perceived reality of our individual and shared arts-based intellectual processes. For example, my student Wang Rui, who took part in the A/R/T Field Trip course in May 2016, created her response to the six steps of development guided and assessed by the six couplets I presented the class. In this case, I highlight the six steps to demonstrate the curriculum in action. Each step is an assignment accompanied by a Chinese couplet, translated into English as below:

⁴ Since my thesis is based on those courses already completed, I invite past students from 2015 and 2016 to be part of this study. None of those students will be in any course I am teaching at HNU now or during the time of this study. The mission of this thesis research is to review student responses, gather and analyze the responses as data collected from the course. The data will include images of student's work, including PowerPoint presentations, artworks, interview transcripts, and students' comments (such as emails).

止流为鉴，不劳拂拭
Still running water for reflection,
doing away with the trouble of wiping a mirror.

沧海独渡，唯见明月
Sailing alone on boundless sea,
you see the moon brighter than ever.
三潭印一月，非一亦非异
Three reflections of the moon in three pools,
they are neither same nor different.

一月映三江，”千里共婵娟”⁵
(宋·苏轼)
Reflected in different bodies of water,
the same moon is looked up at by
people thousands of miles apart.

“举杯邀明月，对影成三人”
(唐·李白)
“I raise my cup to the Moon
for her to join me.
With the Moon, my Shadow, and I:
We're people three,”⁶
(Li Bai, Tang Dynasty)

“此时相望不相闻，愿逐月华流照君”
(唐·张若虚)
She sees the moon, that her beloved
is seeing, too;
She wishes to follow the light beam to shine upon
her beloved one's face.
(Zhang Ruoxu, Tang Dynasty)⁷



Figure 1. Danxia Landform National Park,
photography by Wang Rui.

⁵ The second line in the couplet is a quote from “...但愿人长久，千里共婵娟...”《水调歌头·丙辰中秋》 by ShuShi (苏轼, 1037-1101) and translated by the author.

⁶ Excerpt from Li Bai (701-762) *Beneath the Moon Drinking Alone*, translated by Frank C Yue.

⁷ Excerpt from Zhang Ruoxu (660-720) *Spring River in the Flower Moon Night*, 张若虚《春江花月夜》，translated by the author.



Figure 2. Web Image chosen by Wang Rui in comparison with her photography. Image: Vecteezy.com.

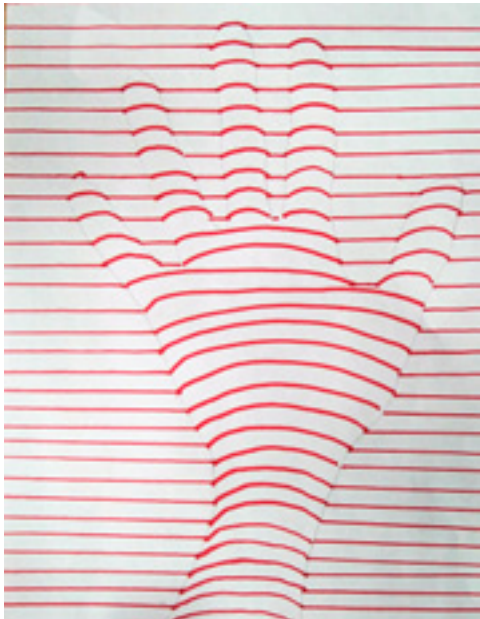


Figure 3. Drawing by Wang Rui.

The research question guiding each student is based on their personal living inquiry that arises out of their desire to make sense of an extraordinary aesthetic experience during the trip. In Wang Rui's case, she was fascinated by the wonder of nature called "Danxia Landform" in a national park in Gansu Province. She needed to investigate its meaning through critical thinking, art-making, and experimenting with her peers.

Step 1. Introspection (200 words)

止流为鉴，不劳拂拭
Still running water for reflection,
Doing away with the trouble of
wiping a mirror.

Wang Rui raises the research question: "Why does the Danxia landscape give me the sensation of inexperience? What has touched me about this landscape in particular, and how?"

In this first step, the couplet guided Wang Rui to undertake ongoing introspection about her aesthetic experience as an event that embodied the notion of "still running water." Though the awe she had experienced with the landscape was strong and clear, how that understanding came into being was difficult to answer. It took Wang Rui quite some time to conduct her own research and meditation on research in relation to the geological science of the landscape, and to savour the process of her encounter with the landscape. In time, she discovered that it was the regular lines of earth texture that gave her the extraordinary visual experience by deconstructing and reconstructing 2D and 3D spaces simultaneously (see Figure 1).



Figure 4. Photography and drawing by Wang Rui with cellphone.

Step 2. Enduring Understanding (1 sentence)

沧海独渡，唯见明月
Sailing alone on boundless sea,
You see the moon brighter than ever.

She naturally arrived at Step 2, where “you see the moon brighter than ever,” for she had made sense of her embodied experience, and created new meaning by expressing the enduring understanding: “It is the textured lines of earth interweaving 2 dimensional and 3 dimensional space at the same time that gives the visual sensation, which is extraordinary to the eyes.” And she illustrated how the power of the earth has shaped this landscape, as if time forms space (Figure 2). These insights and knowledge had been unknown to her before, and had been discovered by her own research on nature and in consideration of her own living experience.

Step 3. Connecting to Art World (2-5 samples)

三潭印一月，非一亦非异
Three reflections of the moon in three pools
They are neither same nor different.

The couplet guides students to search art history and the contemporary art world for varied samples to verify that the enduring understandings they are invoking visually connect with artists beyond their immediate social, cultural and historical contexts. Wang Rui searched the internet for related art methods, and found it in *For Eyes*⁸, (a fashion show to promote sunglasses produced by Les Specs, directed collaboratively by artist Craig Redman (New York) and Karl Maier (London) in 2014. She also found another sample⁹, which was in a primary school art course. They together testify that her understanding is “enduring.” In *For Eyes*, sexy models were dressed in coloured striped tights that exaggerate the curves of the body. In the primary school drawing course, the pupils use curves to protrude the shape of their hand out of 2D paper, and Wang Rui adapted this concept after the primary school art workshop (see Figure 3).

⁸ See Wang Rui, *For eyes*, at www.craigandkarl.com/#!/?projectid=294&image=1

⁹ See roshanda-thecreativespirit.blogspot.ca/2012/01/op-art-hands-that-pop.html

Step 4. Art-Making Experiment (1–3 pieces of work)

一月映三江， “千里共婵娟”

Reflected in different bodies of water,

The same moon is looked up at by people thousands of miles apart.

The couplet encourages an art-making experiment that evolves from both research and individualized experience. Wang Rui invented a digital art strategy with her smart phone. She drew white lines on her own photo, playing with the 3D and 2D interaction, in order to reproduce the aesthetic effect that the landscape had impressed upon her (Figure 4). Since Wang Rui’s art work evoked awe among the peer audience, she knew she had been successful with the experiment.

Step 5. Elegant Problem (1 sentence)

举杯邀明月，对影成三人

I raise my cup to the Moon

for her to join me.

With the Moon, my Shadow,

and I: We’re people three.

Then, following the given format (Using ___ Make/do ___ That ___), Wang Rui created her pedagogical experiment as a workshop based on the art-making experience. The challenge here is to prepare an elegant problem, a pedagogical prompt that has to be expressed explicitly and that is interesting to her peers.

The couplet borrowed from Li (8th century) takes the shadow of the drunken poet in moonlight as metaphor for the elegant problem, which suggests that the pedagogical strategy (the “shadow”) is a new creation out of one’s art-making (“I”) enlightened by one’s research (the “moon”). The metaphor of the drunken poet hints that a bit of playfulness, or craziness, is necessary ingredient for this assignment. Wang Rui offered: “Using my cellphone or camera to take a picture of an object of interest; then, using a cellphone drawing application suggested as (Sketches, VSCO, Snapseed, or Pics art), draw on the photo regular white lines that represent on the main object its space and volume.” This then applied her experimentation with contour lines that evolved from the beginning of the assignment.

Step 6. Educational Reflection (Art workshop with 4–6 participants)

此时相望不相闻，愿逐月华流照君
She sees the moon,
that her beloved is seeing, too;
She wishes to follow the light beam
to shine upon her beloved one's face.

The last couplet borrowed from Zhang Ruoxu (7–8th century) takes the metaphor of a distant lover to suggest that an art educator should be open minded to the contingency in the pedagogical process, while keeping it on track by proposing an explicit elegant problem. Wang Rui named her workshop poetically as “Rhyme and Rhythm,” which did catch the heart and attention of peer participants, but not all peers followed her instructions exactly. Two students used colour lines, instead of the “white lines” as required by Wang Rui, which hints that Wang Rui could revise her elegant problem to be more open-ended. Wang Rui’s a/r/tographic invention is verified by peer students’ positive responses. She had a group of six peers to test her invention in a workshop (four peer participants in a workshop was the minimum requirement). They all had fun and created impressive works in a snap of fingers (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Photography and drawing by Cheng Zhang Yiyue at Wang Rui's Workshop.

A Student-Centred A/r/tographic Curriculum

Students' contribution is at the centre of this experimentation, which has been developed into a student-centric curriculum with the assistance of a/r/tographic pedagogy. The productivity of this reform is impressive, as a student commented: "The course is magical, for anyone can be creative on anything."

Keeping in mind the extremely limited time during the trip, most of the discussion among peers and with instructors took place on buses, trains and at dinner tables, except for the last two days of classroom presentations by all students. Students were not expected to make masterpieces of art works, but they were expected to enjoy the playfulness in the a/r/tographic process of inquiry.

Over the last two years, each student has come up with diversified enduring understandings, innovative art works and pedagogical practices as the result of the two A/R/T field trips. Since every student created a workshop, there are already 78 workshops, with their PowerPoint presentations and images of art works preserved digitally in the archive of Art Education Dept., HNU, that are edited into two catalogues *From a Field Trip to an A/R/T Field Trip* in 2015 and 2016. Those are the basic data of this on-going thesis research.

Not all students have achieved the best of their potential, but I regard it as having fulfilled the mission of the course if the student has had a transformative experience with their identity as artist/researcher/teacher, and is readily adaptable to the "becoming" of new notions of art, new forms of art and duly new strategies of teaching art, and if the student has been able to self-assess their learning by figuring out the strong and weak points at each of the six steps, and enjoyed the collaboration with peers. With more data collected through interviews with students, those are the focuses of further data analysis.

Two of my colleagues, Professor Liu Xuan and Professor Shi Xiaohong, acting as my assistants, have witnessed the courses, and are convinced by the effectiveness of a/r/tographic pedagogy in developing students creativity and art teacher identity. As the first a/r/tographic pedagogical experiment in China, it suggests that embracing the Western conceptualization of a/r/tography could revitalize ancient Chinese literati art tradition in contemporary context.

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**ARTISTIC ACTION FOR SUSTAINABILITY:
DEVELOPING PRACTICE-LED AND PRACTICE-
BASED EXPERTISE THROUGH A JOINT DEGREE
FROM ICELAND AND FINLAND**

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The intention and outcome behind one person's experience of taking a joint doctoral degree is discussed in this chapter. Jónsdóttir carried out her doctoral studies during a period in which interdisciplinary research is becoming essential to understanding emerging issues in our society. Her doctoral project centred on the potential of art in education for sustainability (EFS). She and her supervisors consider the benefits of studying in two universities, one in Iceland (UI) and one in Finland (UoL). Jónsdóttir herself works as an assistant professor in art education at the Iceland Academy of the Arts (IAA).

The joint degree programme designed by Jónsdóttir and her supervisors was the result of working towards an article-based dis-

sertation focusing on action research complemented by art-based research with three art exhibitions; two as a curator and artist and one as the exhibiting artist. The methods used in the research complemented each other and the findings extend our understanding of the potential of art in education for sustainability (EFS).

The early part of the doctoral research at the UI was action research. Through courses, workshops and networks, Jónsdóttir was able to develop comprehensive knowledge of EFS. Through action research she developed her personal practical knowledge in connection to her practice as an assistant professor at the IAA. She analyzed her own practice while developing new knowledge about edu-

cation for sustainability that had operational significance for her workplace, a department at the IAA, and leading to a model for pre-service art teacher training for sustainability. Competence in action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Somekh & Zeihner, 2009; Stringer, 1996) was verified by publishing peer reviewed articles and book chapters. A degree of PhD by publication was awarded by the University of Iceland. It was important for Jónsdóttir to reflect on her own practice through collaborating with other UI doctoral students and scholars studying EFS in connection to other subjects like natural sciences, human rights and philosophy. The collaboration convinced Jónsdóttir that EFS requires diverse perspectives to address its complexity when preparing students for citizenship and sustainability.

The latter part of the study builds on art-based research. Two years into the doctoral project Jónsdóttir felt that it was not consistent to look at the potential of art in EFS without using art in her research practice. Art-based investigations were undertaken to gain new knowledge by means of artistic practice, creative outcomes and through art installations and exhibitions. This research activity led to a Doctor of Arts from the UoL. The long-standing role of art-based research and the network of researchers using art in their methodology at the UoL has been very important for Jónsdóttir's studies. It is argued that a joint degree can benefit the researcher and the supervisors, giving each a broader perspective and experience as well as providing credentials recognized in more than one country. This chapter explores this argument and some of the benefits of a participatory artistic approach in EFS.

Personal Practical Knowledge: Practice Theory

In the action research studies at the UI, Jónsdóttir developed her practice theory (Guðjónsdóttir & Karvelsdóttir, 2013) as pre-service art teachers developed personal practical knowledge towards EFS. Jónsdóttir's research was based on her development as a teacher educator over six years at the IAA and her wish to advance knowledge within her practice. She explored how a teacher educator can contribute to student empowerment and self-efficacy and to student practice-theory towards EFS (Bandura, 1989).

One of her main tasks was to create and assess settings for pre-service art teachers to become responsible mentors for sustainable development and cultural sustainability. Her data includes entries in written journals, written and artistic responses of students to particular experiences of working with students and interpreting theories and readings, course descriptions and evaluation criteria. Further data came from assignments in courses taught, interviews with stakeholders about their EFS experiences and an analysis of master's theses.

At IAA the aim was to design and evaluate settings that help pre-service art teachers develop a pedagogical foundation through visual art education, with a focus on contemporary art, critical theory in art, and research methodologies. Through a sequence of core courses developed at the IAA, Jónsdóttir incorporated a progressive, critical approach where students examined the making and teaching of art as a social act. She combined practice-led art education with contemporary art and its social context.

Pre-service teachers develop practice theories (Guðjónsdóttir & Karvelsdóttir, 2013) built on complex and ambitious understandings of the link between educational theory and the practice of teaching. The theories are based on the interaction between how students want to act as teachers, and their knowledge and understanding of ethical reasoning, attitudes and values. Jónsdóttir conferred with students, compared different approaches, looked for contrast and created lists of themes and developed methods to map her data.

The findings of Jónsdóttir's study indicate the importance of focusing on student driven initiatives, where they take ownership of their own learning, giving them the potential to develop a stronger sense of self. Through their studies, students at IAA have developed an intellectual community amongst themselves, which according to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) is a fundamental value for developing teachers' professionalism. Furthermore, Jónsdóttir created a research group for professionals interested in the potential of art in education for sustainability that functions as a support network for the IAA alumni (former students believe is important after they become in-service teachers).

In the action research Jónsdóttir looked at her actions, evaluating whether she achieved her goals which were to bring together action and reflection through her courses. It was very important that the researcher recognized and acknowledged the different perceptions of the pre-service teachers. They do not have to come to the same conclusion during the process of developing their own practice theory; rather they come to accept that there are different terms and knowledges, and they have to be

willing to work with this. In EFS students are expected to take part in critical discussions that include different perspectives. Because sustainability problems are dependent on many factors EFS requires complex interconnections. Therefore, public participation processes are appropriate approaches when working with EFS (Kozak & Elliot, 2014).

Through participation and collaboration, a range of virtues and values (Macdonald & Jónsdóttir, 2013) for deliberations have been refined. A variety of projects have been developed for getting and keeping people involved in participation in EFS. Jónsdóttir herself attempted to cultivate these values and virtues before working towards the same goal with the pre-service art teachers when dealing with EFS and citizenship.

The Art-Based Research

The art-based research part of the study manifests itself in art creation and curatorial work. It was intertwined by Jónsdóttir with the action research work at the IAA. Jónsdóttir's own art creation and curated art exhibitions emphasized participation with others building on a foundation of personal practical knowledge, theories and practice (Jónsdóttir, 2017). The aim of the actions designed was to develop reflective knowledge, which helped the museum visitor to identify sustainability issues in their world, connect to them and take action to change their world based on new knowledge. This was possible because the arts can integrate knowing, doing and making (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

Jónsdóttir's artistic practice is shaped by an interest in socio-cultural topics: on one hand, at a global level working on developments and changes towards a more sustain-

able society, and on the other hand, at a personal level through intimate changes towards cultural sustainability. The artistic approach is based on understanding through art making, participation, qualitative and anthropological investigation, including, for example, taking interviews and building into the artwork artistic participation from others. Exhibition catalogues can be found as appendices in the published thesis (Jónsdóttir, 2017).

The three required exhibitions were evaluated by three different external examiners. They gave important and useful feedback for further works that forced Jónsdóttir onward both in art-based and action research part of the study. In the artistic process, the artwork both creates and represents data. Some of the responses to artworks fed into the action research data and at other times the data from the action research was the starting point of an art-based approach (Jokela, Hiltunen, & Härkönen, 2015).

In the art exhibitions, the curatorial work focused on creating a holistic approach with a clear focus on sustainability. This included installations of Jónsdóttir's own works with a focus on collaborative approaches, examining the social practices that linked them to the social realm from different perspectives on sustainability. This involved Jónsdóttir's practical work as an assistant professor, with supervisors, research groups and practicing artists.

Learning from the Art Exhibitions and Articles: The Researcher and Others

The learning process behind the exhibitions and the art making is always to stay curious, using art making as a thinking process. The fundamental difference between art-based

and action research was that the products of the artistic activities and art-based work were not necessarily knowledge, but inspiration, and the questions needed to search for new knowledge. In art-based research methods the methodological approaches meet and blend. Knowledge was generated through works where Jónsdóttir looked at her questions in as many different ways as possible both using art as a thinking process and as a way of making her thinking visible. Like in the work *MemoryBits* (Figure 1) where she used the art to understand her own background and sense of place.

The work was rooted in the idea of memories and place. Collective memory in a place is no more than an element in the perpetuation of a particular social order that seeks to inscribe some memories attached as if by nature. In the article the Jónsdóttir looked at the same concept but from a different angle based on her action research findings.

The art-based process was a means of understanding experience or context, often resulting in the artistic process overlapping with qualitative research methods. Sometimes, the artistic creation provoked questions that led to further research in the qualitative realm such as the work *Value Archive* (Figure 2) which stemmed from the researcher's interest in values when she invited 46 persons to share in the creation of book-based artwork messages or knowledge they wanted to pass on to future generations. These women portrayed characteristics that their researcher believed represented a range of values important in a sustainable society. Each participant contributed a 10 x 10 cm piece that was centered on each page of the book. Jónsdóttir then added a short text explaining why she regarded the participants as role models.



Figure 1. Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, *MemoryBits*, 2013, mixed media installation. Photograph: Ásthildur Jónsdóttir.



Figure 2. Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, *Value Archive*, 2013, book-art. Photograph: Ásthildur Jónsdóttir.

Some of the artwork continued to feed into the action research. Participatory artwork like this departs from relationships between humans and the social context of creating art and is meant to create a space in which art can fuel our interest in those elements of our society that might be improved and thereby lead to sustainability. In the article, “Teaching and Learning for Sustainability: An Icelandic Practice-Based Research,” Jónsdóttir (2015) looked at many of the same principles addressed in the book art.

Some of the action research findings were represented visually and continued to be developed in the art-based research. The art-based research brought together Jónsdóttir’s scholarly inquiry and the creative processes. The art allowed her to explore questions and express understandings through artistic means: “Visual images are particularly appropriate to

drawing in the participants themselves as central to the interpretive process” (Mitchell, 2008, p. 374).

The work *Lesson from the Geese: Dreaming of a Collaborative Protection of our Waters* (Figure 3) was inspired by a dialogue during Jónsdóttir teaching practice at IAA on how we can learn from the nature. Migrating geese have discovered that they can reach their destination more quickly and with less energy expended when they fly together in a V-shape formation with the geese taking turns in leading from the centre and all the other geese trailing behind in two lines. If we humans would work on a similar collaboration towards sustainable development it is likely that we might reach our goals more effectively.

The first exhibition *Challenge* (2015) was part of Jónsdóttir’s studies towards the Doctor of Art degree, and aimed to help viewers deepen their understanding of sustainability. The exhibition took place from January–May 2015. It raised the question of what we can do to find a balance between the world’s complex ecology and our well-being. This critical move towards the goal of sustainability requires fundamental changes in human attitudes and activity. The action research findings indicate the importance of personal connection to sustainable development. Each teacher candidate needs to devel-



Figure 3. Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, *Lesson from the Geese: Dreaming of a Collaborative Protection of our Waters*, 2016. Installation from yarn and feathers. Photo: Ásthildur Jónsdóttir.

op self-efficacy and believe their actions can make a difference (Jónsdóttir, 2017).

Skúli's Crosses, All Around (Figure 4) is another work Jónsdóttir created for the exhibition. This anthropological piece shows the quiet influence an individual can have on the environment. Skúli has crafted almost five hundred light crosses since his retirement from farming. He has given the crosses to individuals all around Iceland and some abroad. With the crosses he wants to work towards peace, which is the necessary foundation for well-being in the world. The work reflects the importance of taking mutual responsibility for our environment.

Jónsdóttir's second exhibition entitled *Boundaries and Bridges: Creating a New Role for Old Traditions* was located in Harpa, a large conference and concert hall

in the centre of Reykjavík, Iceland, during the Arctic Circle Conference, October 2015. The exhibition was designed to increase participation in Arctic dialogue and strengthen the international focus on the future of the Arctic. The practice-led findings indicate the importance of this dialogue. The conference has become the largest international gathering on the Arctic, attended by more than 1,500 participants from over 40 countries. In that exhibition Jónsdóttir showed her work *Value Archive* (Figure 2) along with works by nine other artists.

The third exhibition *LOOKING, Back, Around, Forward* took place in a gallery at the Arctic Centre in Rovaniemi in Finland in March–April 2016. This was a solo exhibition with seven artworks created by Jónsdóttir. The emphasis was on different types of



Figure 4. Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, *Skúli's Crosses, All Around*, 2015. Video and photo installation. Photo: Ásthildur Jónsdóttir.

participation through diverse installations. Some works in the exhibition gave visitors possibilities to engage in different ways both before and during the event.

The collective work *Colours of Rovaniemi* (Figure 5) was created with participation of people from Rovaniemi and demanded active participation from the viewer when looking at the work. The aim of the work was to reveal new depths of the experience of being in Rovaniemi, to engage the viewers or inhabitants in that place, rather than abstracting that place into generalisations that apply just as well to any other place. Jónsdóttir interviewed seventeen individuals and asked them to tell her about places within Rovaniemi they believe people could enjoy more. The places are very different and represent people's perceptions of alternate spac-

es, alternate routes, and journeys through the city and the much needed intermittent spaces of "pause." Most of the places are connected to water, either via river or lakes.

The same people in Rovaniemi were asked to choose one card of colours out of 314 colour samples – a colour that makes them feel good. The colours comprise most of the colours we see in the world around us. Most of the participants chose colours in a blue tone and connected them to Finnish light and nature. When peeping through the surface of the works you find photographs of their places. The action research findings have led to understanding how a sense of place grows from identifying oneself in relation to a particular piece of land. A sense of place is also a combination of the characteristics that makes a place special and



Figure 5. Ásthildur Jónsdóttir, *Colours of Rovaniemi*, 2016. Photo: Ásthildur Jónsdóttir.

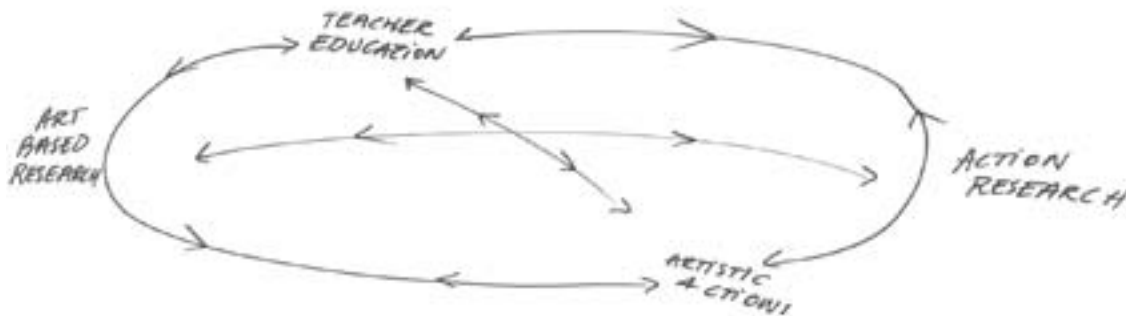


Figure 6. Interconnectedness of the research process.

unique, involving the human experience in a landscape and the local environment. In this exhibition the value of recognising the important and changing role of culture in contemporary society was fostered. The aim of the art was not to find answers, but rather to make people think and question.

Potentials for Art Education

This chapter has described aspects of a joint doctoral study from the UI and UoL where art-based and action research methods were used to look at the potential of art in EFS. At UoL, Jónsdóttir had access to cooperative activities through her professional position in Iceland but by enrolling as a doctoral student she extended access to faculty expertise at both universities and resources as well as the self-discipline required for working in the field. Each supervisor's expertise and the specialization of the two universities were important throughout the multi-layered research process shown in Figure 6.

The dissertation resulting from the joint degrees includes a written component and an artistic component. Both the articles and the artworks are stand-alone items that can each

be accessed in their own right. The two components of the study individually create new insights into the potential of art in education for sustainability. Jónsdóttir neither uses the artistic approach as an alternative nor as a supplement to conventional educational research because she is not trying to replace it. One method is not superior to the other. Instead, all approaches operate equally.

Through the research studies in Iceland and Finland Jónsdóttir has been able to develop a systematic understanding of the conditions at IAA which shape, limit and determine action she can take. Based on her findings she created settings for continuous, collaborative dialogue. Her reflections-in-action have led to the reflexivity of the practice at the IAA (Loughran, 2002).

In summary, the difference in doctoral degree requirements broadened Jónsdóttir's education as well as widening her cultural horizons. Additionally, working with two institutions, combined with her own workplace, helped broaden her network and opportunities. The methodological approach of the study was not rigid but rather involved constant revisions to accommodate the complexities of human interaction and meaning

making. This is what Jónsdóttir knows today, but through ongoing reflection her knowledge has changed and will continue to change and grow tomorrow.

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A/R/TOGRAPHY: A FLUID RELATIONSHIP OF THEORY, TIME AND PLACE

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The Context and the Theoretical Framework

Two perspectives, one theoretical, namely cultural ecology (Creed & Dillon, 2013), and the other methodological, namely a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) are aligned to create art connected to the local environment in a remote island secondary school in the South Aegean Sea. The cultural ecology perspective places significance on interaction between people and their environments in the context of everyday experiences, while a/r/tography is a methodology that places significance on process as living inquiry. We propose that this integrated framework is

well planned to be utilized as a tool for research as well as for teaching/learning sustainability through secondary school art. A new art project is mapped onto the integrated framework in order to corroborate this argument. This research has the potential to re-imagine learning and art making in school as an a/r/tographic process, and as such may be particularly significant for remote environments.

Lipsi is a small Greek island situated South East in the Aegean on the border close to the Turkish coast. It is remote; 173.2 nautical miles from governance. It is isolated due to poor transportation and unstable weather

conditions. Gruenewald's (2008) observation that "no one lives in the world in general" (p. 145) applies to Lipsi, with scarce water supply. These factors influence how life in Lipsi, with its rich cultural tradition, is lived; with limited scope for economic development and encouraging *brain drain* (migration for professional reasons). Thus, in Lipsi, the quest for a sustainable future runs high. A distinguishing feature is its placement under protection of the European network of protected areas *Natura 2000*. In this remote community, education could play a key role connecting environmental, economic and socio-cultural features in order to initiate sustainability (Liarakou, Gavrilakis, & Flogaitis, 2016). On Lipsi however, island life and identity associated with local community is segregated from formal education. The latter is directed at tertiary education and subsequent youth translocation to urban centers. Teaching secondary school art in Lipsi manifests as what Efland (1976) named "the school art style" where art produced in school is irrelevant to place and what is happening outside of school (p. 39).

Conversely to treating art made in secondary schools as separate to the environment, a holistic outlook would be more helpful to encourage understanding of place and sustainability. Cultural Ecology (CE) provides this unifying frame. It consists of relationships among people, organizations and places. The conceptual Cultural Ecology Framework (CEF) theorizes the environment by perceiving it as a space formed by individuals' interactions and transactions of everyday activities and experiences (Dillon, 2008a). These experiences include lifestyles, individual and collective competences, values, ideas and future hopes. They also reflect

conflict between continuity and change. Interactions emerge from one's concurrent perceptual and conceptual involvement with the environment. Perceptual or lived experience involvement is co-constitutional. In this instance, the environment and in the moment activities of the individuals reciprocally transform each other leading to change and they cannot be predetermined. Conceptual or abstract involvement is relational. In this case, the environment is a constant, a stage on which interactions and transactions are played out leading to continuity. To a certain extent these can be predetermined. The co-constitutional and the relational continuously interact. This results in a re-formation of each which in turn propagates either continuity or change respectively. These ideas have been explored inter-culturally, between disciplines and for sustainability (Dillon, Bayliss, Stolpe, & Bayliss, 2008; Dillon, Vesala, & Montero, 2015; Dillon, 2008b; Dillon, 2015). There is no literature however exploring art made in secondary schools from a CE perspective on a remote island. Dillon and Howe (2007) suggest that an epistemology of presence – which we consider vital for encouraging sustainability in remote places – may provide an improved configuration between how people experience the environment both intellectually and practically.

We propose a realization of presence through process, through A/r/tography as methodology. A/r/tography is a connection between theory and practice in a process of knowledge building that combines "knowing (theoria), doing (praxis) and making (poesis)" (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxiii). As such it appears appropriate to negotiate the boundaries that constrain art made in the secondary school on Lipsi. Moreover,

it is an approach that acknowledges diversity of language (visual, narrative, performative etc.). In addition interconnectivity of simultaneous, overlapping and mutually informing artist-researcher-teacher/learner roles combined offers new ways to conceptualize the place/space in which art made in the secondary school occurs. It is described by Irwin as “ongoing engagements through living inquiry—that is, continually asking questions, enacting interventions, revising questions and analyzing collected data, in repeated cycles” (Kridel, 2010, p. 42).

From the description above, a/r/tography may be correlated to the CEF on four grounds. Firstly, the corresponding relationships of notions, for example *theoria* with conceptual/abstract and *praxis* with perceptual/lived experience. Secondly, the mutually adaptive and complex nature of a/r/tographic *living inquiry* on the one hand and concurrent interaction of relational and co-constititional understanding in the CEF on the other. Thirdly, concurrency/non-linearity and crossing of boundaries, manifested on the one hand in a/r/t language and roles of a/r/tography and on the other hand in change resulting from co-constititional understanding in the CEF. Lastly, on the premise that both challenge conventional notions about learning.

In Figure 1 the CEF has been configured with a *heart* of a/r/tography that is, ([h]a/r/tography). A/r/tographic *theoria*

and *praxis* are added to CEF facets “abstraction” and “lived experience” correspondingly. A spiral placed in the core between them has two inward journeys starting out from each of the CEF facets. Each inward journey toward the spiral centre passes through couplings which consist of a living inquiry trait and a rendering. Interaction occurs at the centre and a similar outward journey that brings about continuity/maintenance or transformation/change begins. Interaction between the CEF and a/r/tography, like a heartbeat, is a repeated process. Renderings, like valves facilitate both the internalization of interaction and connection between CEF binaries and the externalization of unique understandings manifested as poesis. [H]a/r/tography, like a/r/tography allows subjectivity to transform objectivity in relationships among people, organizations and places. Moreover, [h]a/r/tography allows *being* or *presence* for sustainability, encouraging continuity, adaptation and change as it operates within the CEF.

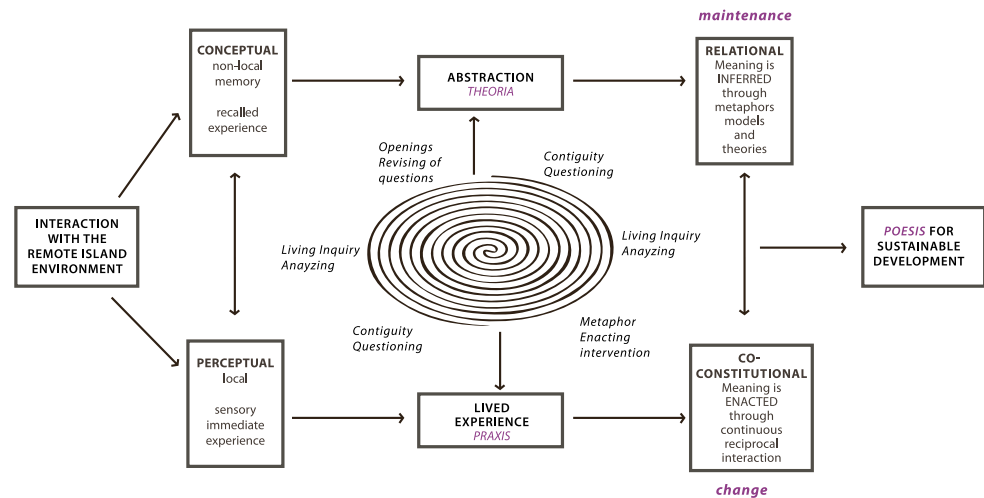


Figure 1. [H]a/r/tographic CEF adapted from the cultural ecology framework (Creed & Dillon, 2013) and a/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

We argue that in the integrated framework, intertwined [h]a/r/t roles facilitate pairing of living inquiry features with renderings thereby limiting predetermined outcomes. It is in this context that the relationship between art made in secondary schools and lived experience on Lipsi on the one hand, and the relationship between a/r/tography as methodology and CE as theory on the other, are explored. Mapping an art project onto the integrated framework aspires to lay bare fundamental aspects of the above. This contributes to an underrepresented area of research concerning art made in secondary schools and sustainable development in remote islands. Moreover, it may provide a stepping stone for both CE and a/r/tography research to further advance. This chapter addresses the following question: What does the CEF with [h]a/r/tography reveal in a new art project on a remote island?

The Project: An Exegesis of the New Art Project in Lipsi from a Cultural Ecological Perspective

This research project was designed by the authors and conducted by the art teacher of the High School of Lipsi. The class consisted of nine students, enrolled in the school year 2015–16, between 15–18 years old, four girls and five boys, three of which had special learning needs. It lasted six weeks, an hour a week, mainly during art classes.

Isolation increases the significance of the environment for livelihood and as such it is of utmost importance to students. Gude's (2009) suggestion to

investigate how engagement with contemporary art could cultivate students' engagement, to re-shape or selectively maintain the constantly changing world led us to believe that contemporary art may be appropriate for exploration of environment.

Students' familiarity through history and art class with Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937), in which abhorrence of aerial bombing and of Franco's fascism is expressed, influenced our selection of Picasso's *Guernica*

ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ ΝΟΤΙΟΥ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ / ΕΙΔΙΚΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΔΙΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΗΣ

ΜΕ ΜΕΘΟΔΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ και ΠΡΟΣΗΛΩΣΗ στον ΣΤΟΧΟ

Χτίζουμε το μέλλον των νησιών μας



Με την πετυχημένη ολοκλήρωση του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος Κρήτης & Νήσων Αιγαίου 2007-2013 και τις αναπτυξιακές δυνατότητες που προσφέρει το Περιφερειακό Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα Νοτίου Αιγαίου 2014-2020, είναι ευκαιρία...
η νησιωτικότητα να γίνει πλεονέκτημα.



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Κρήτης & Νήσων Αιγαίου 2007-2013
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Figure 2. An advertisement commissioned by the South Aegean Region Management Authority at the end of 2015 as part of a campaign to promote the Operational Program for Crete and the Aegean Islands 2007–2013.

as a place to start. Initially it held little interest for students. Interest was heightened however by a Facebook feed posted in November 2015. A Bulgarian cartoonist, Jovcho Savov morphed “*Aegean Guernica*” depicting drowning refugees. What changed? In September 2015, Nilufer Demir’s heart wrenching photograph of Syrian toddler, Aylan Kurdi, went viral; it symbolized the refugees’ deadly struggle to cross the Aegean Sea to reach Europe. The incident not only contemporized and localized the work; it made it meaningful. Students identified with the danger of drowning and the struggle to cross the sea to reach land. Due to its association with island identity, an advertisement from the South Aegean Sea Prefecture – Greece,

depicting a black and white stone mosaic, called “votsaloto,” attracted attention, calling for island development (see Figure 2).

Could expressing lived experience of the refugee crisis in votsaloto technique tell the story through the students’ voice and thus promote learning in a way that a news story online, or an image on a Facebook newsfeed, could not? Students a/r/tographically engaged in creating their own version of *Guernica Today* (see Figure 3) in reply.

Mapping the New Art Project onto the Integrated Framework

The mapping of data (photographs, school art, and reflective learner evaluation) from the new art project was the method used for



Figure 3. *Guernica Today* votsaloto with plastic caps created by secondary students in Lipsi High School.

understanding the correlation of relationships between students and their environment. Both the school and the island of Lipsi may be considered as environments while students' everyday experiences and activities such as the advertisement and *Aegean Guernica* can be seen as experiences intended to influence these environments. Students' interaction arose from concurrent *perceptual* and *conceptual* involvement with both the above examples.

Perceptual involvement with the advertisement led to student inspection of their environment. Students reported to the rest of class and teacher a decline in votsaloto tradition, whilst conversely discarded plastic water bottle caps seemed to have increased on beaches between the depleting pebbles. Articles reporting prohibition and large monetary fines for pebble removal from beaches revealed another dimension of the issue at hand. Student response was to analyze which between the two – environment or cultural tradition – is more important to maintain for sustainability as both have significance to island identity. Would continuity of both be possible? Being attuned to research of their environment opened up possibilities of using material previously taken for granted. Why not use plastic bottle caps instead of pebbles for votsaloto? Students regarded discarded material in a new light – as possible material for art making and for contemporizing votsaloto technique. In addition to a beach clean, a whole community involvement was requested to collect discarded plastic bottle caps. They would be reused (i) to maintain tradition and environment, (ii) to contemporize tradition, and (iii) to negotiate the boundary between local new art project and global environment.

Moreover, this interaction reshaped students too as they became more conscientious of what constitutes sustainability in terms of maintaining island identity and changing what secondary school art is for.

Conceptual involvement led to student research regarding votsaloto technique. They recalled grandparents' narration about a votsaloto in the central church courtyard now covered with tiles. The technique involved placing pebbles directly into the earth working in situ right side up and using natural earth as grout. The result was a slightly irregular surface which soaked up rainwater into the earth. Today votsaloto technique although maintained, is mostly made with the inverse method in smaller sections. Pebbles are placed in a mould consisting of a flat wooden base enclosed by a 7cm frame. It is then filled with cement. Rainwater cannot be soaked by the earth.

Students' *perceptual* and *conceptual* involvement in "*Aegean Guernica*" by Jovcho Savov is also concurrent. This is reflected in the correlation of local, in the moment experience (*Aegean Guernica* and Aylan) as present with non-local experience (Picasso's *Guernica* and the Spanish Civil War) as past. Lived experience that is, witnessing migrants seeking refuge on Lipsi and "*Aegean Guernica*," led to student research of possible causes of the crisis and the Syrian civil war. A non-mainstream theory suggesting that a contributing factor is climate change is illustrated by Audrey Quinn and Jackie Roche (2014) in a comic entitled *Syria's Climate Conflict*. Students' translation of it from English to Greek resulted in further correlations between Syria's drought and Lipsi's water scarcity. Students questioned the influence of past actions in

the present and the future, in Lipsi and elsewhere. Lipsi school environment is thus co-constitutionally reshaped; it becomes a real part of the real world, a place connected to the world which propagates sustainability.

Similarly, students interacting with the transformed environment were re-shaped too. Student perception of the drowned child led to an emotional identification: (i) with the boy as a child; (ii) by often being in jeopardy at sea as remote island inhabitants; (iii) with migration of Lipsian inhabitants as recorded in the past, the 1950s and in the present economic crisis; (iv) to a place on the island named “Tourkonnima” denoting where a Turk was buried after being found washed up on the beach; and (v) to a unique icon, the symbol of Lipsi, “Panagia tou Charou” or “Virgin Mary of Death” holding her son not as a child – as all the other icons – but crucified.

The complexity of the issue is portrayed in the students’ enactment that is, to create a large single commemorative work *Guernica Today* making reference to *Aegean Guernica* and Aylan Kurdi in the votsaloto technique. Choice of votsaloto not only maintains the technique, it localizes and connects the work with tradition and the past. Furthermore, through adaptation of the technique, substituting plastic caps in place of traditional pebbles, the work is contemporized and associated with climate change as one of the causes of the Syrian Civil War. Through their art-making, students express solidarity with the refugees as well as sustainability concerns. They transcended boundaries between remote island art made in the secondary school and its meaning on a local/global scale, thus becoming agents of action and change.

[H]a/r/tography In Between: Revealing New Understandings of Time and Place

Students’ relationship with the environment as described above was manifested through the a/r/tographic lens. Bearing in mind useful explanations of renderings by Irwin and Springgay (2008) and Siegesmund (2014), for our research we coupled living inquiry features with renderings. In what follows, an application of these to the mapped new art project is offered to uncover how making new art in response to a provocation and awareness of place might work across the integrated framework. In Figure 4, in the intersection between two circles continuous [h]a/r/tographic interaction is depicted.

Starting from *Contiguity* coupled with *Questioning*, there is evidence of juxtapositioning between controlled art made in secondary schools and new art where students interact with their environment; between depleted pebbles and abundant discarded plastic bottle caps; between war and migration; between passive lived experience through Facebook and lived experience through art making and learning; and between remote island development and sustainability. The boundary between each of these is *questioned* to display blurring between relational and co-constitutional ways of understanding. Students perceive their environment through new art in secondary school. The two versions of *Guernica* enable the linking of local current affairs with global history. The two versions of votsaloto illustrate its evolution blending the boundaries between future, present and past. Students propose continuation and evolution of votsaloto switching pebbles for plastic.

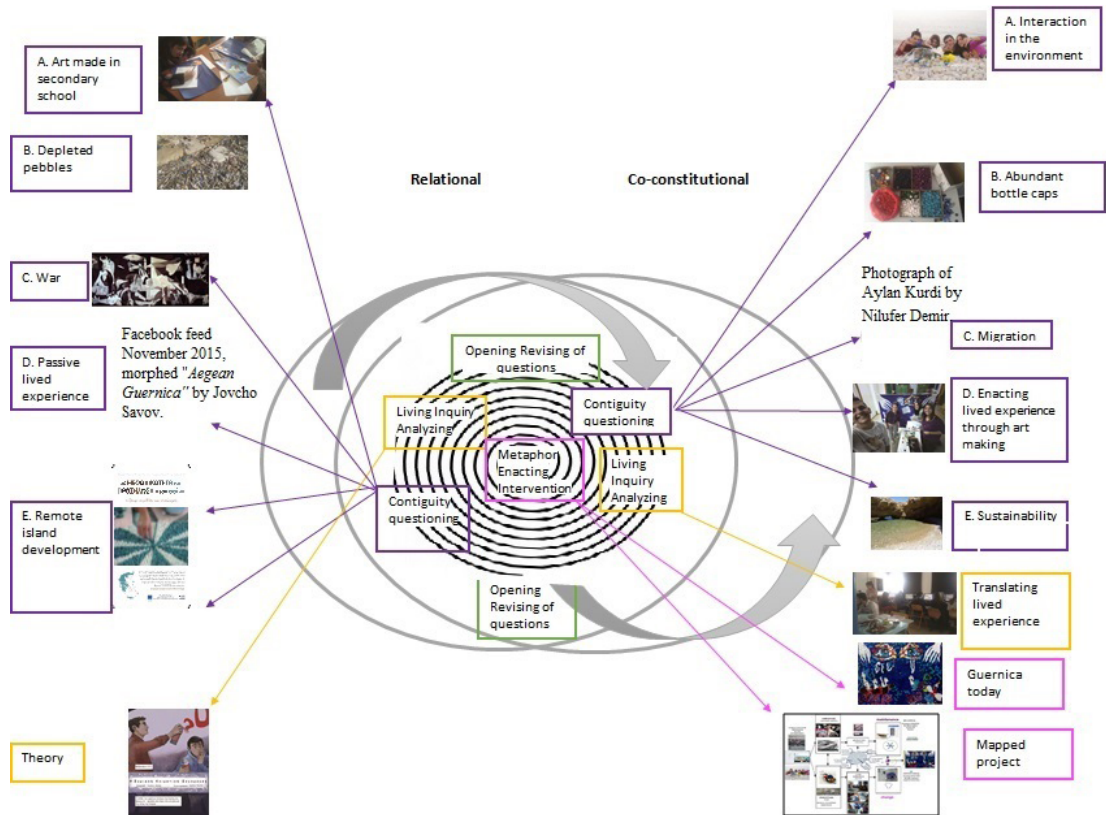


Figure 4.
[H]a/r/tographic
interaction for
sustainable
'being.'

They voice solidarity with migrants and promote sustainability thus questioning the boundary of the remote island. Blurring the boundaries provides a space which connects and differentiates that is, a third in between space, like the proposed integrated framework which broadens dialogue for sustainability.

Emerging data from the comic *Syria's Climate Conflict* (Quinn & Roche, 2014) is analyzed through *Living Inquiry*. Parallels between Syria's drought and Lipsi's water shortage are explored to facilitate understanding of the complexity and connections between migration and sustainability. Moreover, the complexity of teaching/learning is revealed too. It is an ongoing, concurrent,

fluid and unpredictable process, in which the complex dynamics of relational and co-constitutional understandings through [h]a/r/t roles are always in flux – in a maintenance/change – connection/differentiation interface, which promotes *sustainable* "being."

In this interface new and confusing experiences of the present (*Aegean Guernica*, Aylan, regional advertisement), and experience and knowledge of the past (*Guernica*, votsaloto tradition) are melded and bricolaged into *Metaphor* for new understanding. In "*Guernica Today*" students enact interventions in art made in secondary school, votsaloto tradition and the environment through poesis for sustainable 'being' that is,

for *continuation, adaptation or change*. In the new art project they derive and combine references, material and technique from place thus *changing* art made in secondary schools to express student voice, emotions and solidarity globally from a local perspective. In votsaloto tradition by re-using plastic caps as material instead of pebbles students *adapt* the technique to maintain the tradition and in so doing comment on the need for *continuity* of the physical environment and votsaloto for maintaining identity and sustainability. Furthermore, mapping the art project is an enactment of intervention too, a metaphor, which prompts the a/r/tographer teacher/learner to move to a new space *adapting* a/r/tography and the CEF for greater understanding.

Spiraling outwards through openings and revising of questions, boundaries of relationships between teacher/learners, secondary school art and place are reshaped. One question whether an art project in a remote school can change relationships and sustainability on a global scale. Moreover, can the integrated framework be further advanced? Lived experience of the new art project in the integrated framework is overwhelming and emotional and as such navigation of dialogue and discourse is unpredictable, non-linear, fluid and open.

In conclusion, reiteration of the living inquiry spiral is reverberation. Teacher/learners respond to reverberations resulting from concurrent interaction between CEF and [h]a/r/tography, becoming agents of action and change. In addition, reverberations of the new art project go beyond the boundary of the controlled 'school art style' (Efland, 1976) and Lipsi Island through the momentary transmission of the work created on a national television program (360° broad-

casted on Alpha TV 26 January 2017). The integrated framework with its concurrent, non-linear roles, new associations between existing ideas and ways of doing things dis-integrates boundaries. "In the moment" experiences, perceived in an a/r/t manner, provide teacher/learner opportunities to break away from tradition and to produce an "off the track" approach from the main secondary school art trajectory. The new art project is opened up to risk taking in a space of interaction between maintenance of tradition and change, which allows for both connection and difference. By thinking and acting in the CEF as [h]a/r/tographers in pursuit of sustainable "being," boundaries that compartmentalize secondary school art and environment are crossed to achieve "presence," connecting time and place, just like in the small, remote and isolated island of Lipsi, where the students created their own *Guer-nica* with plastic water bottle caps.

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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS:
REFLECTING ON AN EMBODIED
UNDERSTANDING OF CREATIVITY AND
CREATIVE PRAXIS AS AN A/R/TOGRAPHER

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To Intervene, Intrude or to Act

My PhD candidature has provided me with a number of provocations (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxx) that continue to be explored and reverberate in, with, and through my practice. These provocations continue to call me to intervene, intrude or to act as a result of the triggers that have poked and prodded at my praxis as living inquiry (Sullivan, 2005). As a relational (Bourriaud, 2002; Irwin & O'Donoghue, 2012) and rhizomatic (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 279) artist, researcher and teacher, provocations range in the form of memories, stories and metaphors that serve as necessary openings for my idea-tion and creative practice found within the common threads (Flood, 2003) of reflection. Each provocation threads new lines of flight

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) and lines of sight at each turn (creative, affective, a/r/tographic and digital) and have shifted understandings in becoming an a/r/tographer (Irwin, 2013). Using critical auto-ethnography (Holman Jones, 2016) as a method to theorize these a/r/t stories and narratives that I encountered on the way, I was able to position myself as an a/r/tographer in the center of my inquiry while peering in on the multiplicity of these identities in a digital form that supported the exploration of my study into digital artist portfolios. This visual essay explores my methodological journey “down the rabbit hole,” through a number of metaphoric and metonymic provocations that were responded to, reflected, reframed and reified in my recently submitted digital PhD thesis.

Situated within a/r/tographic inquiry and embodied research (Grushka, 2010), my PhD study sought to address how a turn to rhizomatic learning, and digital pedagogies in art education opened ways of seeing and noticing the affect of creativity (Ama-



Figure 1. Through the Looking Glass (I AM a/r/tographer), Digital Drawing, 2015. Early on in my candidature I pondered the role of the researcher and my contribution to research if my entangled identities and knowledge of self as artist, as researcher and as teacher were so felt. Working on self-portraits throughout my candidature allowed me to untangle and unlayer the rhizome and to reify the sites and sights of my practices and allow me to gaze, forward and backward about who I was, and where I was going.

bile, 1996) and creative practice (Allen, 2015) on identity as artist. My study was performed as an a/r/tographer over five years and an embodiment of multiple selves opened new ways of doing and being research in art education (Figure 1). A/r/tography for me is a methodology, method and way of researching, seeing and relating to making, doing and being. As an a/r/tographer, I am always an artist/researcher/teacher.

I have only recently submitted my digital dissertation so I am looking back over time as a PhD candidate, studying how my travels reverberate in the reflection of the looking glass of an onto-epistemological (Barad, 2003) rhizomatic c/a/r/tography (Irwin, Bickel, Triggs, Springgay, Beer, Grauer, Xiong, & Sameshima, 2009) where, critical auto-ethnography as a 'living body of thought' (Holman Jones, 2016) opened dialogue with the self in a wonderland of art, research and teaching. Gazing is an important facet of my practice and this chapter has opened new ways of seeing through the curation of new and old a/r/tworks, and the re-storying of the dissertation assemblage. I was drawn to critical auto-ethnography because it invites me to reflect, respond and reify my a/r/tographic praxis theoretically by untying the interwoven aspects of my identities developed through years of study, practice and teaching and then to re-weave them in new stories.

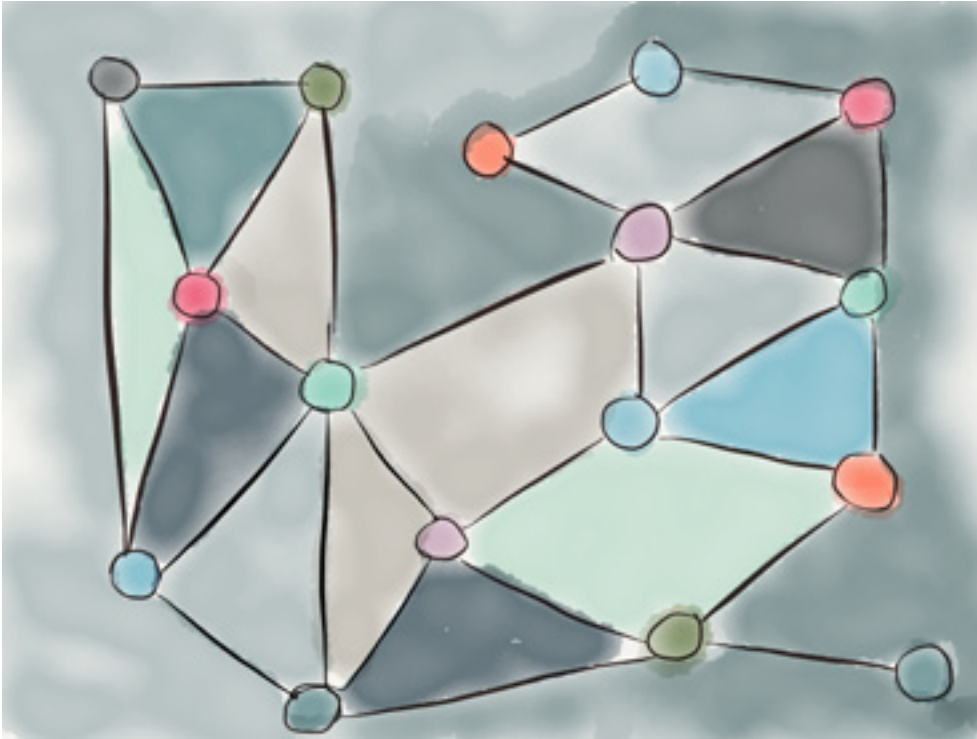


Figure 2. Connecting the dots, Digital Drawing, 2017. Reflecting on how this digital and situated journey as a/r/tographer through a mapping of sights and cites allowed me to see the interactions and reactions in my art encounter. Drawing these stories digitally offers new insights into how I made connections through cites and sites, and how re-seeing this encounter offers new insights.

Through critical auto-ethnography I could gaze, forward and backward, in and out. As Ellis and Bochner (2000) describe, “back and forth auto-ethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of the personal experience; then they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations” (p. 739). This embodied way of knowing allowed me to develop my

pedagogy and design a thesis as curriculum, while exploring the self as a/r/tist.

Extending the inquiry practice of Honan and Sellars (2011), in this visual essay, I have drawn the images reflected in the looking glass of time to invite reflection on my own rhizomatic journeying. The dissertation opened new opportunities at each growth point for me as an a/r/tographer. The rhizomatic action of my art encounter led me to new openings that continue to rever-

berate and resonate in moments that incite memories and stories created over the last five years. I have always worked at ease in digital spaces and sites, having been raised in a family that had a desktop computer from the earliest days of home computers. As a secondary visual arts teacher I was also a specialist photography, video and digital imaging teacher and this knowledge and experience led deeper into digital pedagogies for artists and art teachers in my masters research (Coleman, 2011). In my PhD, I have sought to activate new digital sites by asking questions of the digital spaces where we work and learn, and following the rhizomatic stems as they directed and steered my



Figure 3. Drawing the sites of self-making, Digital Drawing, 2017. This digital drawing was done after presenting my dissertation to a community of arts education scholars at a conference and thinking about this chapter. The layering of lines, softness of colors and wash of the digital watercolor as I draw offers a space to reflect. It is meditative and the flow of energy invites new thoughts that I write about quickly. I draw in Paper 53, an iPad app that I have used for many years to draw in a physical, yet digital space to think, know and do.

PhD journey. My art making, research and teaching have been influenced by a process of critical dialogue in digital spaces with the self as a/r/tographer. This criticality has been an unfolding process of relational work that has created a new conceptual practice that is woven, intertwined and that runs through, in and out, and over the a/r/tographical (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxvii). When you turn the research lens inwardly, looking deeply at the multiplicities of identity and practice, there is a felt shift – an affect (Leys, 2011) forcing a becoming (Deleuze, 1997, p. 65). This shift turns your sight: it opens questions and these openings are wide and far reaching beyond the inquiry.

I began my entangled meaning making (Barad, 2010) within my digital a/r/tographic thesis immediately after completing my Master's research in art education and digital pedagogies (Coleman, 2011). I was not finished with my search for self that took me deep into my entangled selves and identities (Figure 3). I wanted to explore my field further through an embodied and performed methodology and method of living inquiry that had been opened by and with a/r/tography (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xix).

The provocations of my (re)search was calling me into new sites of art education by the inquiry of *research as pedagogy* within the Deleuzo-Guattarian rhizome (O'Sullivan, 2006) of the internet and digital spaces of artist portfolios. My inquiry was participatory and reliant on the relationships and collaborations between my online art, research and teaching communities of practice in digital spaces and the sites and spaces in which they are sighted and cited.

A relational approach to research invites participation, and this relationality

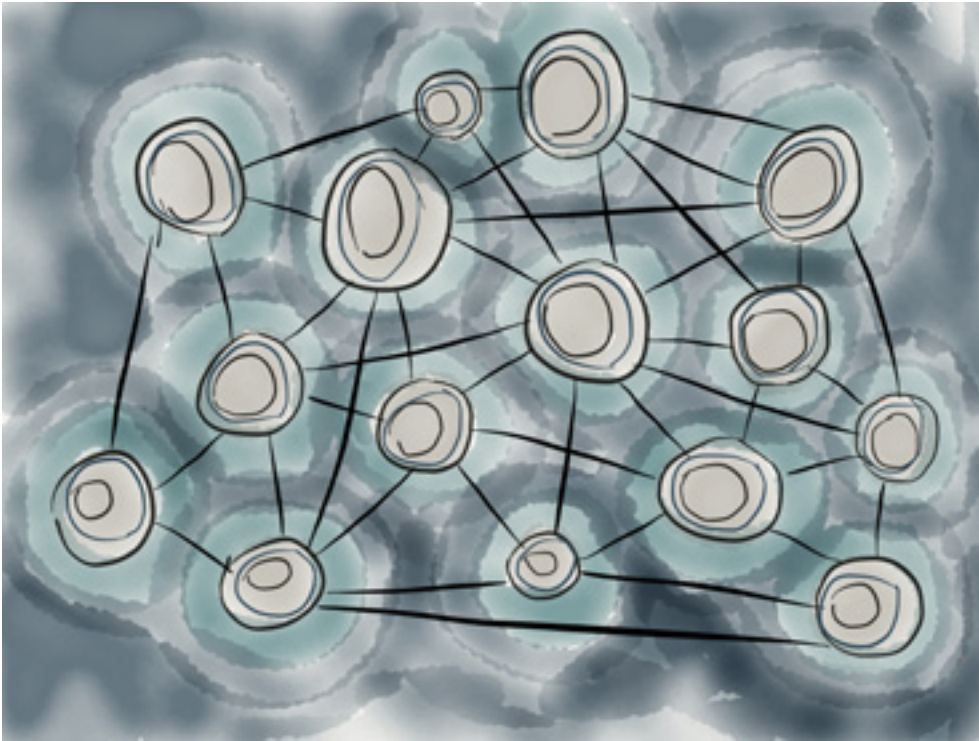


Figure 4. Mapping the felt sites inquiry, Digital Drawing, 2017. This drawing seeks to map my lenses of learning, seeing, doing and relating as a digital a/r/tographic practitioner. The reverberations and resonations are always felt.

has driven my turn to praxis (Freire, 1990; Rolling, 2010) and the decisions I made to design, curate and submit an online URL as thesis (Coleman, 2017). As I developed and curated my online A/R/T Portfolio in a participatory site, I designed the space as a curriculum for the multiple audiences in the artworld, art classroom and in digital education. As a curator, I was selecting a/r/tefacts generated and created during the PhD. This critical reflection on my stories brought me closer to my narratives and memories of being artist, researcher, and art teacher.

Here in the digital site I could see the three selves gazing back at me through the reflection of the curation of a/r/tefacts.

In the wonderland of the internet, I was prompted to further new sites/sights of inquiry through questions that have directed new lenses of learning, seeing, doing and relating in digital spaces and places. Here in the digital labyrinth, in the excesses of knowledge found between a/r/t, deep in a wonderland, I lived in the liminal spaces found between artist/researcher/teacher (Figure 4). I found openings between the



Figure 5. Working in Threes, Digital Drawing, 2016.



Figure 6. Tea Cups and Woven tablecloth from Conversations with the Seminals in Wonderland (The Researcher Tea Party), Folded & woven selection of academic papers/tea chest, 2014–2016.

selves and identities that I played out in this inquiry through intertwining the woven aspects of self, sustained through creativity and the re-creation of the self through reflection and creative practice in the design and curation of my research as a portfolio.

Is it possible (and useful) to determine the characteristics of the digital identity of a visual artist that is present in a constructed digital portfolio? In doing so, how might secondary visual art students benefit from structured, curricular support for the building of artist identity through digital portfolios? I asked myself throughout the study, using these questions as provocations to my reading, making, doing, and writing my PhD where the more I read and wrote, the more I was making art and designing curriculum to understand, investigate and explore.

I began to map my journey as an artist through my identity and creative practice, yet the researcher and teacher personas were always there wanting to be heard and seen alongside the artist. Unable to continue in my written thesis exploration without purely making, I set the date for my PhD a/r/t exhibition, left my ongoing researcher role in a university, and began to work full time as an a/r/tist to curate my first solo show to open the digital doors to a new site. I curated a show for my artist-researcher, artist-teacher self-portraits (Figure 5) and pedagogical insights through mapping my artmaking in a gallery.

As an a/r/tist within the study, my making practice explored the intertwined and layered aspects of my own stories, experiences and knowledge, alongside my co-participant's, with the seminal voices found with the collections of research material I was collecting in the form of academic pa-

pers (Figure 6). As a digital researcher, the practice of printing, cutting, folding and re-creating with the physical paper to make new work and ideas became important identity a/r/tefacts for my work. The process of cutting, weaving and folding the paper to generate new dialogue for art education in installations and sculptures had a profound affect on my becoming.

During my (re)search, I made a number of identity a/r/tefacts, wrote and designed alongside hours of ethnographic video recordings that I edited and cut as sites of pedagogical knowledge, curated amongst my writing and making in my submitted A/R/T Portfolio. Exploration as research, as a maker firstly offered me new insights to see the common threads of my practice, then through video as method (Harris, 2016) to find the interconnected spaces and gaps that I would not normally see through reading and writing alone.

My exploration saw me gaze upon my artist digital portfolios as assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to find out the place of identity and creativity in the digital in order to create opportunities in secondary art education for creativity and self-discovery through a storied curriculum that sees artist-students develop digital portfolios through sustained and deep personalized learning sites in art education (Figure 7). As a maker, I was doing, being and performing the research through making, critical reflection and creative exploration. Deep within the being, making and doing of my a/r/to-graphic digital thesis, new triggers came in



Figure 7. Curating through assemblage, Digital Drawing, 2017.

the form of new learning sites, sights and cites. Sites were embodied, performed and found in spaces and places where I was learning, knowing and theorizing within my communities of practice. Each sight created new openings found in the mapping of the rhizomatic exploration; with the gaze critical auto-ethnography opened I found in the cites of knowledge I was exploring.

These mapped sites-sights-cites are the center of my inquiry, my pedagogies, a/r/t making and a/r/t writing and created new spaces for learning in my thesis as digital currere, a conceptual space I look to develop further (Freire, 1990). In each site, the stories have been storied (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), each sight of my digital thesis journey mapped, recorded and reflected upon and theorized, each cite (Figure 8) that has opened my thinking continues to resonate in all of my actions in the A/R/T Portfolio as thesis.

To work through this rupture (O'Sullivan, 2006) of sites, sights and cites I cut up each citation as an a/r/tist to create



Figure 8. Cloud Collectors trying to hold onto knowledge, Paper weaving (The International Journal of Education through Art) and maps, 2014–2016.



Figure 9. Academic Tumbleweeds, woven selected references & Alice in Wonderland text caught in glass bell jars, 2014–2016.

new discourse with woven, entangled and folded paper works (Figure 9) to render new openings for meaning making. Some of my work I have exhibited over the last five years has been discarded or reworked. I also made several works to better understand what I was becoming and “[l]earning/creating/inquiring in, from, through, and with” (Irwin et al., 2008, p. 206). Thinking and theorising about my praxis as an a/r/tographer through auto-ethnography offered me time to notice. Time and space to notice creativity through the affect of new ideas provided insights into the fields I was living within. I was affected creatively (O’Sullivan, 2001) to write, design curriculum and create new work through this study. My research lives in art education, where I have worked for a career as a creative practitioner striving to support my artist-students as they find themselves in and through art as artist and through looking at art as a knowledgeable art audience. A/r/tography as an embodied research practice extended an invitation to me to create new possibilities for designing curriculum and generating pedagogy that is storied as artist, as artist-teacher and as artist-researcher.

Of the many things that happened in this wonderland as a re-searcher, was time to return to the event and the assemblage of an a/r/tographic thesis through ongoing curation and reflection on doing practice-led and practice-based research. My A/R/T Portfolio is an exhibition of the identity a/r/tifacts written and created by the many identities and a/r/t selves of the inquiry collected, curated and created on site. It has been published online (Coleman, 2017) as a narrative of my experience of and in a/r/tography, blended and connected through an emerging methodology and embodiment of praxis

as an a/r/tographer. My submitted digital Portfolio as thesis not only re-presents my journey in the digital wonderland as an a/r/tist through a/r/tworks, rhizomatic a/r/t writing and a/r/tefacts generated from ethnographic videos woven within narrative in conversation, it is a moment in time captured for art education.

My travels to this moment, have been filled with joyous and adventurous sites and sights, explored as a Deleuzo-Guattarian (O'Sullivan, 2006) and supported by colleagues, mentors and researcher field guides who have supported my thinking, steered my travels, propped up my ideological pursuits, and offered bigger and deeper questions all while allowing me to deep dive beyond the plateaus (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

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THE STRUCTURE OF PHD PROGRAMS IN EGYPTIAN ART EDUCATION

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Shifting Landscapes: A Review of Programs in Egypt

We will briefly highlight the institutional frameworks for organizing the art education postgraduate programs in Egypt. Afterwards, the major themes trending in Ph.D. dissertations are listed, followed by a discussion of six theses in which we focus on at least one of the top trends. Art education has been one of the most important educational subjects in modern and contemporary Egypt, thanks to the endeavors initiated nearly a century ago by a pioneer generation of modern Egyptian artists. Most notable among those pioneers of Egyptian modern art was Habib Gorgi (1892–1965), who was the first to introduce *art education* as a concrete term to the Egypt educational system. He was arguably the first Egyptian artist to

study pedagogic approaches to teaching art and the first to write an Arabic book on the subject in 1936. In 1928, he founded the Art Advocates' Society, aiming to explore and manifest the Egyptian identity through art, particularly watercolors (Ali, 2001; Hanafy, 2018; Porter, 2011). Since Gorgi's initial efforts, there has been continuous development in art education in Egypt.

Today, the monitoring of the Egyptian education system is highly centralised, for both public and private institutions. The Ministry of Higher Education (established in 1961) is responsible for the supervision and coordination of higher education. These activities have been subdivided among a number of Supreme Councils, including a Supreme Council of Universities. This council, chaired by the Minister of Higher Education, formulates university education

policy, coordinates university programmes, determines how many students may be admitted to the various faculties each year, and advises the government on university financial affairs. The council also deals with international comparisons and credential evaluation (EP-Nuffic, 2015). To come to the point, in contemporary Egypt there are mainly two ministries operating the educational system: The Ministry of Education, which supervises the educational levels up to high-school stages; and the Ministry of Higher Education that regulates the university and postgraduate studies.

Although Helwan University is the most recent of three major governmental universities in Cairo, it encompasses some of the oldest and most unique faculties in Egypt and the Middle East. Art education is one of these faculties. It was established in 1936 (see the Helwan University website for more information¹) and has since become the only resource for art education programs and curriculums in the country. By the late 1980s, art education departments were created in new faculties of specific arts, which include art education, music education and mass communication (see the Faculty of Specific Education website for more information). In postgraduate art education, where curricula are based on credit hours, with a semester duration ranging from 15 to 17 weeks, researchers employ the most advanced tools and media available to them, carrying out their studies in relation to undergraduate or pre-university education institutions that are, sometimes, quite limited in the relevant supplies, tools and requirements. Generally speaking, postgraduate art

education studies center on, more or less, ten majors: Design, drawing, painting, weaving, printing, artifacts, metalwork, woodwork, sculpture and poetry. With such programs focusing on how to deepen experiences, skills and information through visual arts in both traditional and western modernism styles, Ph.D. studies increasingly tend to concentrate on certain majors, targeting studies and experiments focusing on either pre-university students or schoolchildren, or even older-age groups such as members of various community clubs.

Art Education Ph.D. Programs: Major Themes

Regardless of the points of convergence or divergence in terms of postgraduate art education, Ph.D. art education studies at the turn of the twenty-first century still seems to be concerned with major five areas:

1. Art Education;
2. Art Therapy;
3. Comparative Research;
4. Cultural Criticism and Art Appreciation; and
5. Art Techniques and Applications.

A good example for the first area might be Reham Abu-Zeid's (2013) thesis entitled *The Impact of Using Project Strategy as an Approach for Teaching Art Education in the Setting of the Twenty-First-Century Skills*. Setting out from her down-to-earth experience as a member of teaching staff at the University of Suez, Abu-Zaid brings attention to

¹ See www.helwan.edu.eg/English/?page_id=16

the desperately challenging conclusion that graduates in the Art Education Department are not qualified enough to meet the needs of the labor market. Graduates have insufficient skills and lack of experience, or even of awareness of the latest developments, with respect to art education (Abu-Zeid, 2013). Although Abu-Zaid is concerned with how to help art education graduates, Hend Kalketawy (2017) investigates possible ways to benefit from art education further in therapy, as best manifested in her thesis entitled *The Effectiveness of Forming Merino Wool in Rehabilitating Kidney Failure Patients (Muscular-Psychic)*.

Moving beyond local spheres with their challenges and hopes, art educators interested in comparative education have more possibilities for celebrating, widening and augmenting spaces of interaction and convergence between various cultures and nations. In his thesis entitled *Nationalizing Aesthetics: Art Education in Egypt and Japan, 1872–1950*, Raja Adal (2009) examines the evolution of art education both in Egypt and Japan, from those earlier stages when art education was employed to help modernize societies in both countries, to those “particular moments” and when the aesthetic values underlying art education were manifested as they opened up new possibilities for subjective expressiveness, creativity and beauty. Hence, from a cross-cultural standpoint, Adal (2009) demonstrates not only the extent to which art education has made progress because of the *paradigm of modernity*, but more significantly how much modernity has aesthetically transformed thanks to the introduction of art education in schools, as exemplified both in Egypt and Japan.

However, art education unfurls the aesthetic manifestations and transformations of humanity, not only in its recent past, but also in its far distant history. In his award-winning Ph.D. thesis entitled *Symbolic and Aesthetic Indications of Motion Value in Paleolithic Ages Paintings in the Gilf El-Kebir Plateau and Mount Uweinat in Egypt*, Akmal Abdullah (2010) explores how the Paleolithic drawings and inscriptions in various caves of the Gilf El-Kebir plateau and Mount Uweinat mountain unfold the anthropological and cultural history of Egypt (Abdullah, 2010). In art education, we teach art through history, geography, art critique, and science. Thus, this region of the Gilf El-Kebir Plateau and Mount Uweinat is considered a teaching resource. The mountain, regarded as one of the world’s most waterless regions in southwestern Egypt, is in the heart of the Libyan desert. It is a sierra sandstone plateau mounting 200 to 300 meters above its surrounding plains. About 70 kilometres to the southwest of the Gilf El-Kebir, there lies the Jebel Uweinat, which is a comparatively small tabular mountain mass with a height ranging from 600 to over 1900 meters above sea level (El-Baz, 1980; Vivian, 2000). Engaging the enthralling experience of discovery at these geographically significant formations, Abdullah stresses the role that art education played in the aesthetic development and preservation of human culture and daily-life experiences in that distant era.

In between Adal’s and Abdullah’s endeavors, Mohamed Rehan’s (2015) thesis, *Plastic Dimensions of Kufic Calligraphy as an Approach to Innovate Silkscreen and Stencil Prints during the Preparation of Learning Programs*, demonstrates how Kufic script – that developed toward the end of the



Figure 1. Modern design using Kufic calligraphy 1, printed art by Rehan, 2015.



Figure 2. Modern design using Kufic calligraphy 2, printed art by Rehan, 2015.

seventh century – serves as a method to bring about a particular program of art education today rooted in tradition. With the aim to provide more aesthetic, experiential insights, Rehan’s proposed program centers on certain visual techniques and strategies, including the repetitive changing, overlapping, distributing inside and outside, zooming in and out, adding, dropping, varying the thickness, and constructing characters, lines, shapes, textures, and colors, along with the interplay of shadow and light (Rehan, 2015). Through lectures, discussions and brainstorming sessions, Rehan sought to explore the output of his experimental program, engaging the intended students to learn about calligraphy and modern techniques to design new prints using combinations of silk-screen and stencil. Perhaps this is the most challenging of all the theses we have discussed. Several of these techniques are difficult to learn because the relevant tools and material are very expensive and therefore hardly available in schools.

Similarly, Islam’s (2016) dissertation revisits the Nubian art of hand weaving, thus negotiating the philosophical concepts underlying this particular practice to bring forth fresh insights into the socio-cultural aesthetics of ancient and contemporary hand weaving. Exploring the basic concepts of Nubian histology, this thesis gives precise yet intense accounts of the patterns, materials and techniques employed in



Figure 3. A Nubian handwoven belt 3, woven by Fedaa Islam, 2016.



Figure 4. A Nubian wall-hanging 4, woven by Fedaa Islam, 2016.



Figure 5. A mirror-frame handwoven in the Nubian way 5, woven by Fedaa Islam, 2016.

the splendidly hand-woven artworks of the Nubian people, including bags, table watches, wall-hangings, belts and accessories. In addition, the thesis describes several pedagogical strategies for teaching this particular practice of hand weaving through various educational stages.

Possibilities and Challenges in Art Education

This chapter, despite its limited scope, sought to shed light on the development, possibilities and challenges for doctoral research in art education in Egypt. Starting with a gen-

eral overview of the modern development of art education in the Egypt educational system, we briefly highlighted the institutional frameworks for art education postgraduate programs. Each of the theses shared here has shed light on several challenges facing the programs of graduate studies in art education in Egypt, insofar as they revealed the ambitious endeavors, visions and possibilities of emerging scholars. The most challenging aspect of this work is attending to the disjuncture between researchers using advanced and updated technology and media knowledge as compared to the limited use of technologies and media knowledge in the schools. Despite the highly-expensive material and tools, and the lack of relevant resources available in the targeted schools, each of the theses we have discussed has been able to offer its own aesthetic insights, revealing and opening up to wider spaces of creativity beyond the framing boundaries of locality. Hence, the need now is to support, improve and advance the art education graduate programs, in order to promote not only the current state of art education in Egypt, but also to raise society's awareness of its cultural history, thereby broadening its future possibilities.

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RESEARCHING EDUCATION THROUGH
VISUAL INSTRUMENTS IN A/R/TOGRAPHY:
PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES
IN DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

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Figure 1. Direct
Visual quotation
(Mena-de-Torres,
2015, p. 33). Use of
visual abstract.

The Role Images Play

What role should images play in the discourse on educational arts based research? Can an academic text organize knowledge through visual instruments that integrate aesthetic qualities? Does research that uses images as its method of argument deserve a space in the scientific field? Is it necessary to establish research instruments in order to introduce images into an a/r/tographic research report? Does this contradict a methodological approach?

In this chapter we present two doctoral dissertations that have attempted to respond to these questions (Genaro-Garcia, 2013; Mena-de-Torres, 2015). These research projects, developed at the University of Granada, tackle a working hypothesis of openly integrating exclusively visual arguments. In recent decades, we have gradually become accustomed to seeing images gaining space in new sections of research reports and doctoral dissertations as images have begun to perform unexpected functions.

What is most significant in these two research projects is not only a use of images that is not restricted to the spaces and sections traditionally considered to be visually inclined, but also that both projects use images in a similar way. That is to say, stable uses for the aesthetic in visual a/r/tography have begun to be developed in doctoral dissertations, which imply the development of equivalent instrumental forms. In research methodology, this fact is significant because it clearly signals that the field of arts based research is demanding a certain degree of

systematization. This is the case for both doctoral dissertations that we present here.

Doctoral Dissertations as an Environment for Methodological Development

Doctoral dissertations are a specific genre within academic literature, a particular type of document that usually presents one of the first research projects of its author. Doctoral dissertations are not only an entrance for researchers into the academic field, but it has been demonstrated that they are very useful as a space for methodological experimentation. By their nature, given the context of their creation and development, they tend to deal with emerging, fresh and ambitious work and they tend to be attentive to the latest methodological developments.

In a little more than twenty years since the first publications related to arts based research were published, we can affirm that senior researchers have earnestly undertaken the work of justifying the approach and illuminating the path (Eisner, 1998; Barone & Eisner, 2011; Irwin, 2010; Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Marin-Viadel; 2005, Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008). However, it must be acknowledged that they have only been capable of advancing when they have walked in the company of doctoral candidates. In other words, doctoral dissertations have become the primary focus for implementing best practices in arts based research and are mainly responsible for the continued growth of the methodological model¹.

The advances developed through doctoral dissertations using these approaches

¹ See www.artography.edcp.educ.ubc.ca

have been critical in achieving the current thriving state of arts based research. This is due primarily to two reasons: (i) because those who have promoted these methodologies since their beginnings belong to the university community, and their efforts have largely facilitated development and recognition within the university's academic environment of the value of projects that use art and images. The first step in accomplishing this is through graduate student research. The second reason, (ii), is because the innate freshness and daring ambition of doctoral dissertations has united with the embryonic state of the methodologies that sustains them, which has permitted and favored this methodological adventure.

The two doctoral theses that we present here utilize artistic images to develop their introductions, to present key visual concepts, to cite the most significant authors, to present and to sequence their arguments, to present their hypotheses, to present their critical positions and to deduce their conclusions. However, from our perspective, the most interesting aspect of these two doctoral dissertations is that they introduce images following pre-established standards, using justified and reproducible techniques with objectives declared and explicitly described before their use.

Developing Research Instruments in A/r/tography and Arts Based Research

What converts these two dissertations into pioneering works in methodological development in visual a/r/tography and visual arts based research is precisely the efforts taken to describe and validate the instruments that they develop and use.

The way in which the aesthetic use of information is produced in different sections of these two doctoral dissertations is not in response to a whim or a moment of inspiration by their authors. On the contrary, the functions and purposes of the use of artistic strategies, as well as the objective and the technique that they make use of are described precisely and specifically in the dissertations' methodological section and are designed explicitly as arts based research instruments. This leads to an unequivocal approach for using images that is argumentative, explanatory, and demonstrative, rather than validating images exclusively as narrative or rhetorical devices. Furthermore, it provides the necessary methodological foundation and evidence that enables other researchers to debate or build upon this use of images in research. That is to say their aesthetic use of information: (i) permits the validation of images as research instruments, and (ii) supports debate in the academic environment, and/or (iii) justifies and promotes its use in other research contexts.

The development of arts based or image based research tools has been an endeavor that a group of researchers from the University of Granada have dedicated themselves to during recent years. This dedication comes from a certainty that this development is paramount for the growth and influence of artistic research methodologies. Without methodological systematization – that is to say, without the characterization, description and systematic use of the techniques and strategies that belong to artistic research methodologies – it would be very difficult for these methodologies to improve as research methods, and, thus, to penetrate the methodological paradigm currently in place

in universities and in the rest of the scientific community. Thus, it is necessary to direct our efforts towards the development of contrasting and verifiable techniques that can have different uses, variable applications and multiple functions, and that could be considered specific, useful, and functional for the research purposes described.

To put it in another way, just as qualitative research has established triangulation, the use of the participants' observations, interviews or biographies, to be an appropriate, useful technique with a long history of use; and just as quantitative research has

established tools such as the introduction of control groups, statistical studies and analysis or the use of multivariables as appropriate and effective research instruments for the scientific community; in visual arts based research, we should start to establish a sufficient number and variety of research tools that have demonstrated their versatility, validity and effectiveness for the achievement of particular research results.

This does not imply a negation of the essence of aesthetic strategies that characterizes a/r/tographic research. It only implies an effort to order and systematize the way in



Figure 2. Direct Visual quotation (Genaro-Garcia, 2013, pp. 116–117). Use of photo series.

which these aesthetic elements are utilized. The relevance and usefulness of particular artistic research instruments do not exempt the researcher from performing the same effort of systematization that researchers in the rest of the social sciences must perform.

Photo Series, Photo-essays and Visual Quotes as Educational Research Instruments in the Visual Identity of Teenagers (Genaro-Garcia, 2013)

This is one of the first Spanish doctoral dissertations that specifically addresses the use of visual arts based research tools. The author produces photo essays and photo series composed of three types of images: (i) visual quotes that have used the self-portrait as a visual method of research; (ii) self-portraits of the research project participants; and (iii) self-portraits of the researcher. This combination of elements analyzes, compares and creates arguments based on artistic material.

One of the most unique strategies adopted for this project is that the researcher creates self-portraits as a way of substantiating and connecting to other approaches to the self-portrait, such as to the work of the most significant visual artists that have characterized, described and substantiated the self-portrait as a research tool for researching identity, gender, culture, memory and personal idiosyncrasy.

The images make up the bulk of the research project, forming the beginning, middle and end of the project. The educational processes (a critical approach to the self-image during adolescence) are not described by text or simply illustrated by

images: they are created as critical images. Each image arises from the artistic concepts that demonstrate the educational content and objectives of each project. The images are the primary research results, but they also contain the arguments and are used as rationale in diverse stages of the research project. The researcher's subjectivity characterizes the whole process, with a notable self-narrating and autobiographical character since she makes herself and her own self-portraits the basis of subjective interpretation of the research results.

The principle methodological instruments that are used in the research project for the analysis and discussion of the results are: the sequential series, the visual quote and the photo essay.

Sequential series

The sequential series is the most effective instrument for describing the process of change. Normally a sequential series is organized through a coherent set of images that show key phases in succession to demonstrate how the events unfolded. Order that is chronological, increasing, decreasing or visual is what generates the logic that the series proposes. Photography is especially recognized for its capacity to offer us instant and repeated aspects and slight variations that suits a description related to a sequence of events. All phases included in a sequential series are crucial for comprehension of the described process. The sequential series that we present here (Figure 2) is composed of eight photographs of ID cards of the author of the project. The eight photographs come from successive ID cards of the research author. The succession is chronological



Figure 3. Direct Visual quotation (Mena-de-Torres 2015, p. 199). Use of explanatory photo-essay.

(Genaro-Garcia 2013, pp. 116–117). Other examples of the use of this instrument include Molinet-Medina (2010, pp. 100–101), Marin-Viadel and Roldan (2012a, pp. 72–73) and Genet-Verney (2013, p. 49).

Explanatory photo essay based on visual quotes.

This type of photo essay gives a visual explanation, structuring images and interconnecting them. It can deal with self-portrait photographs or photographs that document a process. The photo essay can exclusively

use original photographs from the research project (by the researcher and the participants) or the photo-essay can use visual quotes from recognized authors published in quality sources (see for example Mena-de-Torres, 2015, p. 199). Other examples of the use of this instrument are Roldan and Marin-Viadel (2012, pp. 118–119) and Cepeda-Morales (2009, p. 20).

Interpretive photo essay

This photo essay is primarily used as an example of exposition and presentation of results, in which particular aspects of

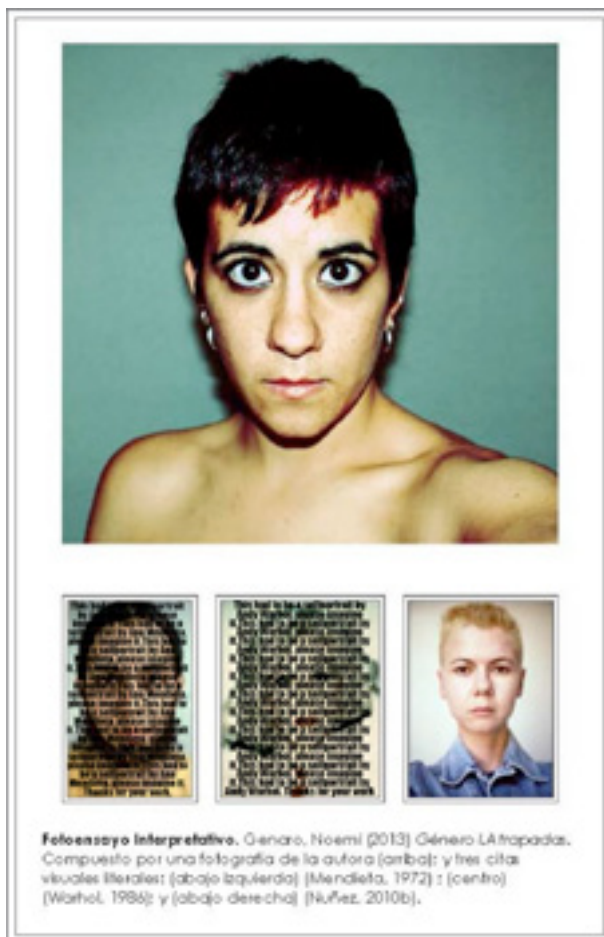


Figure 4. Direct Visual quotation (Genaro-Garcia, 2013, p. 67). Use of interpretive photo essay.

the research are interpreted and analyzed. In our research this type of photo essay is organized primarily with self-portrait photographs, for example, of the visual conclusions of the experiments that they present; they can then be accompanied by visual quotations or be original photos (Figure 4). Other examples of the use of this instrument include Rubio-Fernandez (2014, pp. 94–95) or Pérez Montañez (2010, p. 99).

The Construction of the Visual Concept of Education based on the Visual Commentary and the Visual Chart (Mena-de-Torres, 2015)

In this doctoral dissertation the author endeavors to establish, in explicit detail in the methodology section, the nature and functions of two specific tools that are necessary to achieve the objectives of his research project: visual commentary of an image and the visual chart.

Visual commentary

Visual commentary is a methodological strategy by means of which images are used to conduct observations, clarifications or explanations of another image. The author of the commentary explores the image that is the object of study, through the evidence and emphasis that is produced through visual means. This exploration is accomplished without the existence of a translation into a written medium. Visual strategies typically used in the analysis of paired images are strategies of comparison, continuity, extension, contrast, analogy, metaphor, metonymy, movement/translation, association, identification, etc.

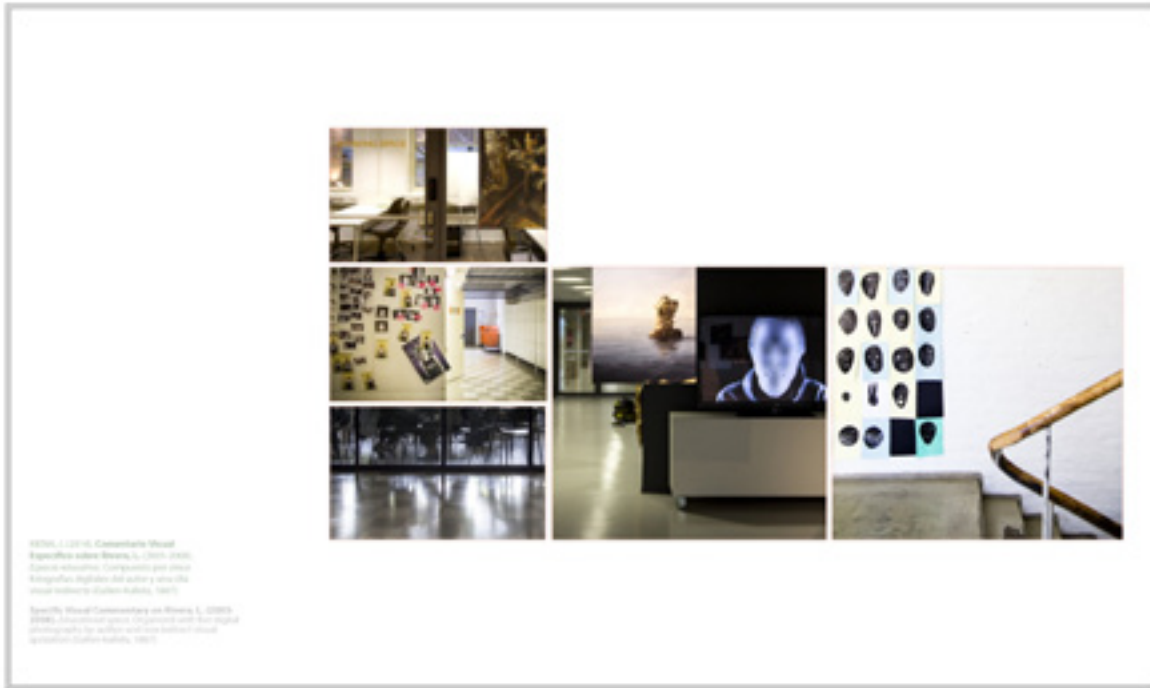


Figure 5. Direct Visual quotation (Mena-de-Torres, 2015, pp. 112–113).
Use of specific visual commentary.

In the visual commentary of an image, the visual essay is the fundamental method of organization as it permits a fairly extensive discussion through the relationships and overlapping that the set of images establishes with the image that is being commented on. A strict and stable organization of visual discourse does not exist, but rather can materialize in many ways. The way of organizing the commentary will vary in the function of the image that is commented on, in the objectives of the research, and even by the selected visual model. Hence,

we can have visual commentary on a single page where the visual discourse is positioned around the analyzed image, or it may occur when that visual discourse is a succession of visual essays in which not all are positioned beside the analyzed image.

A visual commentary can be combined simultaneously with both visual quotes and original images by the commentator. To distinguish the authorship of the images that are used, we can highlight, among others, two models of visual commentary.

Fragment by fragment analysis

Fragment by fragment analysis is composed of a group of image fragments extracted from the analyzed image. Through the placement of the fragments, it tries to underline, highlight and explain the significant details

that they want to comment on. Characteristic of fragment by fragment analysis, we organize the analysis of the content from a selection of image fragments without needing to include images by other authors. The main advantage that this visual analysis tool

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

fotografías de acceso libre: 18.540	fotografías educativas: 1.477
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Es la institución cultural más antigua de Estados Unidos. Su función es la de preservar, investigar y divulgar la historia y la cultura de Norte América. Alberga una de las colecciones bibliográficas y visuales más amplias del mundo. Concretamente, las imágenes fotográficas que conservan son de gran interés temático y estético. A diferencia de otros archivos, ésta conserva un número significativo de fotografías de artistas que trabajaron durante la segunda mitad del siglo XX. En sus fondos se conserva el material fotográfico del proyecto fotográfico de documentación del medio y cultura rural promovido por la Farm Security Administration. Este archivo tiene la mayor colección de fotografías educativas. Mayoritariamente son imágenes de artistas, así que la visión que tienen de la educación es especialmente interesante. En sus trabajos documentan la realidad educativa, pero también la analizan y la interpretan. Sus imágenes representan una de las principales referencias visuales para investigar fotográficamente sobre la educación.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/> [26/06/2014]

estilo visual: PUNTO DE VISTA | SEGUNDO PLANO | INTERPRETACIÓN | PROXIMIDAD | POÉTICA

motivos fotográficos EDIFICIO | RETRATO | ACCIONES EN EL AULA | RELACIONES PERSONALES



TABLE 9. FOTOGRAFÍAS EDUCATIVAS. ESTILO Y MOTIVOS FOTOGRAFÍCOS EN LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Figure 6. Direct Visual quotation (Mena-de-Torres, 2015, p. 215). Use of visual charts.

presents is the formal coherence that the images retain that then shapes the visual commentary into a set (see for example, Menade-Torres, 2015, p. 109). Another example of the use of this instrument is that of Marin-Viadel and Roldan (2012b, see p. 121).

Specific visual commentary

Specific visual commentary is composed primarily of images created by the commentator, with the specific purpose of making a comment. The distinctive feature of this analysis tool resides precisely in how the author of the comment has to produce the necessary images for the study. To visually comment through one's own production of images implies a prior, thorough and comprehensive review. From this review a specific aesthetic and a series of complex associations and symbolic, formal and aesthetic relationships with the analyzed work are generated. This does not imply emulating or performing visual alliteration, but rather it implies questioning the studied work based on the aesthetic and conceptual questions and answers that are asked and resolved in the terminology of the analyzed piece. The main advantage that this instrument has is visual coherency within the set of images (Figure 5). Another example of the use of this instrument can be found with Pérez-Cuesta (2010, see p. 43).

Visual chart

Among other tools of Visual Arts Based Research or A/r/tography, the visual chart stands out as a method of organization, visualization and comparison of images and

their content in qualitative terms. One of the potentials of arts based methodological approaches is that it permits the introduction of the unique and singular experience of the world through scientific and systematic research processes.

The way in which we organize ideas, but also, the way in which we arrange images, allows us to visualize how we view, analyze and conceptualize the world (Siegesmund, 2014; Varto, 2013). The visual chart provides a structure whereby the use of a visually specific grammar makes it possible to relate, articulate and exhibit in a concise form the associations that are born through the research.

The visual chart permits the arrangement and grouping of images according to concepts. This organization systematizes the visualization of results allowing the qualitative analysis of the conceptual and aesthetic relationships of the images that the chart is comprised of. The intersection of data is presented through charts where visual strategies, aesthetics and thematic terminology connect or dissociate the data. Through these three elements the visual exposition and argumentation is realized, based on how each of the creators of the visualized aspects or images constructs specific concepts based on aesthetic and thematic questions. Visual charts configure a sufficiently broad map that synthesizes the idea, strategy and visual perspective posed by the images that comprises the chart (Figure 6). Another example of the use of this instrument is in Marin-Viadel and Roldan (2014, see pp. 92–93).

Visual a/r/tography research instruments

In this chapter we have tried to justify the necessity of defining and validating several research instruments in visual a/r/tography. Similarly, we have tried to demonstrate several image based research instruments, characterizing them and connecting their results with other research projects in which the instruments have been used in different contexts. We understand that this work has not been completed and is only beginning. This work should continue into the future, in order to strengthen the development of arts based methodologies (Gutiérrez, 2014, p. 32).

To meet current regulations, doctoral dissertations in Spain should justify their validity by combining their final reports with publications in the better professional research journals. This links the professional editorial field with the academic field. Given that these two fields currently do not assume the same criteria for the admission and validation of research reports, it is urgent that they take steps to validate the methods and instruments belonging to arts based research, so that they can be recognized not only in the university academic community, but also in professional fields of study. We understand that it would be necessary to establish three interventions: (i) to promote specialized journals that permit the publication of image and arts based research; (ii) to promote the discussion with current publishers and journals; and (iii) to design and disseminate methodological standards that favor the admission of arts based research.

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**SURROUNDING EXPERIENCES:
HOW MY DISSERTATION USED EMBODIED
ARTS-BASED DATA CREATED THROUGH
LIVE-ACTION ROLEPLAY**

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Live-Action Role-Playing

In my dissertation, I used live-action role-playing as a form of embodied arts-based research. I reasoned that since, as Patricia Leavy (2015) writes “social reality is experienced from embodied standpoints,” assuming a different standpoint would allow an art educator to gain a broader sense of a perspective, such as from those of a student or an administrator (p. 152). The community of inquiry (Irwin, 2004) that participated in my dissertation, a group comprised of four – including myself – professional art educators and one pre-service art educator, used this

premise to imagine the school in which they role-played scenarios using American freeform (live-action role-playing games) (Stark, 2014) over the course of four sessions. The “American” aspect of American freeform differentiates it from the Nordic larp and Jeepform traditions it draws from by indicating the inclusion of American larp culture, which tends to be more concerned with emotional safety, and the cultural concerns present in the games, which here were situated in the American educational system.

As a starting point, we used my larp *What to do About Michael?*, which illustrated Michel Foucault’s (1977) claims re-

garding the ways community members are unwittingly transformed into instruments of authority. The larp disrupted participant assumptions that those transformations only occur in systems other than their own, a tendency I had recognized in myself during my research. In the larp, players took on the roles of staff, teachers, or administrators. The way a role was played is dependent on the personal experiences of the players, who in this case were all working within educational systems, and did not propose to show exactly what it was to fill that role, so much as invite participants to “begin with the overly familiar and transfigure it into something different enough to make those who are awakened hear and see” (Greene, 1988, p. 129). By envisioning what a world might look like from another perspective, they gained a new sense of how they had been seeing it from their own. The characters in the larp were meeting to discuss the future of a boy named “Michael,” who had attacked another student. This event was representative of my experiences as a classroom teacher as well as Foucault’s lived experiences in education (Miller, 1993).

Using my larp as a framework, the community created a diegetic world centered on “The Indigo School,” a K-8 charter school that was home to a diverse economic and sociological population and that had recently come under new leadership. The first characters were the school’s interim principal, a pair of guidance counselors, a novice second-grade teacher, and a veteran seventh-grade teacher. Before the end of the first session we had also role-played sessions with Michael, the student he had attacked, and that student’s mother. Over the course of the four sessions we created nineteen dif-

ferent characters, and played in scenes that took place in numerous times and places including around a tense family dinner table, a confrontational parent-teacher meeting, and even as the emotions inside Michael’s own head.

Capturing Embodied Knowledge

In this chapter I describe how these embodied examples of fiction-as-research (Leavy, 2015) functioned to allow the community to reflect on their *actual* lives as artists, teachers, and community members. The larp was similar to other embodied arts-based research, such as dance, music, or theatre in three ways: (i) a practitioner is simultaneously a medium, an artwork and a researcher; (ii) sensory output and input mirrors social phenomena that intersect with culture, identity, and the flow of power, (iii) it needs to be experienced to be in existence, and once completed it exists only as a memory (Leavy, 2015). In effect, the larps were social artifacts that illustrated the process of reality construction for individuals and cultures (Riessman, 2008) by inviting participants to imagine events as perceived in different contexts by different characters. The embodied nature emphasized the relationship between context, thought, and action, a connection that Freire (2005) claims makes each person responsible for cultivating a society.

The embodied knowledge produced in our sessions was, by definition, ephemeral. In the words of analog game designer, writer, and theorist Bernard De Koven (1978), games are art-like social fictions that “exist only so long as they are being continuously created” (p. 3), which engendered challenges particular to the data. Because in my

research games are an artistic media, this challenge was complicated by Elliot Eisner's (2008) observation that knowledge is not presented literally in works of art, but rather as an empathic experience. Experiences in the research tied together the identities and places the players created with their own, which added another layer of complexity.

These challenges are an essential characteristic of arts-based inquiry, as proposed by John Law (1999), most known for his work with Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Law notes that such complexity can be more representative of experiences, and challenges the "notion of theory that says that it is or should necessarily be simple, clear, transparent" (p. 8). Arts-based inquiry was the ideal tool to investigate that complexity because, as Graeme Sullivan (2010) writes, the inquiry is an experience through which we interpret our senses in order that we might find pattern and meaning. Nevertheless, the difficulty of capturing that meaning was significant in my particular case, given the movement to larp as embodied fiction-as-research.

The key to describing and understanding these experiences was not to attempt to channel it into a single form of data, but to approach it from multiple perspectives, which intersected and surrounded the experience (Sullivan, 2010), and to provide an in-depth exploration of relationships that were both local and complex. My method for doing so was necessarily reflexive to the larps themselves, an emergent event wherein data was created, explored, interpreted, shared, and created again. The collection of the data supplemented the embodied fictions.

Forms of Data

jagodinski and Wallin (2013) suggest that artistic events can be described as an assemblage of *poeisis*, *praxis*, and *aisthesis*. *Poeisis* is the visceral and lived experience of "making," the transitory act that expires as it is created. *Praxis* represents the idea of "doing" a thing, often associated with will and thought, and generally represented as transformation. *Aisthesis*, which supplies "sensing," differs from aesthetics in that it does not refer to an intellectual evaluation of an encounter, but to sensations and perceptions that are felt when we encounter works of art. I developed instruments to represent and record these components, each a different combination of time, place, and medium that represented multiple views and explored the participant's perspective (Stone-Mediatore, 2003, cited in Hunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013, p. 96). The data produced in the session was embodied fiction-as-research (Leavy, 2015), oriented towards participants rather than an external audience as in most fiction-based research that expressed and explored what participants thought about educational communities and the relationships therein. Meanwhile the discussions and depictions of events which emerged from the group discourse at the beginning and end of each session connected the professional lives of participants to their diegetic encounters and provided a source of personal narrative inquiry (Schwandt, 2007; Leavy, 2015) that I used to identify emergent themes and conclusions in the research.

Because *poeisis* exists "in-the-moment," it proved the most difficult aspect of an artistic encounter to capture. To do so I used what freeform larps refer to as "the debrief"

(Stark, 2014), a period after players have enacted a group of scenes, during which they reflect, consider emotions they felt, transition back to “real life,” and address potential problems between players. While a lived, poetic experience cannot truly be quantified and known, this liminal space between “play” and “reality” allowed for data that is semi-poetic in character. The emotions and ideas that arose from having embodied the experience lingered in a less-processed state that Hans (1981) calls a state of play, “an experiential mode of confirming or denying the connections we make with our world” (p. 12) that precedes any linguistic approximation of experience. The participants had not had time to completely rationalize them.

This was vital to the discourse within the community of inquiry because it meant the act of discourse functioned as a collaborative and emergent act of meaning-making, the “doing” represented by praxis



Figure 1. Michael's Facebook page by (John Paul) (Cox, 2015, p. 186).

as well as the lived quality of “poesis.” The domain of praxis also utilized what I called the “pre-brief.” During the pre-brief we discussed previous sessions, considered the developing narrative, and asked ourselves what concepts or spaces we would investigate next. For example, the majority of the participants were interested in whether Michael would be allowed to continue at his school, and so we role-played a confrontation between school administrators and Michael's parents as the final scene of the last session. The most perceptible meaning-making occurred during these times because, as Greene (1988) wrote, “only when individuals are empowered to interpret the situations they live together do they become able to mediate between the object-world and their own consciousness” (p. 122).

During the pre-briefing we examined artifacts players created in the interval between sessions. These artifacts represented aesthetic data, the visceral force of art that is “sensed” rather than categorized. The objects embodied the relationships between the players, characters, and contexts through which they were linked. By visualizing these perceptions, participants became more aware of their own view of the extra-diegetic world in the schools and classrooms of their professional lives, which in turn increased their ability to alter that world and how they interacted with it. Participants noted that they felt more able to empathize with students with whom they had struggled and for the unique pressures administrators faced, and they therefore modified their behavior to support needs of people and situations differently than they would have previously. The artifacts rendered imagery that was *intuitive* and *interpretive*, a fact which distin-



Figure 2. Torn page from Michael's sketchbook (John Paul) (Cox, 2015, p. 221).

guishes them from the linguistic methods utilized to collect and present other participant data. The combination of the pre-brief and artifact sharing was also a space that placed a spotlight on the individual efforts of each participant and allowed the community to engage in a collaborative visual analysis (Riessman, 2008).

Drawing from the Data

This data is drawn from transcripts of the games, group discussions and individual interviews with participants, who are referred

to here by the pseudonyms that they chose: John Paul, Jenny F., Danielle S., and Juniper M. Their experiences have been illustrated through their visual artifacts, quotes, and my interpretations thereof.

John Paul taught Art at a Middle School. He used his artifacts to further his understanding of the characters he played, and of his own real-life students. John Paul constructed the image of a Facebook page for Michael (Figure 1), whom he played, by imagining what his own students would have made. He later returned to the verisimilitude of this method by submitting a torn page from Michael's sketchbook (Figure 2) that he said the seventh-grade teacher W. R. Bechtle (whom John Paul also played) had found in his classroom.



Figure 3. Michael's portrait as a filter (John Paul) (Cox, 2015, p. 222).



Figure 4. Jim's Relationship with Michael (Jenny F.) (Cox, 2015, p. 202).



Figure 5. Intended/unintended influence (Jenny F.) (Cox, 2015, 218).

For Bechtle the picture justified his suspicions that Michael needed psychiatric help, and so he kept it as “evidence,” whereas for Michael it had merely been a doodle he did not care about and had discarded. It is important to distinguish that Bechtle and Michael's opinions existed separately from John Paul's, and that whether Michael needed psychological intervention was only a narrative device for exploring the relationships between the characters. John Paul also submitted a picture (Figure 3) Michael drew for how he sees himself: as a filter that “takes bullcrap miasma and condenses it, pressurizes it, and spits out bullcrap sludge.” However, John Paul said that Michael is not as profound as he thinks, because while he “believes he is good at separating bullcrap and finding truth” there is little difference between the gaseous and the solid waste in the image.

According to John Paul the larp caused him to “reconsider what am I saying, how am I saying it, and why.” He reflected that this affected what he saw as the benefits of being a risk taker, and of encouraging that behavior in others, and said that:

If you're always afraid to be wrong, you are never going to be able to create anything original. Because you can't step outside of what is known, you can't step outside of what is already in the textbooks. Yeah, that's where you fail, but that's also where things happen, that's where you succeed, and that's where you do things that have never been done before.

Jenny F. taught elementary art, and the artifacts she created reflected her concerns

with perceptions of relationships in families and at schools. Sometimes this represented a character's perspective, as was the case in her oil pastel illustration (Figure 4) of her character's perception of the relationship with his son Michael. There was what he thought it had been and should be, a space of happiness made of light areas and gentle curves, and the disconnection he now felt between them, shown by the black vortex in the pieces center. This piece was a direct reaction to two tense "family dinner" scenes we had played, at which times Jim was trying to force his family to be what he thought they should be by being a forceful authoritative presence.

Other times, as in her tempera painting (Figure 5), she offered her own perspective. This painting described the far-reaching importance of one person's actions, with the purple lines indicating the purposeful ways in which the figure influenced the world while the multitude of other lines represented influence the figure was unaware of. While this was not a new idea for Jenny F., she felt the larp experience offered a different conception of what it actually meant.

Jenny F. said that "obviously I was projecting my own life experiences into my characters. But I was reaching, trying to reach, into what might be going on in other students' lives" (Cox, 2015, p. 277). A part of that reaching took the form of the authority figures those students encounter, as Jenny F. played Michael's father Jim and the second-grade teacher Jenny Fairborn. She realized after having created and played those characters that she had unintentionally drawn on her perceptions of her own parents, that she had replicated behaviors and actions to represent herself as "an authority," which was not a comfortable realization for her.



Figure 6. People as layers (Danielle S.) (Cox, 2015, p. 187).



Figure 7. Barb's character web (Danielle S.) (Cox, 2015, p. 201).



Figure 8. Michael's emotions (Danielle S.) (Cox, 2015, p. 217).



Figure 9. Sean Mitchell (Juniper M.) (Cox, 2015, p. 185).

Danielle S. was a pre-service art educator, and she created artifacts that abstracted relationships and people to illustrate ideas and feelings that were normally invisible. Her first artifact (Figure 6) portrayed people as a series of layers, the outer perceptions hiding the true core of a person from the world. She referred to Michael's attitude as an example of this metaphor, his rage represented by a ring of red while his sadness remained obscured. Later, Danielle S. drew up a web for Michael's mother (Figure 7), whom she played, which was informed by the development of the relationships experienced during play.

Through the creation of that map Danielle S. realized her character's feelings that life had not turned out as she had expected it would, and that informed the character's desire to pretend that everything was as it should be family. If everyone was happy, or could be seen to be happy, then her personal sacrifice would have been worthwhile. This is why the character drank to excess in private, why she insisted to the children that her love of them gave her special knowledge of their needs, and why she united with her husband to insist her son would continue at the school.

Danielle S. united her perception of relationships in her abstraction of Michael's emotional turmoil (Figure 8), which referenced a scene in which she had portrayed the voice of Trust in his mind while other participants played Anger, Depression, Guilt, and Michael himself. In the drawing, Michael's core being was depicted as a layer of yellow that was covered in layers of emotion that hid that core and changed how it was perceived. Danielle S. wanted the piece to appear frenetic to represent Michael's

frustration, while the star in the center would pull him forward.

The value of hope represented in that final drawing was an important aspect to Danielle S.'s perspective. She had said during one session that conclusions are in some sense always arbitrary because “we go on,” though we might see ourselves or be seen by others is a transitory state. Therefore, when she played the emotion of “Trust” in Michael’s mind, it was with the thought that “It’s just there. It’s just white noise right now maybe, but maybe later on you’re going to find it’s ingrained in you. That maybe finally, maybe, it’s going to come up.”

Juniper M. was an Elementary Art educator, whose artifacts tended towards portraits that incorporated imagery or text that complicated appearance-based assumptions. Her sketch of the interim principal (Figure 9) included a “recipe” to create him: “a pinch of Mr. R., a dash of assumption, one cup of sifted personal identity, and a heaping tablespoon of discretion. Serve with caution and prudence.” Her rendition of Michael’s “perfect” older sister was represented by the orderly and emotionally intense scrapbook page she created (Figure 10), through the creation of which she realized she had much in common with the character.

She also drew Michael (Figure 11) as she pictured him: alone, surrounded by the things he thinks he is *supposed* to be, but is not, and thinking of himself as “a round peg that doesn’t fit in anywhere.”

In the larps, Juniper M. intentionally created several characters based on people she had known. Through the games she reflected on people she may have misjudged, on the difficulties school authorities have to navigate, and on how she wanted to see



Figure 10. Hayley’s scrapbook page (Juniper M.) (Cox, 2015, p. 200).



Figure 11. Round peg, square hole (Juniper M.) (Cox, 2015, p. 219).

herself in the future. She stated that she “was able to come to understand these really intricate relationships, and drives, and desires of administration, and parents, and teachers, and students... I just don’t know that I could have gotten that any other way other than actual life experience. There is no textbook, there is no traditional class that would have provided that learning.”

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II

Enfleshing

enflesh / en'fleSH , en / v. [Also enfleshing]. **1 a** The act or action of generating insights with, in and through bodily form. **b** opening emergent scholarship that is an embodied engagement, an incarnation of self-in-relation to post-humanist becomings. **c** An expressions of new forms and understandings of materiality, a geo-mapping of immanence and the affectivity of the capacities"dividuals," (as Clough reads Deleuze through the lens of Massumi). **d** Unfolding spectral social imaginaries of *when* is art by seeking sustainability in uncertainty, where intellectual value resides in our nomadic wanderings.

WHERE SHOULD WE BEGIN
TO “RETHINK” OURSELVES?
ART EDUCATION:
A TALE THAT EMERGES FROM A COLLECTIVE

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*I think in myself in and from the other.
We write about our own shared feelings
that come out from art processes.
I want to answer this first emotional
impulse with provocation. We have
to provoke the listener to think on his/
her own. (Sampedro, 2014, p. 24)*

Taking this quote as a starting point, we want to share with you the creation of C3, a cell of art/educational resistance, and to gather art memories of fond and exciting meetings portrayed through interwoven feelings among pupils, teachers, communities, contemporary art and methodological approaches, that is to say, shared processes in order to live the present as a resistance space.

Meeting Point and Some Script Ideas

Meeting point: Who are we? In 2012, at the Faculty of Education in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, we created C3 as a collective of teachers and investigators working together as a cell. We understand “cell” as a new way of art and educational activism (arteducativism) that has been updated to be a structure able to operate in any situation and context. This new way of action should not compete with other organizations because many of us are interested in similar directions. Therefore, we should collaborate and be a complement to other forms of action. With C3, we hope to activate and encourage many people who are working in classrooms, on computers, or in the streets. We believe activists are quali-

fied, involved individuals who can cause changes in the system.

C3 expands upon proposals of reflection and contemporary artistic action. The goal of this collective is to bring to light new methods of teaching and exploring them further. It is also a way of stimulating ideas towards a vindication of spaces where art and education may live inside the state system where we hope our proposals achieve these purposes. Through a construction of complex spaces of intersection, negotiation and dialogue among art, artists, mediators, teachers and education, we do not try to emulate the other, but look for an interweaving of differences as transformation forces. The educational result of these projects is the unavoidable art process.

Every art and pedagogical project generates value because they mix people, collectives and many organizations, and through their inter-relational frictions, new learnings arise. We should not forget that learning mainly means changing. There is no learning if people are not transformed.

Currently C3 is coordinated by María Jesús Agra and Cristina Trigo. Their collaborators are: Carmen Franco, Teresa Eça, Ana Vidal, Daniel Vilas, Inés Sánchez, Manuel Miguéns, Guillermo Calviño, Olalla Cortizas, José María Mesías, Silvia Capelo, Carol Gillanders, Angela Saldanha, Luis Baizán, Joán Vallés, Maja Maksimovic and Silvia Garcia. We are an interdisciplinary group, who live *Arteducation* through different experiences and come from different professional backgrounds: primary and secondary teachers, visual artists, art historians, researchers, designers, museum educators, teachers of didactics of artistic expression from faculties of Educational Sciences in the University of Santiago de Compostela, in the

University of Girona, Spain, and the University of Oporto, Portugal, and in the Fine Arts Faculty at the University of Vigo, Spain, and Philosophy Faculty of the University of Belgrade, Serbia. Occasionally others are added to our group. People participate not only from their specific professional field but also from a perspective of others, that is to say, that a museum educator could also act as a visual artist and a researcher. Teaching and researching are always related. Identity, context and environment are the fields that become pieces of our lives, jigsawed together like a puzzle. Everything we experience can turn into an idea, a discussion, a text, a project, a process or an action.

Contemporary artistic and cultural practices, realities and everyday stories are like our own *raison d'être*. After many debates and reflections upon art and education, we created the term *Arteducation*. The key for this new word has been the text of Luis Camnitzer that says:

Neither art nor education is a word that reveals the disciplinary division that forces knowledge to be fragmented. It is a criticism that proposes to us a challenge in order to begin to generate systems of creative orders and to do it creatively. It is a statement looking for a word that still does not exist. (Camnitzer, 2013, para. 2)

Arteducation, without the pause in between, seems to us the most appropriate term because art and education stimulate and confirm the knowledge fragmentation into subjects and specializations that tend to be isolated in different compartments. It is the word that defines our vital attitude because

it condemns the discipline division. This term is a statement which re-defines words giving them a meaning to suit the aims for what they had been created.

Contemporary artistic practices make visible all the relationships between an individual and their context; they break unidirectional practices and question the world as such. Through artistic action, we want to stimulate, to provoke, and to give visibility to current arteducational methodologies. We want to use all the possibilities that contemporary artistic manifestations give us to be able to have a voice and be heard.

We wanted to work together, so we decided to create a space (C3), not on the margins, but among individual researchers, research projects, art works and learning environments. In the centre of C3, this group talks and works without established routes and lines of thought. We provoke conversations and we try to turn our own *Arteducational* concerns into actions. We understand these actions as vital movements and as a way of looking into our own self, learning from one another, questioning educational concepts, as pedagogy, didactics, artistic practices, teaching, and personal development.

Ideas for a Script:

How (the education) can it be more than the site of shrinkage and disappointment? And why at this particular moment? Because, with Bologna and all its discontents, this moment is also seeing an unprecedented number of self-organized forums emerging outside institutions, as well as self-empowered departures inside institutions. Propelled from within

rather than boxed in from outside, education here becomes the site of a coming-together of the odd and unexpected—shared curiosities, shared subjectivities, shared sufferings, and shared passions congregate around the promise of a subject, an insight, a creative possibility. Education is by definition processual—involving a low-key transformative process, it embodies duration and the development of a contested common ground. (Rogoff, 2008, p. 6)

If the desire to do art research is our meeting point, our source of study is the reality and the map in which we are situated. Despite the changes that are taking place in university programs of study, the increase of research art education programs, the increasing presence of museums and art centers in the last 30 years, or even the development of interesting projects in which art is interrelated with different knowledge fields, the situation in which we live as professionals, who believe in a vision of education taught through contemporary artistic practices, does not satisfy us. There is a need to renew and rejuvenate our premises, concepts, and methodologies to be able to vinctuate the *Arteducational* practice with different realities for the future.

Therefore, we react against passivity and the lack of artistic space. We try to look for other intellectual and artistic territories which allow us to be what we want to be: *Arteducators*, process generators *under construction*. On the basis of reflection and investigation, we look for artistic activism!

Teaching arts must go further than simply teaching learners specific

skills, practices, and bodies of knowledge. Therefore, in addition to studio competency, Art Education programs should move toward broader teacher preparation. Art teachers should be encouraged to draw on the skills of other artists, including those from other disciplines, while also developing the skills required to cooperate with artists and with teachers of other subjects in an educational setting. (UNESCO, 2006, p. 9)

We do not want to be in this silent place we have been allocated. As main characters of this story, we participate in the making of this narration. We have to be responsible “assuming our personal and social responsibility as the leading role actors of the artistic

education in our country” (Congreso Iberoamericano de Educación Artística, 2008, p. 6).

When it comes to cultural contexts (Spain and Portugal), visual art teachers and educators confront a situation which gets more complex with time, and in which all the potential, the energy and the strength of our collective may become completely neutralized by government cutbacks that provoke a progressive diminishing of resources, and therefore, the quality of our very important and needed work decreases. In the context of this socioeconomic crisis, generated by global and neoliberal consultants, there are some people who insist on breaking down the basic principles of quality public education and leaving artistic education in a residual space. Nowadays, the economic situation is, of course, behind our declining



Figure 1. Action: FREE THINKING CENSURED. DO NOT GO TO SLEEP WITH FAIRY TALES! Primary Education second year pupils. Faculty of Education. University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain.¹



Figure 2. Action: ANY PLACE IS OUR LABORATORY OF IDEAS. Primary Education second year pupils. Faculty of Education. University of Santiago de Compostela. Spain.

¹ The images used are from the authors' archive. C3 are grateful to the authors of the images, to the people and places, which appear on them, for giving us the necessary legal authorizations for this publication.

educational system and we believe, clearly benefits private institutions.

As visual art teachers and educators in the university system, we feel we are being ignored. If we keep quiet, we will only have a place on the margins. We are outside the educational discourse without realising it. We waste a lot of time arguing about superficial issues in our field...But, even though it is a complex stage, it is our working space and it is of tremendous use for us as we create action strategies working against passive, defensive practices that correspond to other educational paradigms. Let us as art educators widen our professional fields, construct narratives in which art, education and life are totally inseparable, kept in motion, creating changing situations, linking aesthetics and politics, having in mind that art and politics are not separated realities.

Our stage is transformed: We are political actors in a public space. Our actions can happen anywhere that we can turn our space into a laboratory of ideas.

To be able to build that learning space, we are trying to develop situations through collective involvement by living and transforming a moment in time. A situation in this sense is somewhere between or rather beyond arts and politics. Such situations are built on relational pedagogy grounds. Relational pedagogy equips learners to become partners in their own education for life. (Agra Pardiñas, Torres Eça, & Trigo Martínez, 2012, p. 189)

As said by Basbaum (2014), we think it is important to take up again the avant-garde pedagogy that places great value on direct

contact with art work or action. In this way a learning space is constructed with the participation of the spectator and with collective proposals that open new possibilities for training and transformation.

Crossing Spaces: To Provoke with Affection

My pedagogy was always reduced to two words: love and provocation. You have to love the people you are speaking with and I loved my students...I want to correspond that first affective impulse with provocation. You have to provoke those who listen so they can think on their own. You do not have to indoctrinate, you have to provoke....The third word, after love and provocation, is authenticity. (Sampe dro, 2014, p. 24)

For many years, reason was the main educational premise that often dismissed emotion, feeling and affection. Basic aspects of personal growth were hidden in education. New educational premises such as rhizomatic or collaborative pedagogy, creation of new situations, edupunk, and invisible pedagogies, reject traditional approaches and are based on making individual possibilities more powerful from an emotional perspective. The process is opened through strategies of provocation created with attention to affection and participation. The difference is the activating element of change: this drives us to converse but also to move between frictions where our knowledge is vulnerable and everything can change in an instant.

...It is more about displaying all the complexities, paradoxes and models in which we think processes of production and mediation of knowledge happen. Pedagogical work supposes social experiments out in the open (Duschatzky, 2007), where teachers, school groups, the school itself, our society, our communities, all are vulnerable but with the capacity of being a political potency above all. (Rodrigo, 2011, para. 5)

Looking inside through lived and shared experiences. Words, debates, our experiences out in the open...awakening emotions! To transform public space, understood as a space of action and participation.

React! And this is Our Research

In 2015, we participated in the InSEA Regional Conference in Lisbon, Portugal: *Risks and Opportunities for Visual Arts Education in Europe*. After debating about our roles in that context, we decided to create an Arteducation survival kit which we presented as a performance. Through a video we explained why we were in Lisbon before also explaining the elements that made up the survival kit. Meanwhile we developed the action 'React!' inviting all the attendees to become artistic activists using the kit.

This project, based on the metaphor of the survival kit, offers a parallel between the art educator and the explorer who knows that he or she will encounter some obstacles, but there will be important discoveries during the expedition and the survival backpack should be ready with a combination of multipurpose tools. Have you ever thought

about what you need today to be who you are in Arteducation? The expectation of travelling through the visual arts awakens knowledge, every emotional sense, and every experience and discovers unknown professional and personal facets.

This work must be understood as a way of alternative research coherent with today's society, which is very close to the current educational situation, using artistic ways to express and/or document ideas and personal experiences as a way of increasing professional knowledge.

Whereas traditional research methods pose specific questions to be answered, this kind of a/r/tographic research stresses research processes. This is why questions evolve and modify the direction of the research. Planning is done as a whole, plans are changed and we learn and re-learn....It is based upon aesthetics, learning and relational research. Relations are not free from tension, therefore surprisingly rich connections and breakings take place in these social, densely significant spaces. (Agra Pardiñas & Trigo Martínez, 2013, p. 18)

Arteducation researchers propose the use of subtle languages – metaphorical, figurative, poetic, connotative, ironic or even ludic – as well as different visual representations. It is a fluid investigation, also natural and dynamic, that uses artistic, visual, spoken, textual, corporal support with the intention of expanding the comprehension and perception through its own flow.

This project began because we, as C3, wanted to give voice to those who have



Figure 3. SURVIVAL KIT presentation.



Figure 4. Objects that help the user to defend against any risks.



Figure 5. Objects that help the user to generate new possibilities.

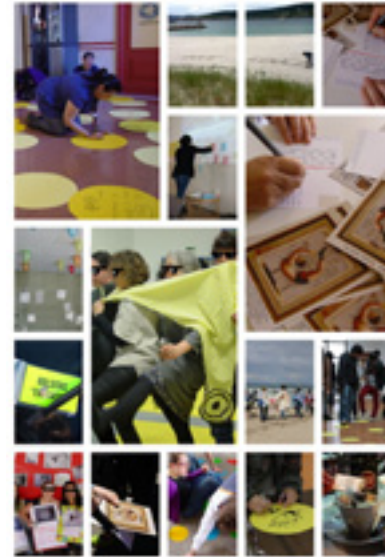


Figure 6. Images of different actions of the C3 group.

never spoken; to observe in a way that has nothing to do with the academic institution or traditional research. They are voices of dreams, expectations, failures, successes, reasons and feelings, they are narratives with no beginning or end; they are life transits; they do not have a beginning, a development and an end; they are being; they are similar processes to living.

The Open Artwork: Survival KIT

C3 action proposes that we think about what we need to do by using artistic, metaphoric and of course ironic language. It is a survival KIT that works as a metaphor for our current educational situation, in which change

comes from within (to read Figure 6). To get to this point we pursued an exercise where we considered what we would take with us in our survival kit suitcase. We carefully choose the basic things knowing the journey would be focused on our mental perspectives.

The KIT is composed of two types of objects. Firstly, those things that help the user to defend against risks, and secondly those things that help us generate possibilities for artistic education in the state system:

This KIT is for public use. Citizens, who feel like utilizing it, can use it in all its strategic development for education and art. It is recommended that an exhaustive study is undertaken of the different contexts and situations in which the interested person

may want to intervene. Any physical or intellectual risk caused by the use of it will be the responsibility of the user. Therefore, from an affective provocation using irony and humour as strategies for artistic investigation as a resistance, we begin the most interesting part: investigating, debating, experimenting, working on projects, creating networks, and sharing voices through the breaches of reality.

Pick the role that you want to have in **Arteeducation**. Transform your own creative space into a **space of action and resistance** where everything is possible.

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PROVOKING CURATING: LISTENING FOR THE CALL OF THE CLOTH

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My arts-based dissertation, *Unpacking Self in Clutter and Cloth: Curator as Artist/Researcher/Teacher* (McCartney, 2016) traces personal narratives of failing as a mother, hoarder, and curator through the autobiographical curating of my own clothing collections installed in the exhibition, *Dress Stories*. The exhibition offered a space to reimagine the scope of curating in creative ways. My inquiry required all of the work of a traditional dissertation, but also included an innovative format to reconceptualize the possibilities of the dissertation as exhibition catalogue – a cartography or mapping of the curatorial.

I was able to think through a medium – the dissertation as catalogue – where



Figure 1.

I stitched within its pages over 250 images and rich narratives of my clothing as living curriculum. Every page was aesthetically curated as a creative rendering for how the reader might experience the inquiry (see Figure 1). This page from the dissertation catalogue juxtaposes images of wedding dresses and clothing agendas told through first-person stories in middle spaces between theory and analysis. These narratives are intended to provoke readers to remember and add their own dress stories as they journey through the work. I have chosen to include images of the creative catalogue page layouts throughout this chapter because I am more interested in sharing the aesthetics of the dissertation design than asking you to read each page as it appears in the catalogue. The catalogue was designed to allow images and text to push against each other and inform the inquiry. The dress narratives I offer readers are not trivial accounts of simply where and when I embodied each garment, but rather serve as the very fibers of the dissertation used to consider theory, methodology, and curatorial implications for teaching with objects in museums and classrooms in profound ways. In undoing the curatorial, I found I could move past old ways of knowing, doing, and valuing objects – and the catalogue traces these shifts in my practice. In doing so, I did not go alone, but rather within



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

an a/r/tographic community discovered the courage to provoke and challenge my past curatorial performativity to begin to curate differently (McCartney, 2014) and begin to identify myself as curator as artist.

The *Dress Stories* exhibition occurred in the middle of the research process affording opportunities to trouble and undo the curatorial – through curatorial turnings and re-turnings. Memories, interpretations, and histories were placed beside clothing examples



Figure 4.

of material culture using narrative, practice-based, lived inquiry, and arts-based research. The exhibition included over 150 clothing objects, many of which were handed-down through six generations of women in my family installed alongside reflexive discourse about curating, collecting, hoarding, teaching, and mothering to reweave a story of continual becoming as curator/artist/researcher/teacher and its implications for Art Education. For example, in the catalogue (see Figure 2), I include images of me, my mother, and my great-grandmother – each holding our children – with a reflection about the ways I searched to map my family threads together. In the *Dress Stories* exhibition (see Figure 3), I created a mapping installation of infant clothing spanning over 100 years in my family on the gallery wall and literally wove them together using my great-grandmother's spools of thread. In this image, readers see fibers move back and forth, through and between each garment that I feel obligated to hold onto and care for as a curator and as a daughter. In the pages of my dissertation, I discovered space to deliberate, experiment,



Figure 5.



Figure 6.

bition by listing each opportunity I encountered as I lived the curriculum of curating an exhibition. Here, I want readers to experience the flow of all eight pages of this interlude in the catalogue, not necessarily with the goal of reading each step, but feeling the punches of the enormity of my curator-to-do list. I also include a single page of the punch list (see Figure 8) so readers might read a sample of the steps that forced me to continually turn as a curator.

In curatorial turning (Rogoff, 2008, 2010), I begin to listen for the call of the cloth, to dwell in wounds, scars and openings (Kind, 2006), and to be transparently

reflexive within my complicated lived experience as curator, artist, researcher, teacher and mother. Before we assert that everyone is a curator (Ruitenbergh, 2015), we need to ask what is care teaching us and what is the curriculum of care, starting with the messages handed down within what we currently care for – students, artists, curators, educators, mothers and daughters alike.

The theoretical framework of my inquiry invited an experimental joining of care theory (Noddings, 1984), performativity theory (Butler, 1990), thinking through our mothers (Grumet, 1988), allowing for gendered failures (Halberstam, 2011) and

Figure 8.

94 Mount picture hangers on 30 black frames, clean glass, and edit Laura Ashley photographs
112 Production meeting with Nadine Kalin and Rita Irwin to interrogate the curating and be in the curating

layout for exhibition title panels **56** Get final pedestal courts from Fashion on Main **57** Schedule Texas Fashion Collection staff for installation and de-installation dates and times **58** Make reception guest list **59** Drop off clothes to dry cleaners **60** Locate remote storage items in attic **61** Purchase 30 black 8 x 10" frames, and mount all Laura Ashley photographs **62** Purchase antique attic closet door, doorknob, and hinges at salvage store **64** Finalize object list for TFC staff **65** Arrange for Little Guy movers to deliver dress forms and platforms on installation day **66** Coordinate with professional stylist, Melanie Sanford and exhibition designer, Greg Gookby for installation schedule **67** Locate bank pins for mounting the didactic panels on the gallery walls **68** Go to Central Market and order floral centerpiece for opening reception **69** Label each dress form and neck piece with corresponding object numbers **70** Complete final editing on didactic panels **71** Make netting infrastructure for infant christening gown **72** Create packing lists for installation weekend at Oak Street Hall **73** Purchase batting, hosiery, and surgical tubing for styling dress forms **74** Locate and fit bras, shoulder pads, petticoats for each dress form **75** Set-up staging table in TFC for packing items to take to gallery **76** Spray paint dress form bases **77** Sign-off on invitation design and marketing photo with Blake Hampton **78** Create purchase orders for all printing needs and submit to Mary Miller **79** Make shopping lists for food and supplies for the reception **80** Arrange for additional transportation for installation and deinstallation days **81** Make list of painting supplies needed to prep pedestals and bases **82** Submit contracts for Little Guy movers to pick up platforms at Fashion on Main and deliver to campus **83** Complete phone interviews with UNT Public Relations Office to craft press release **84** Arrange to meet Mary Miller, university staff to assist with reception purchasing needs **85** Purchase and fit pillow forms for all 15 pillows in exhibition **86** Wash and iron all bedding and pillow covers **87** Purchase curtain rods and finials **88** Edit infant clothes for curtain rods **89** Purchase spray paint and drop cloths **90** Get fabric for tablecloths for reception **91** Complete final fitting for

63 Frame deteriorated baby garment in shadow box



Figure 9.

keeping up gendered appearances (Kuhn, 2004). As a feminist curator doing autobiographical curating, I struggle with mothering my daughter and her dresses – while attempting to keep up the appearance of being a good curator, good mother and good girl. Curating my own collections was a means to undoing myself. The hybrid methodology calls me to be deeply reflexive in my practice – in a form of self-study (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, 2004a, 2004b). Included in the work are more than thirty “dress story” (Weber & Mitchell, 2004a, p. 4) narratives to model the ways care theory informs important contemporary issues such as feminism, privilege and identity and the implications for poststructural feminist analysis (see Figure 9). In this catalogue image, the text on the left side of the page unpacks the ways a woman might construct and deconstruct meaning in her clothing, while the dress story narrative on the right side provides a conceptual account of my embodied bathrobe and the ways I disrobe myself in my complicated female identity.

A/r/tography afforded the opportunity to begin to unpack my plural identities in creative ways within the pages of the catalogue. Rita Irwin (2004) describes the double dashes in the writing of “a/r/tography” as a way of visioning the roles of artist, teacher and researcher through uniting identities and practices in ways that surface tensioned possibilities in this methodology. I propose adding a letter and dash in the a/r/tography acronym to create another way to integrate the roles in my personal and professional life. Subsequently, I add a “c” for “curator” beside and between the slashes of “a/r/tography” to create the acronym “c/a/r/tography” where curator/artist/researcher/teacher identities converge and diverge in my representations and practice (McCartney, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016).

I turned to rhizomanalysis to seek what I lost and found in the inquiry process. Inna Semestsky (2006) defines rhizovocality as “performative utterances that consist of unfolding and irrupting threads” (p. xii). The inquiry allowed me to listen for these utterances stitched within the threads. The interconnectedness within the spaces take rhizomatic forms, where “routes produce roots and routes return to roots” (Friedman, 1998, p. 178). Barbara Hovey, as cited in Sullivan (2010), reminds arts-based researchers, “[w]ith change comes risk, the risk of

misunderstanding, of failure, the danger of being led up a blind alley; but also what you most hope for as an artist—the possibility of transformation” (p. 86). For me, transformation came in the spaces where I invited failure (Halberstam, 2011) as an opportunity to do curating differently.



Figure 10.

New routes for unpacking my lived experiences sanctioned a different care theory in the findings – a duality where caring for my collections as a curator meant I could also uncure for my collections as an artist (see Figure 10) imbuing them with new meaning and potentiality for failure within the curatorial. In this catalogue image, readers experience uncaring as I tossed, piled and shoved objects and years of anxiety about clutter into a physical closet of curiosities I constructed in the middle of the gallery for the *Dress Stories* exhibition. In this moment I was not caring for my collections like a curator, but beginning to care for and heal myself in relation to my pedagogy of failures (McCartney, 2015). The day the exhibition opened, the gallery flooded and threads of my past, present and future unraveled in my

institutional life as a curator. In the flood damage, one of the oldest and most precious dresses in the exhibition was ripped open. The damaged dress became a metaphorical opening into the inquiry that altered my ways of being as a curator where I could subsequently cut, rip, tear, and stitch other clothing artifacts in creative ways brought on by the flood.



Figure 11.

I was able to locate similarities between my own water breaking causing my daughter to be born fifteen weeks early and my gallery space filling with water causing irreparable damage to my collections – allowing me to draw unforeseen connections about my need to nurture, guard, and protect the things, ideas, and people that I care for most. The flood damage caused me to be undone in ways I could never have predicted or planned. I considered veiling my emotions but, instead I pulled back the veil and revealed myself as a curator allowing for my curatorial failures – this marked a change in my curatorial prac-

tice forcing me to interrogate once hidden and unrecognized perspectives in my performativity and caring as a curator who is also an artist, researcher and teacher to see anew (see Figure 11). On this catalogue page, I collage several photographs in the process of literally opening myself and my prom dress as a means of reconceptualizing the premature rupturing of the membranes I experienced as a mother, forcing my daughter to be born so early. It was only after the exhibition closed I discovered the acronym for this condition is P.R.O.M. which pushed me to think about my prom dress in different ways (McCartney, 2015). Once I performed this kind of violence

against one of my treasured artifacts, I was able to go deeper in my *uncaring* as a curator.

Arts-based research, as described by Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner (1997) maintains that the arts provide a special way of understanding the world and constructing knowledge, while representing new understandings in contextualized ways. I had to pause my inherited curatorial modes of care through intentional acts of *uncare* in order to reappropriate these objects for alternative use in order to care *better* for myself and to reinterpret my curatorial obligations in order to send out my questions for curating (see Figure 12). This catalogue page includes text

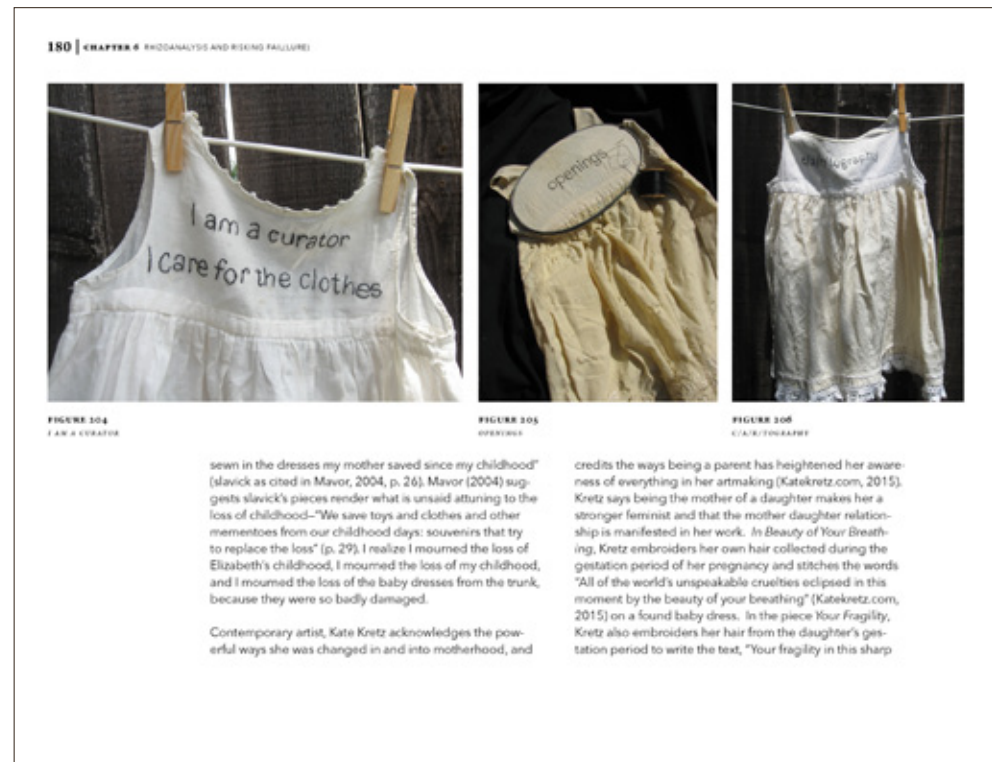


Figure 12.

describing contemporary women artists that inspired my artmaking with images of family clothing I altered in *uncaring* ways. I selected several baby garments handed down to me from my great-grandmother and attuned to the ways I was changed in and into mothering and in and into the inquiry by stitching words and phrases into the fabric that ties me to my family and to my research. In undoing the curatorial, I found I could move past old ways of knowing, doing, and valuing objects and instead call forth creative spaces for failure, forgetting, releasing, undoing and *uncaring* as curators in our curriculums, museums and classrooms.

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AN ALARMING JOURNEY¹

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Emotions

Each author currently works in academia: Jackie Batey is the MA Illustration Course Leader in the School of Art and Design, University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom; Linda Knight is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Early Childhood, Queensland University of Technology, Australia. Although we work in different academic spaces we each completed a PhD in Illustration, and we conducted our respective PhDs through a practice-based, or practice-led approach loosely based on a conventional science model: the investigation of a particular idea/question/supposition through a thesis of approximately 40,000 words and a body of practical, experimental work. At the time of our respective studies, this was a common model for practice-led doctoral study: the establishment of a hypothesis that would be examined through practical ‘laboratory’ work and presented through that work and a dissertation.

¹ See analarmingjourney.blogspot.co.uk

This visual interlude was an opportunity for us both to re-engage with the visual elements of our PhDs, to re-examine how illustration was a critical research tool for us within a specific study model, and how it can function within the wider study models that include hypothesis-driven, propositional, inquiry-based and experimental studies.

We contribute a visual chapter to PROVOKE as a way of looking back on our initial experiences of ‘doing research’ in illustration, and how that is quite fraught in some instances. We use the term ‘fraught’ here, not to describe horror stories of bad supervisors (we each had excellent supervisors), or a lack of support by our respective university departments, but to describe the shock of making art for a PhD. Our shock was because the prior reasons for creating illustrations for commercial briefs or for community stakeholders, was suddenly changed.

We present a predominantly visual paper here to *illustrate* the alarming journey we travelled from our being commercial artists, to higher degree students, and eventually, academics. We keep the text purposefully brief to reflect the original dominance of the images within our respective studies. In each case, the images were required to speak for themselves for us to successfully attain our doctoral qualification.

The Images

We contribute a visual interlude to enable us to head back in, theoretically and practically, to our original work. When constructing the images for this chapter we chose to present a timeline of an image for each year we studied. We also use layers and scrolling in this curation, although our usual styles of illustrating are very different. Transparent layers can reveal or obscure what is underneath. Visualising the timeline as a series of images helped us recall tasks of researching, writing and image-making, and helped us reconsider old feelings of anxiety as well as the idiosyncrasies, successes and trivialities of making art as part of a practice-led/based PhD.

We present images we each produced during our PhD as a series of reminiscences of our respective intellectual and emotional shifting: of ourselves and of our art practices. We recall through these images how the familiar scenario of working to commercial and community briefs shifted to creating more individual, personal and theorised work. These new practices were troublesome however as we had to negotiate the balance of image and text in our respective

doctoral studies² and the resulting dualistic pressures of producing a practice-led, or practice-based art PhD: project ideas must be individual and innovative while also achieving validation from the academy via its higher degree procedures and processes.

Speculative Research in Art and Design

The very nature of arts research using practice-based or practice-led methodologies (Johnson & Edmonds, n.d.) begins with speculation. Often with art and design projects, the practice and research grows organically through experimentation, accident and reflection. The intertwining of the textual and practical, although not without risk is in fact one of the strengths of a doctorate in the arts. This *practitioner's methodology* is already familiar to those who have completed first degrees and master's qualifications in art and design.

Speculative research however, can be an issue when artists try to “fit-in” to the submission and progression requirements of postgraduate study. One of the first dilemmas we each encountered was with the formal application process. The university application system for practice-based doctorates often requires a detailed outline of the project. As creative practitioners neither of our working methodologies were clear A to B sequences. The feeling of applying with a “fraudulent” proposal was the first anxiety; as practitioners we both understood and expected our projects to change and develop through speculative research and experimental practice. Official paperwork did not allow for a full description of the artist's methodology, even such familiar elements as the literary review did not leave room to discuss research sources vital to artists such as exhibitions, special collections or other tactile visual resources. Things have changed over time, for example in the UK, Goldsmith's University runs a series of events exploring the messiness of practice-based research³. Batey is co-creator of a project called “Images in Practice”⁴ which seeks to make examples of completed practice-based PhDs available online (including all the visual elements). In Australia, QUT, with other universities has higher degree policies that support practice-based doctorates across the university.

Rigid application forms can prompt feelings of not fitting in within an established system. This anxiety inherent in not fitting in is ascribed by Candlin

² Batey's PhD had an approximate 50:50 image/text split, with additional gatefold images bound into the thesis. Knight's PhD had a 40:60 text/image split, with an exhibition produced as part of the exegesis. Each thesis is archived:

Linda Knight - ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?did=1&uin=ukbl.ethos.287964; Jackie Batey - thesafecigarette.blogspot.co.uk

³ www.phdbydesign.com

⁴ imagesinpractice.blogspot.co.uk

(2000) to frameworks that doubt whether, in fact, images can function as research at all. Archer (1995) described “research through practitioner action” (pp. 6–13) as early as 1995 but acceptance of practitioners’ various methodologies is still yet to be fully accepted by many universities.

Speculative research is risky in an age where every REF (UK)⁵ and ERA (Aus)⁶ output counts but the autotelic nature of creativity practice-based/led research needs acknowledgment, and tacit knowledge needs to be respected as part of the practitioner’s methodology. Problem-finding as opposed to problem-solving has been described as vital to creative practice (Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1996), the exploration of emergent structures and questions is seen to deliver works of greater originality and of higher quality. For the arts practitioner, this fluid approach to the research question is the *sine qua non* of their practice-based research, otherwise we revert back to commercial artists working for a client, to a fixed brief.

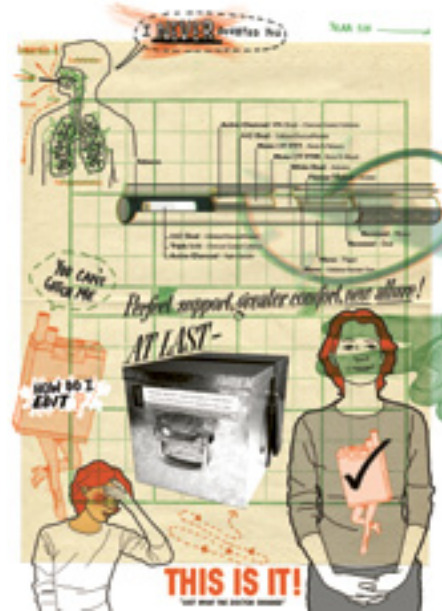
Linda Knight had researched representational stereotypes in children’s books, resulting in fake picture book illustrations and Jackie Batey had researched images of reassurance in cigarette advertisements, resulting in satirical fake adverts. Both artists reflected upon this PhD research as a timeline with each year marking a new image (Knight: 4 years full time, Batey: 6 years part time). Batey created images by recombining elements from her series of final artist’s books using Photoshop and drawing. Technology had changed significantly during the completion and reworking of the images. We chose to embrace the new with Knight using the Brushes app on the iPad to create layers to add depth and context to the original images but also the creation of an online version of the research journey using Blogger (and a scrolling “marquee tag”).⁷ Newer elements were created to give structure to the emerging sequence, although it was fascinating how quickly the images fell into place. The period of time between completing our PhDs and then revisiting the artwork highlighted technical advances for us both in terms of software and hardware, as well as provided us with an opportunity to review our original proposals and methods and how much our practices have grown since our studies.

Through a series of discussions, which included much laughter at shared experiences, we decided to attempt to reclaim and reapportion the practice

⁵ The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions.

⁶ The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) is the system for assessing the impact and quality of research activity in Australian universities.

⁷ Images can be seen in greater detail at: analarminjourney.blogspot.co.uk



Figures 1–6. Paper, ink, digital print. All images by Jackie Batey.



Figures 7–10. Paper, ink, pencil, watercolour, digital print. All images by Linda Knight.

element of our PhD by reconfiguring it into a description of itself. We reviewed how, for each of us, illustration is a critical practice rather than a decorative one. As practitioners it was important in our Doctoral studies to remain true to the practice i.e. for our visual work to not masquerade as fine art or information graphics. This was an important distinction for us, as we believe that our Doctoral illustration folios were able to effectively contain our critical investigations as well as still be identified as illustrations.

During our discussions the day-to-day experience of studying a PhD emerged. Shared elements were: carrying heaps of heavy books; travelling backward and forwards (including navigating the notorious UK M6 motorway at the Spaghetti Junction); feelings of ‘Is this good enough?’ and, “How will I know when it’s finished?” We discussed breakthroughs where the sun shone down and mental blocks when everything stalled. Procrastination dogged us both and guilt was a shared emotion – the feeling that every hour of the day should be gainfully used in research. What was remembered and what was forgotten was surprising, for example, the feel, smell and look of old library paper book tickets were a vivid recollection for us both.

This re-engagement with our original images was like meeting an old friend and finding out we still had much in common. It gave each of us a greater respect for what we had actually achieved, as the anxiety of submission overpowered feelings of success. Creating these reworked images was enlightening: being able to stand-back and have a more holistic vision of our artistic development brought into focus themes that have remained constant in our work. Having the option to produce an interlude over a written chapter directly impacted on how we performed the intellectual task. In that sense, visual interludes are useful and responsive publishing options for practice-based academics.

Becoming an Academic

We did complete our PhDs, and we became academics. Our respective transitions from artist to artist-academics did not begin as we walked out into the world to search for work clutching our certificate; the shift in our art practices becoming a researching process began as we negotiated the structures of doctoral study. By the time we each graduated, we were aware of how practice can be research, and how practices can differ across private/commercial/academic contexts. Importantly, we each understood how art is a deeply technological, intellectual and critical activity, and is much more than representation, competence and aesthetics. The practical PhD allowed each of us to embark on an alarming journey that equipped us with excellent skills to use in our academic careers. Batey has continued to extend her research into illustration and artist’s books with many of the themes identified within the PhD becoming a foundation for further bookworks – which are also used in teaching illustration.

Knight has continued to arts practice as a research focus and as a methodology, and continues to use her PhD portfolio of illustrations regularly within her current teaching in early childhood education.

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REVEALING THE PHOTO BOOK AS AN ARTS-BASED EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH TOOL

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This chapter is about a journey through research to define and articulate my teaching philosophy and practice – Immersive Art Pedagogy. Inspired by a/r/tography, my pedagogy emerged and continues to evolve through my work in schools and universities. I am a practical academic, someone who “spans the somewhat ethereal world of academia as a scholar and the pragmatic world of practice” (Walker, 2010, p. 1), with what Posner (2009) calls a “pracademic sensibility that traverses the academic-practitioner divide” (p. 17). As a pracademic, I respond with equal force to the physical, emotional and contextual stimuli in my field of operation and seek to disclose and amplify

the creative freedom that exists in this space. The desire to expose the creative core of my pedagogy largely determined the method and form of my PhD which comprised an arts-based project presented as a photo book, and an exegesis. The photo book was central to my PhD as a *curatorial revelation*; it presents the created artwork/research alongside reflective/reflexive commentary. This hybrid structure builds creative analysis with *forward making* possibilities. The following chapter features excerpts from the photo book that (re)make and (re)produce self into discourse from the inside/outside worlds of the artist/researcher/teacher. The excerpts are layered with observations and extracts

from the exegesis that reflect on the photo book discourse, and discussion of the photo book's methodological value and form.

Towards Immersive Art Pedagogy

As a child, my family and I spent many weekends at the beach soaking up the hot Australian sun and splashing around in

the sea. Sometimes, even on school nights, when scorching days simmered into breathless afternoons, we would drive to the nearest suburban beach. We would ease in and out of the water, have a light dinner and wait for the relieving breeze as night stole the sun from the sky. I loved those times – floating, diving, pretending to be dolphins and mermaids with my siblings. It seemed the sea

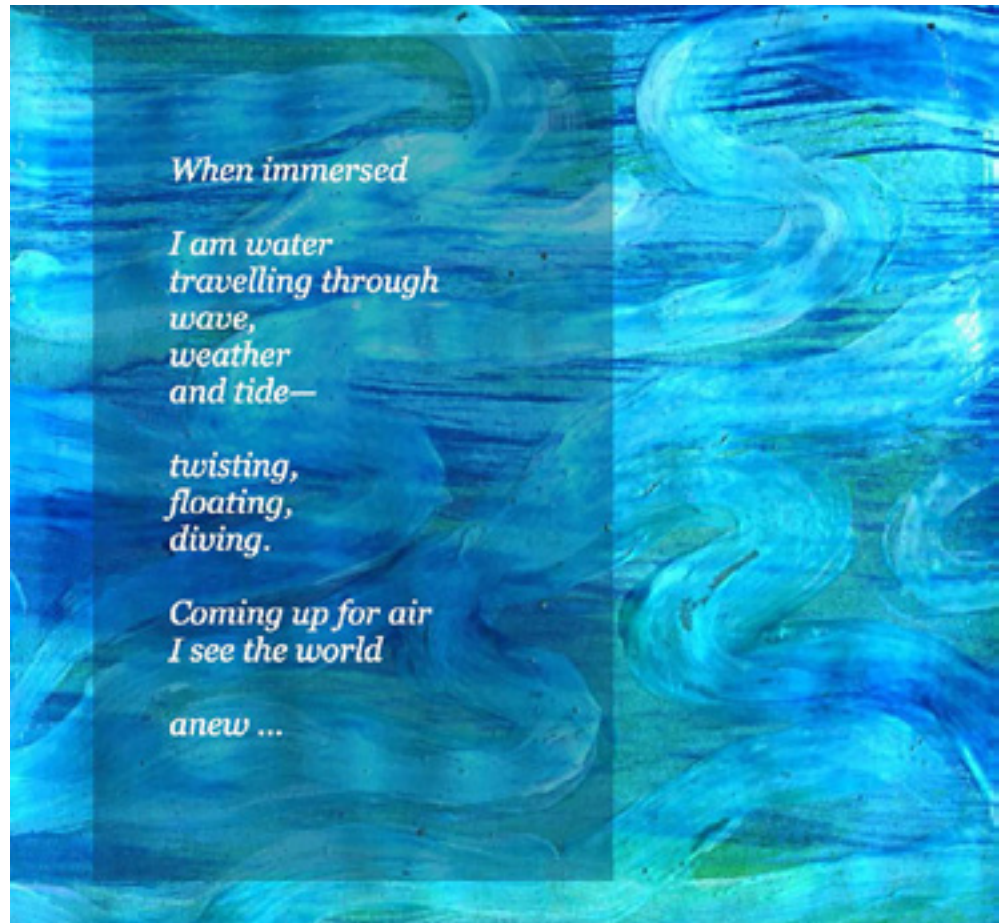


Figure 1. Being Immersed: An embodied response to the wash and flow of water and memory.

and I could be anything, fluid as its changing physical and conceptual qualities.

To me art offers endless possibilities like those times on the beach, always prompting refreshing ways to express silences, daydreams and lived experiences. Art provides me with a way to be, and become in the world; it powers my personal and social contribution, even though it can be incredibly frustrating *and* deliciously addictive in equal measure. Today, my teaching aims to replicate this sense of immersive possibilities. When approached in this way, art takes on immersive qualities...interest, involvement, imagination, and interaction (Burbules, 2004)... enabling simultaneous concepts to form in responsive or proactive gestures towards the everyday, as well as the cultural domain.

This empowerment, made possible through personal and immersive engagement with art, inspires the way I create, teach and now research. What started as an intuitive approach to art making and teaching became a philosophy of practice I call “Immersive Art Pedagogy.” The object of my PhD research, which privileges art processes and practice, was to understand what Im-

mersive Art Pedagogy entails, and whether the practice of Immersive Art Pedagogy could connect and reconnect the pluralities of artist, researcher and teacher.

I conducted my research over several years using events to explore ways of knowing through art. These events investigate pedagogy in three contexts I call “creative worlds” set in (i) the community, (ii) an educational institution, and (iii) the artist’s world. Each event encompassed processes, interactions and artwork that became my source of information; visual and textual images of my research available for reflection, analysis and reprocessing. I felt it was essential to present these descriptive images as integral to the research, intertwined and informing, still current and still capable of provoking further creative agency. This requirement led me to the photo book genre which allowed me to weave images, text and diagrams to show the exploration and development of my pedagogical model through theoretical examination of the evolving source of information. The result is far more than a book of photos with accompanying text, but not an illustrated appendix, art thesis, artist’s

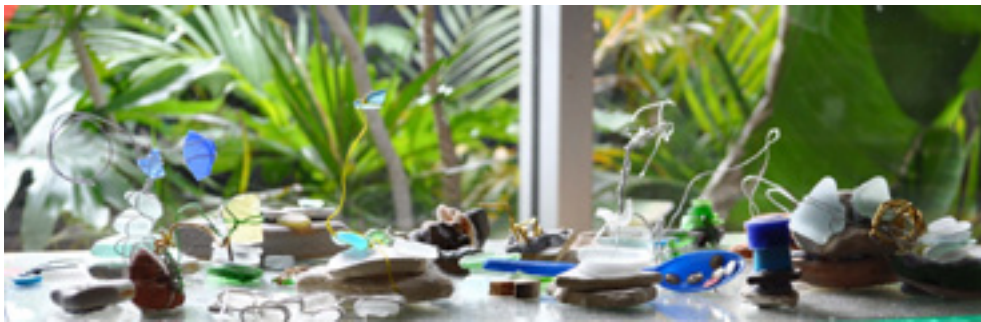


Figure 2. Art work. Walking/Finding/Sorting/Sculpting/Talking/Displaying/Remembering. Found objects (re)claimed from a favourite suburban beach, bound with wire and placed on a mirrored box. Installation by Geraldine, Chester and Joe.

catalogue, art journal or art book. Rather, it is an a/r/tist photo book; it hybridizes the photo book format and layers photographs, artwork, experience, narrative, diagrams, revelations and explanatory text to pioneer a new scholarly form. The photo book presents the art pedagogy of the third creative world where the lens of artist/researcher/teacher (a/r/t) is focused on the artist. It provides the reader/viewer with an intimate immersive experience within the 7 x 7 inches space of the book. My aim was to bring people with me on my research journey; I hoped that through the photo book people would experience how Immersive Art Pedagogy develops a socioecological understanding of place

and identity by encouraging a relational view of creativity and critical evaluation.

Narrative Layers in the Photo book

The following vignette from my photo book *(Re)connecting: Immersive Art Pedagogy* (Burke, 2013a) shows how I conducted and presented my research. The vignette is from Section 6, “Relational Places,” and showcases an artwork together with its set of five layered narratives which investigate the art-making experience (Figures 2 and 5).

Throughout the photo book I intertwined art practice with narrative discourse to discover what Immersive Art Pedagogy



Figure 3. Artist Narrative. Photo Book Extract. An intuitive response to the Art work which reflects on the experience of *being with* through our making.

reveals and contests. The first narrative for each set of art works was always intuitive – me the artist responding to the art making (Figure 3). It was often poetic or observational, details captured in the moment on the back of artworks or in visual journals. It was essentially an expansion of the information sourced from art making, a descriptive process opening up space for further work.

Kincheloe’s (2008) post-formal approach to “multilogical critical pedagogy” (p. 4) and his call for “critical bricolage” (p. 5) with its respect for complexity helped synthesize my methodological choices. He argues that education researchers must be aware of the existence of multiple methods of research and diverse theoretical constructs and suggests that methods and theories need to work in synergy. Kincheloe (2008) states:

The power of difference, of diverse perspectives, and of insights coming from different locales in the web of reality reveals their significance. All of these worldviews – especially when they are juxtaposed in dialogue with one another – contribute to our understanding of the world in general and the oppression that leads to human suffering in particular. (p. 5)

Kincheloe’s ideas inspired the 4-C narrative which was my direct and immediate response to the concepts of Immersive Art Pedagogy at work in the art making (Figure 4). In this instance, the ecological aspects of art education emerged and prompted me to research ecological perspectives such as Sobel’s (1996) approach

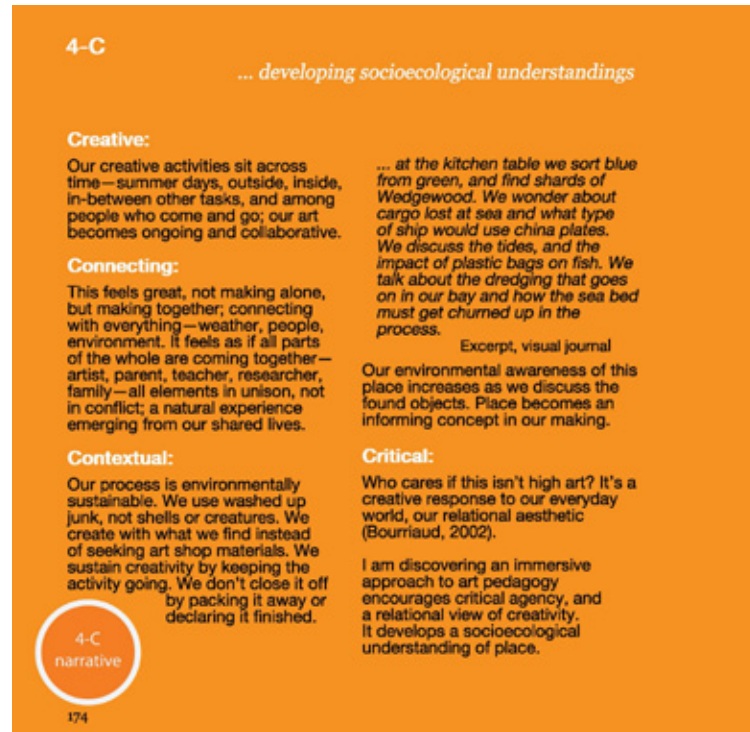


Figure 4. 4-C Narrative. Photo Book Extract. Applies creative, critical, connecting and/or contextual insights to the artwork and artist narrative.



Figure 5. Montage: Photo Book Chapter Elements. The opening section of the photo book explains the method for presenting the a/r/tist’s multi-vocal research.



Figure 6. A/R/T Narrative. Photo Book Extract. Cross-fertilises my roles by investigating the spaces in-between artist/researcher/teacher to forge and strengthen connections.

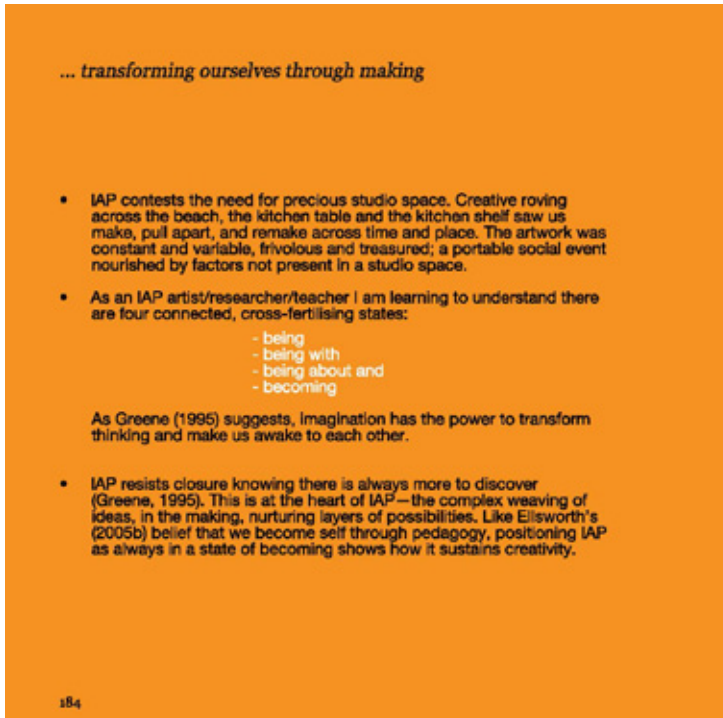


Figure 7. Critical Narrative. Photo Book Extract. A synthesis of the insights developed through the research with specific focus on forward-making possibilities and intentions.

Extract from my Exegesis: Towards a Socioecological Understanding

I am learning to understand the connected, cross fertilising states of being: being with; being about; and becoming.

Of being: By tuning into the lived experience, I, the artist, catch the world as it moves me. This is knowledge-making space, capturing and nurturing present possibilities as events move forward. It is exciting, and calls me in. As Bourriaud (2002) suggests: “the artist dwells in the circumstances the present offers him, so as to turn the setting of his life (his links with the physical and conceptual world) into a lasting world....He catches the world on the move: he is a tenant of culture” (pp. 13–14). For Sameshima and Irwin (2008) this is a liminal state informed by living inquiry, “a heightened state of being” (p. 4) that is both sensual and sensitive in its charge.

Of being with: A/r/tography helps me understand the possibilities and power of relational and creative connections across roles because it encourages an ethics of being and being with (Springgay, 2008). The complexities across and between the artist/researcher/teacher roles, and alongside co-makers, can be reclaimed as a source of creative agency supplying imaginative possibilities and strength. A/r/tography allows the hybrid space, the expansive other within. Importantly it does not “other” the artist self, which often happens in schools and universities. Even though I am an artist, often I have been so consumed by my teaching that I put aside my artist identity. An a/r/tographic disposition embodies an ethics of being with by understanding the

relations between identities rather than describing identities, intentions, or acts of individuals or groups (Springgay, 2008, p. 160). According to Springgay “the a/r/tographic disposition of being-with and the in-between...enables the possibilities of an ethics of embodiment” (Springgay, 2008, p. 154). Gablik’s (1998) inspirational words still ring through the decades: “We are all being called to move beyond the mode of disinterested contemplation [of art] to something that is more participatory and engaged” (para. 2). Our humble beach-debris collaboration shows we have not opted for a disembodied stance. Instead we made everyday life our source for creative agency “grounded in immediate human experience and value rather than abstracted as a sequence of design problems” (Cary, 1998, p. 28).

Of becoming: Like Gablik (1991), Immersive Art Pedagogy opts for a relational, social and ecological re-positioning of art to counter disengaged aesthetic views. Immersive Art Pedagogy seeks to awaken the power of imagination to transform our thinking. Greene (1995) suggests imagination has the power to make us awake to each other. Irwin (2007) suggests that as we create we convey complex ideas and often these are the complex parts of ourselves we are coming to understand. In the doing we are becoming; we are transforming ourselves (Irwin, 2007, p. xx). This is at the heart of Immersive Art Pedagogy – the complex weaving of ideas, in the making, nurturing layers of possibilities.



Figure 8. Diagram from Photo Book Section 7, (Re) processing and (Re)producing. Illustrating how process and product shift. The explanation below describes my (re)processing and (re) producing experience.

(Re)processing: I reflexively tell the Immersive Art Pedagogy story in a layered format to re-discover the intuitive elements of the process, and re-curate its products (artworks and ideas).

(Re)producing: I present the Immersive Art Pedagogy story as an innovative a/r/tist photo book that connects my lived, everyday world to theoretical research.

Methodological value: In this making and telling, Immersive Art Pedagogy emerges, grows and is tested through appraisal of the emerging artwork, narratives, observations and images. It is forever in a state of becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

to place-based education which begins by fostering empathy for the familiar that is then extended to the home range and then to social action and reinhabitation. Gruenewald (2003) also proposes that critical pedagogy and place-based education are mutually supportive educational traditions, and he suggests that “a critical pedagogy of place ultimately encour-

ages teachers and students to reinhabit their places, that is, to pursue the kind of social action that improves the social and ecological life of places, near and far, now and in the future” (p. 7).

However, since the object of my research was to expose the creative core of my pedagogy, I wanted to push beyond these observations and I felt that a/r/tography with its ethics of being and being with (Springgay, 2008) would provide an appropriate lens for deeper exploration (Figure 6). I have found that a/r/tographic renderings carry me forward. Like artworks, they help me consider reverberations into further contexts and prompt me to simultaneously reflect back and plan forward.

I deliberately layered evolving art work with the first four narratives to create a bricolage for the fifth, critical narrative which reflected on the three major questions of my research and lit the way forward to the next explorative event (Figure 7). This emergent approach pushed me to investigate activities that simultaneously embraced concepts of creative agency and sustainable practice.

Speaking Back to the Exegesis

The narrative layers from my research project were examined in my PhD exegesis to develop an extensive critique that folded into major tenets of the Immersive Art Pedagogy model. The accompanying extract from my Exegesis (Burke, 2013b, pp. 214-215) relates to the photo book extract in Figure 7. Together they show how the a/r/tist photo book and the exegesis intertwine; the content of both draws on all that has come before to forge connections. By evolving together, they reveal insights and contestations made possible through their intersection.

The A/r/tist Photo Book as a Creative Analysis Tool

Although there is a large body of research that promotes the value and importance of art processes, my experience as an artist, student, and teacher is that participants' expectations of producing tangible outcomes and displaying results tends to draw attention to observing and celebrating the finished product. With Immersive Art Pedagogy, process and product are equal; they are the essential dialogue from which all else proceeds. The diagram in Figure 8 illustrates how this applies to my research.

Reaching Out to Community

I chose the 7 x 7 inch size of the printed photo book to create a sense of intimacy. I wanted readers to have a sense of being able to hold the book and bring it in to look closely at its content. The choice of format was deliberately democratic, populist even, because I wanted to share the project with a public audience and reach beyond the usual confines of exhibition/academia/library shelf. I put effort into making the photo book visually appealing, accessible, and easy to hold so that the form itself would urge people to browse.

Cultivating Multi-Vocal Understandings

In 2003, Finley prompted for research that offers an open text where multiple possible meanings provoke questions instead of drawing conclusions. The a/r/tist photo book is a fitting response because as an open text it creates space for my pracademic sensibility (Posner, 2009) to tune in to lived experience and create new knowledge. Each

lived, processed, produced, (re)processed, (re)produced experience provoked questions and prompted action by building creative analysis alongside forward-making possibilities. Take the following observation from the vignette featured in this chapter: "We could make these works every summer as more gems wash up on shore. What other junk from our lives can we re-purpose and re-create?" (Burke, 2013a, p. 176). This is a small beginning emerging from art process and feeding into a research context which looks to create new knowledge by moving forward into the unknown.

This fresh and novel use of the photo book genre makes a valuable contribution to arts-based research by providing a way of employing a/r/tography to help capture the research topic as gerund. It helped me see my art and research as active and evolving by creating the momentum Leggo (2012) describes as "searching repeatedly" (p. 10), and bringing focus to the doing, making, being, becoming of living inquiry (Irwin, 2004). It was a way of (re)making and (re)producing self into discourse from the inside/outside worlds, an enabling research tool because it values and validates the use of emotion to reveal arguments so the multi-subjectivities of artist/researcher/teacher emerge as singular and contiguous concerns.

The "crystallization form" (Richardson, 2000, p. 934) of the a/r/tist photo book with exegesis enables sources of information to be explored through multiple perspectives and methods for analysis (Lather, 1991). Inspired by a commitment like that of Barone and Eisner (1997), it seeks to notice, understand and appraise unique insights, thereby engaging with discourse as a living, continuing concern and

glimpsing the “in-between where meanings reside in the simultaneous use of language, images, materials, situations, space and time” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xix).

Copyright

The photo book is copyright
Geraldine Burke 2013.

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DOING RESEARCH-CREATION THROUGH A MULTI-FABRIC WEDDING DRESS

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This chapter reviews the multi-fabric wedding dress I created for my doctoral dissertation, called *The Threads, Trends and Threats of the Wedding Dress*. My research-creation project is centered on the collaboration of nineteen women living in Montreal who guided the artistic transformation of wedding dresses. Involving textiles, photographs, text and the body, this work explores the different understandings women have about marriage and the roles that personal experiences and social norms play in shaping their identity. It combines diverse methods of inquiry such as participatory visual research, ethnography and collaborative art practices

to examine, respond and resist to the way bridal fashion participates in the creation of female stereotypes and contributes to the definition of feminine identities.

The idea of creatively transforming a series of wedding dresses occurred to me as a response to the “Trash the Dress” phenomenon when I was pursuing a PhD in Art Education at Concordia University. This relatively new and increasingly popular wedding photography practice shows brides wearing their white dress in an environment outside of the traditional wedding context, damaging or destroying it, or even exposing themselves during the photo session, at times tak-

ing part in situations in which they became vulnerable, or even abused by their grooms¹. This cultural phenomenon is just now beginning to attract the attention of theorists, scholars and artists (White, 2012).

While fashion has traditionally been a repressive form of gender identity that reinforces heteronormative femininity, this research-creation work intends to create alternative clothing styles to promote the construction of flexible identities and to oppose cultural expectations of women's roles (Crane, 2000). More than adopting heteronormalizing behaviours through dress, or trashing a gown without proposing a constructive alternative, my participants and I creatively generated diversity and change (Crane, 2000; Kawamura, 2011). Instead of allowing these white dresses to constrain our identities – like traditional wedding gowns do – this project allowed us to actively transform them to collaboratively resist their oppressive expectations about our sexuality, femininity and behaviour (Crane, 2000).

The idea of including diverse voices seemed an effective way of responding to the heteronormative connotations of bridal fashion. I decided to develop this research-creation project in collaboration with other women I already knew, exploring and resisting together the gender-based violence I believe “Trash the Dress” supports. Friendship functioned as an effective creative method that allowed participants to interact in meaningful and open ways (Harris, 2002; Tillmann, 2015), empowering us to challenge normative and constraining social practices in forms that were significant for us.

This project involved each participant choosing a wedding dress (which I had originally bought in second-hand shops), coming up with ideas for its transformation, carrying those ideas out, participating in a photo shoot and an art exhibition, and finally writing about the whole process. By incorporating my participants' experiences through visual, material, performative and verbal explorations, this project allowed us to develop new understandings and awareness about the connection of fashion and popular visual culture to the ways women learn and generate meaning. Together we examined, exposed and challenged heteronormative norms enforced by bridal fashion, generating alternative, subversive, provocative and meaningful interpretations of what romantic love means today for many women. Love, more than a romantic relationship between two individuals, in this project involved community, collaboration, support and inclusion. We expanded the concept of love, embracing equality, freedom and resistance (Freire, 1973; hooks, 2000; Ingraham, 2008). The participating women not only revised their close relationships, but also developed meaningful interactions among themselves as a strategy to collaboratively create and perform knowledge in ways that allow for compassion, awareness and humanization through art education.

The transformed wedding dresses, photographs and responses of my participants are analyzed in detail in my dissertation, written under the supervision of Dr Kathleen Vaughan (Ezcurra, 2016). This text, however, is focused on the process of imagining, cre-

¹ See: www.trashthedress.com



Figure 1. The Threads, Trends and Threats of the Wedding Dress. Final Pictures.

Collaborators: Anne Pilon, Carmen Giménez Cacho, Claudia Vega, Daniela Ortiz, Denisse Horcasitas, Des, Flavia Hevia, Gen, Gina, Jessie, Lee Lapaix, Nati Vega, Norma Vite, Rosa, Tina and Zacy. Photos by Enrique Uranga and Jaqueline Fortson, 2013.

ating, performing and documenting my own wedding dress. I made a gown intending to integrate my professional and my personal lives: as an artist and academic, as a wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend, and as an immigrant Latin American woman in Canada. The fact that it was part of a doctoral research-creation project made it feel quite challenging. Despite my extensive experience as a professional artist, it meant producing something that was not only creative, but also academically successful and pedagogically effective, all while retaining a certain degree of honesty and enjoyment.

When I critically revised my feelings about marriage for this project, I was not surprised to discover that they are complex and varied. Giving form to these ambiguous ideas was not easy, but I finally decided to make a multi-fabric dress, conformed by many fragments. I wanted it to reflect my conflicting but still complementing identities, reflecting my experience in a relationship while also considering marriage as a social phenomenon. Instead of transforming a wedding gown as was originally planned, I chose to create an entirely new dress from several different white garments. Mediating between my body and the social world, my mixed gown validates my different experiences and reflects diverse understandings.

For making my dress, I needed to choose the fabric, measure and cut it, sew it together and try it on before applying the finishing touches for taking the picture. Its production process and underlying concepts are implied in the final piece. This gown – like all the dresses made for this project – can be examined through various critical approaches: from its formal or material components, or based on

its cultural or social context, or considering its deeply personal implications. For the purposes of this text, I am revisiting the material and technical process of making my dress in relation to the symbolic, personal and conceptual elements that it conveys (Rose, 2011).

The Fabric

I used many garments to make my wedding dress, representing the several different aspects that conform and shape my identity as a woman. I chose to make it white, a traditional colour for the bride to wear. Aware of the notions of exclusivity and white heterosexual privilege that this color involves (Ingraham, 2008), I created instead an inclusive fabric made of dozens of clothes. This cloth conformed my dress's long and wide train, displaying an exciting variety of tones, shades, thicknesses, textures and patterns. Initially, I looked for white clothes that my family and I were not using anymore. It was important to me that I include not only my own clothes but also theirs, to symbolically represent my partner and children in the piece. I also asked my friends to donate any white garments that they were no longer using. Finally,



Figure 2. Sketching my dress, 2012. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.

I bought the rest of the clothes in second-hand stores, along with used wedding dresses for my participants to transform. All these garments allowed me to shape my many identities through clothing and also to acknowledge others in my own dress. While my family

has a central position in this piece, consideration is also given to people I do not know, but who are part of my lived experience and affect it somehow, so as to understand the interweaved circumstances in which our identities are formed.

The Pattern

I started working on my dress from the top, with a white blouse that I chose from my wardrobe for this project. It became both the physical and conceptual support of the whole gown. It would be the base of my identity by holding the other pieces together around my body: A T-shirt from my partner, a jersey from my son and a dress from my daughter. These garments formed a skirt around my body, shaping and protecting me while symbolizing the important place that they have in my life. I continued working on the train, sewing together the dozens of garments I had bought for this piece. This process required a lot of work and time, and was concluded when I stitched together eighteen long-sleeved shirts in the train's last row, representing the other participants in this project. The process of sewing these clothes together was parallel to the act of thinking. It allowed me to make meaningful connections between past and present; art, academy and life; collectivity and individuality; private and public; art and research; concepts and experience; and many other ideas.



Figure 3. Sketching my research through dress, 2012. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.



Figure 4. Wedding dresses bought in second-hand shops for this project, 2012. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.



Figure 5. My dress pattern, 2012. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.

The Stitches

I worked on my dress alternatingly over a six-month period while also undertaking the transformation of other participants' gowns. I started with provisional stitches made by hand and finished with the more permanent darns of the sewing machine. Stitching together the garments was not only a creative process but also a material and formal investigation. It became a contemplative activity and a meditative process. The stitches connected my ideas together, materializing my thoughts about, and in, the cloth. The thread merged the individuality of each garment into a collective fabric. Stitching became an imaginative and constructive act that brought together different concepts to create something new. In this sense, sewing became an effective pedagogic process to experience the creative and transformative possibilities of our own identities (Springgay, 2004). I like to think that I shaped my dress based on my life experiences,



Figure 6. Some of the books that informed my research, 2014. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.



Figure 7. Creating my wedding dress, 2012. Photo by Pedro Orozco.



Figure 8. Sewing my dress together, 2012. Photo by Pedro Orozco.

using a needle to write my thoughts onto the fabric of my dress while stitching my ideas and experiences together in my doctoral dissertation to develop new insights.

The Try-On

During the process of creating my white dress I had to try it on several times to be sure it fitted me well. I experienced its textures, shape and weight on my own body, both by sewing and wearing it. When it was finished, I had to try it on in a park, as my home was too small for its long train. While it seemed smaller than I had envisioned, the different patterns composing the fabric looked beautiful. It felt good on my body, too. However, walking was made difficult by the dress's large and heavy train. I had to pull hard, walking cautiously but firmly in order to advance. I could feel the dozens of garments composing the train pulling me, and on a few occasions it almost made me fall back. The train was as heavy and restrictive as the heteronormative and patriarchal social pressures placed by marriage on women. It made me think about some feminists who have historically used specific garments to reproduce, challenge, reject, or question restraining gender roles (Dekel, 2011), and about all the possibilities it offered.

The Picture

A component of the project was the creation and exhibition of a photograph of each participating woman wearing her transformed wedding dress (sometimes with their partners or families). Besides the pictures I took of the whole process, I hired a professional photographer to take a formal series of photos at Concordia University's Loyola Chapel. We carefully selected a place in the chapel



Figure 9. Trying my finished dress on for the first time, Summer 2012.
Photo by Pedro Orozco.



Figure 10. Wearing my dress for the second photographic session in fall, 2012. Photo by Jacqueline Fortson.

to enhance and distinguish the concept carried by each participant's dress. Because of my gown's large dimensions, I chose an open space at the center of the chapel for my shoot.

Initially, I did not consider my family's inclusion in the photograph, as I had symbolically incorporated them into the dress through their clothes. However, before the final photo shoot my six-year-old daughter questioned my choice of posing for the photograph alone. Her observation had a deep impact on my approach to this project, as it made me realize the degree to which I value her input (and by extension, that of my partner and my son, too). Accordingly, I decided that such an important aspect of my daily life should play an equally significant part in



Figure 11. Wearing my dress with my family at Loyola Chapel, 2013. Photo by Enrique Uranga.

this project and decided to incorporate them into the dress itself during the photo shoot. Their physical involvement and active collaboration in this project was a more accurate representation of my marital experience.

In the picture that represents me in this project, I am placed at the front of the frame, and my dress' train extends behind me, supported by my partner at the end, my son on the right and my daughter on the left. Like me, they are all embedded in the fabric of the dress, having placed their heads and arms through the garment's openings. We are held together by this multi-fabric. It gives us structure and it shelters us, but we are not trapped by it. More than a wedding picture, I see this image as a family portrait.

The Multiple Fabrics of My Dress

I see numerous and flexible interpretations regarding the way in which the wedding dress I made for this project helped me to generate learning experiences related to my personal and social circumstances as a woman. My white gown embraces my diverse identities, considering my conflicting experiences as an artist in the academy, as an immigrant in Montreal, as a partner and a mother. Responding to "Trash the Dress," it questions the concept of bridehood itself. My dress reflects the burden that traditions such as weddings can become for some individuals, while also considering the possibilities they offer if we creatively transform them into a more inclusive and diverse practice. Moreover, my dress not only speaks about my experience in marriage, but becomes an embodied experience in itself. With my body covered and restricted by a heavy social fabric, I simultaneously expose and confront the connotations that the tradi-

tional white wedding dress upholds in many women's lives. More than reinforcing ideals of female purity, objectification, beauty norms and heterosexuality commonly promoted by the wedding dress (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2002), all the different clothes that constitute the fabric of my dress shape my identity as ambiguous, fragmented, heterogeneous, fluid and even contradictory, challenging traditional cultural values (Crane, 2000; Kawamura, 2011). My dress shapes my identity as a woman, not by passively accepting institutional heteronormativity but by actively creating and embodying my own lived experience while considering others.

My wedding dress also functions as a metaphor for the whole *The Threads, Trends and Threats of the Wedding Dress* project, as it incorporates personal garments into a social fabric that re-signifies them while keep-

ing their individual identities. This research-creation project allowed women to transform a wedding dress to explore and embody their understanding of marriage and love, generating new knowledge and validating their ways of knowing. Wedding dresses function in this work as a participatory visual research methodology through which we disclosed significant information about the wearer and the culture in which she lives (Rose, 2011). Rather than as just a concept, white gowns function as a lived experience (Weber & Mitchell, 2004). Moreover, by involving participatory and collaborative art practices, this work allowed us to produce an experiential form of knowledge that was dependent on the participants' unique understandings and exchanges (Kester, 2011). We created art while participating in it. This creative collaboration was pedagogical because it functioned not



Figure 12. Final Exhibition of the pictures printed on silk, at the Maison de la culture de Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Montreal, Quebec. Photo by Maria Ezcurra.

only as an instructive but as a constructive practice too (Helguera, 2011). Together, my participants and I thought about the quality of the marital relationships we were exploring while enjoying the process of creating new human connections (Bishop, 2011). The participants felt protected, and even empowered, by taking part in this art-research project not only as a group of women, but a group of friends. Together we creatively participated in the construction, interpretation and change of our own personal and social realities produced through dress artworks that functioned as educational strategies to resist gender inequity.

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BEGINNING IN THE MIDDLE: MY LIMINAL SPACE OF ‘MA’: 間

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...understanding our identities as teachers... [is] not so much in our presences; rather, our identities, who we are... [is] ongoing effects of our becomings in difference.... – Ted Tetsuo Aoki (Aoki in Pinar & Irwin, 2005, p. 205)

Appreciating my Japanese culture I value the creation of tensions and conflicts in my ongoing contemplation of this question: What do my creative acts do? Carl Leggo (2011) has been asking such an important question through his poetic and creative inquiry. Throughout my arts-based research, I am examining how I encounter obstacles in relation to dialogic relationships with others. I have come to understand that each experi-

ence of trust and distrust may be metaphorically represented as my own tsunami as I re-examine the meaning of life, personal values and humanity. In doing so I am learning from the differences that may exist between others and myself as I embark upon PhD research. This visual essay is presented as a storybook informing my a/r/tographic practice as an artist, poet, researcher and teacher.

I am continuously searching for my identity that resides somewhere between Japan and Canada. I was born and raised in Japan and have lived in Canada for my adult life. As a child I was always interested in art or anything creative such as painting, drawing and writing to release pain and hardships. How I talked with my parents, friends

and their parents, schoolteachers, sports-club coaches, doctors, store clerks, waitresses, master artists and strangers on the streets was precisely differentiated with my choice of vocabulary, grammar structure, facial expression, tone of voice, body gesture, mannerism, eye contact and most importantly “ma”: 間 in Japanese that gives unspoken acknowledgement that we understand each other’s social position (status, situations, feelings, thoughts, etc...). To me, “ma”: 間 is a Japanese concept of being and becoming, existing inbetween (without an hyphen) many spaces we experience in our lives.

Creative acts were a daily ritual to help nurture my soul and assure my existence in this world of “ma”: 間. I wrote poetry and stories in Japanese all the time and presented them in front of friends and family. I was shy to speak up in class but was not afraid to read my essay when teachers asked me to. Creative acts helped me to connect with people positively. This was especially important as I worried about my mother’s critical heart condition. Art helped me find my way between my reality and my imagination. I did not understand how important my mother language “Japanese” was in influencing my creativity until I came to Canada where I unfortunately lost my confidence while learning English. My undergraduate study was extremely difficult. I constantly heard criticisms based on Western contemporary art practice and views. It was painful for me as I tried to create anything until I realized that I could not assimilate. At the same time, I was helping undergraduate students learn Japanese language through conversation at a local college. I found some confidence in this educational role.

During my undergraduate struggles, I held an art exhibition based on my poetry.

This led to further art exhibitions and more poetry focusing on my inner emotions. Indeed, I had five exhibitions entitled Caught in the Middle in various venues at The University of British Columbia (UBC). At each exhibition, I included poetry, paintings, and photography yet I also started to cut people’s hair as a haircut performance. As a certified hair stylist in Japan and Canada, my haircut performance helped me to situate myself as an artist performing with haircut volunteers and the audience. As a professional stylist, I was comfortable performing in front of others, and I was also comfortable choosing hairstyles for the volunteers who trusted me to cut their hair. We did not rehearse, discuss or negotiate any styles in advance. Instead, we studied trust together: inquiring into how, why and what we trusted about each other when one person has the obvious power to cut hair the way they want without the receiver’s knowledge. These haircut performances helped me negotiate the Western academy as well as my daily relationships.

As I gained confidence in my artistic expression, I was again hit by my own tsunami. Japan was hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 11, 2011. At the time, I was about to finish my undergraduate study and everything I was doing to gain confidence in a Western art academy became unimportant because of the pain I felt in my heart and mind. Gathering information online only aggravated my anxiety. I embraced my internal sense of responsibility as an artist and organized fundraising events with thousands of people coming together. I was making my next step toward realizing how to use my skills and creative mind for society’s betterment.

During my master's study, my supervisor, Rita L. Irwin, introduced me to a/r/tography. This is where I re-examined my past haircut performances and realized I was still searching for ways to understand how, why and what I trust in other people. More importantly, I realized I was searching for my own identity in the middle of everything. My experience of writing my own stories in my thesis was truly a healing moment in my life. Now as a doctoral student, artist, poet, researcher and language teacher, I am continuing my journey to use my creative energy to connect with people who are suffering, struggling and fighting for their rights.

In the reminder of this chapter, I share examples of my visual and poetic journey with artistic research beginning in my undergraduate studies, through my master's degree and now in my doctoral program. Perceived as an ongoing and unfolding repertoire, I refer to this as the *Being and Becoming Exhibition*. In this exhibition, there are two collections, Section 1: "Caught in the Middle" Collection and Section 2: "Beginning in the Middle" Collection. In Section 1, I included some of the works I created and showed in public during my undergraduate studies. They were all created as I was examining my identity in Canada. In Section 2, I am including a performance piece I created as I moved into my doctoral studies. Whereas in my earlier studies when I felt isolated and insecure, by the time I began my doctoral studies I was stronger and clearer about my own identity. I have come to appreciate how we are all different and may have different ideas. I am feeling more secure with my own ideas. This is why I named Section 2 "Beginning in the Middle." I hope to extend my

research to work with others as I examine identity, trust and reciprocal relationships.

Section 1: Caught in the Middle Collection

Each time I paint or take photos, I strive to communicate my vision. In the first combined image below, I join together the beauty of an egg with the beauty of an egg-based meal. I remember the day the sun was shining in my kitchen window when I conceptualized this piece – when I felt caught in the middle. All of the images in this section underscore my feelings of feeling caught in the middle as a Japanese Canadian artist-scholar-educator during my undergraduate and master's degree programs.



Figure 1. *Caught in the Middle*, 2009, Postcard.

The poetry, $3=1$ is my way of living. It does not make sense to many people or it is too ambiguous to most people yet my sense of the number "3" is clearly representing who I am evolving into. Since I was small, I loved

the number “3.” I see the color yellow when I see the number “3” in other words, if “3” is written in red, I feel unsure if that color is the right choice for “3” and I thought everyone thinks the same until I discovered differently. I never spoke about this to strangers until now.

When I was in an elementary student my parents decided to call me by a different name “Yoriko.” In Japan, we usually do not have a middle name, but I had “Yoriko” as my unofficial middle name. In the poem *3=1*, I am exploring how my identities shift according to the names attributed to me.

3=1

[Takako (Yoriko) Gillard]

You and I
First was you
Second then I
Third is us
Emergence
Sense of one
Origin of sense
inside
belonging
truth
invisible
desire of all
beginning of middle

(2009)

In the next three works of art I explore a triptych that incorporates my poetry nested between two images that express my liminal, 'ma' 間.



Figure 2. *Self-portrait (1)*, 2010, Installation.¹

Self-

sunlight slips into blinked eyes
capture my sense of existence
I hide behind the light

my sense of existence
stays in daily momentum
a reciprocated world

the corner of the gallery full of
Duchamp
allows me to speak out loud

an ironing board full of concepts
burning sent on my white shirts
stays forever or not

a letter 'A', a symbol appears

I take my hats off to rest my mind
so as my sun umbrella protects me

I see my future in a frame
hiding a water jug

It is empty

nothing exists quite the same
without the sun
creation of grays, we command

inside out of the gallery space
e domestically placed in the center
of attention

I am an imaginator

Self-portrait
my sense of belonging in the world
with the light created
by the shadows
in my liminal space

¹ Presented at art events: "ART" and Caught in the Middle, AMS Gallery UBC, 2010.

portrait

sunlight slips into blinked eyes
capture my sense of existence
I hide behind the light

my sense of existence
stays in daily momentum
a reciprocated world

the corner of the gallery full of
Duchamp
allows me to speak out loud

an ironing board full of concepts
burning sent on my white shirts
stays forever or not

a letter 'A', a symbol appears

I take my hats off to rest my mind
so as my sun umbrella protects me

I see my future in a frame
hiding a water jug

It is empty

nothing exists quite the same
without the sun
creation of grays, we command

inside out of the gallery space
where domestically placed in the center
of attention

I am an imaginator

Self-portrait
is my sense of belonging in the world
with the light created
by the shadows
in my liminal space

(Reflection of Self-portrait, 2017)



Figure 3. *Self-portrait (2)*, Installation.

The original black and white photo of *Caught in the Middle* (2009) was taken at the Nitobe Garden, UBC, while I was searching for my identity during my undergraduate study. The reflection of the Japanese garden in the pond included the tall trees that are not usually found in a Japanese garden in Japan. It felt odd to see this combination. So, I thought about placing this photo as an upside down portrait of my identity: a Japanese immigrant trying to fit into a Canadian environment. During my graduate program, I then recreated the image through a tiny hole I made in a piece of paper to peek in as if I were looking back at myself as an artist considering my identity.

In 2010, I cut eight participants' (strangers) hair during my conceptual performance ART and gathered the cut hair and presented it at my exhibition, *Caught in the Middle* (2010) at the Alma Mater Society (AMS) Gallery UBC. This performance taught me reciprocal trusting relationships exist, even among strangers.

The cut hair from *Intercultural ART* (2010) was kept in a brown paper bag at my home. I forgot about it for about one year. When I opened the bag in 2011, it had acquired a natural looking form; marbled with different shade of hairs from international participants (see below). I did not need to alter it in any way to make it more presentable because it was already beautiful. The first impression I had was "oh, wow...look at this!" I thought it looked like a fetus. So then I called it a *Cross-cultural sculpture: New Born*. This sculpture was exhibited at the Asian Library, Asian Center (2011), AHVA Graduation Exhibition (2011) and the *Explore Asian*



Figure 4. Portrait of Me, 2012, Digital Photo. (Original: *Caught in the Middle*, 2009, B/W film photo).



Figure 5. *Intercultural ART*, 2010, Installation.



Figure 6. Cross-cultural sculpture, 'New Born,' 2011, Sculpture.

Art Exhibition (2011) at the Department of Asian Studies, UBC before I put it back in the paper bag for future opportunities.

Section 2: Beginning in the Middle Collection

In this section I move to my current work as a PhD student. All of my previous work informs where I am today. The Figure 5 image was recently selected for the poster of the Margin is the Center, 39th Annual AHVA (The Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory) Graduate Symposium + Exhibition (2016). This was a conceptual haircut performance I performed at The AHVA Gallery, Audain Art Centre, UBC (see below). Participants were willing to allow me to cut their hair without speaking a word. They trusted my skill as I gave each one a different haircut.

Feelings of trust grow as we make an effort to understand each other's differences and perspectives. Ted T. Aoki's work has guided me to appreciate my own liminal space where I can enjoy both Japanese and Canadian perspectives. In this space, I have encountered a life that exists inbetween two languages and two cultures, Japanese and English: both are a source of creative thought especially when I communicate with others. "...learning a second language has been an entering into the strange world of unfamiliarity. Gradually, the new language sheds its unfamiliarity as I see more deeply into another perspective of the world and see with new eyes an already familiar world" (Aoki, 1987/2005, p. 243).

My educational journey in Canada did not start very easily and yet now I am an artist, a researcher, and a teacher. Carl Leggo, my mentor and PhD supervisor always reminds me to appreciate who I am and who I am becoming. In 2013 and 2016, I visited, listened and cried with people who were suffering from the tragic event, after the Great East Japan Earthquake and the radiation problem in Fukushima. In the spring of 2017, I became a research assistant at Nikkei National Museum (Landscapes of Injustice), and since that time I have been researching about the dark history of Japanese Canadians during 1942–9 when they lost their Canadian identity due to the Second World War. I listen to what is written in many letters and documents in Japanese and cry. These are some of my current research topics that help me to learn what I can do to contribute in society through my doctoral studies.

Who we are, who we believe we are and who we want to become, often differs. Our



Figure 7. Beginning in the Middle (1) 2016, Conceptual performance & installation.



Figure 8. Beginning in the Middle (2) 2016, Conceptual performance & installation.

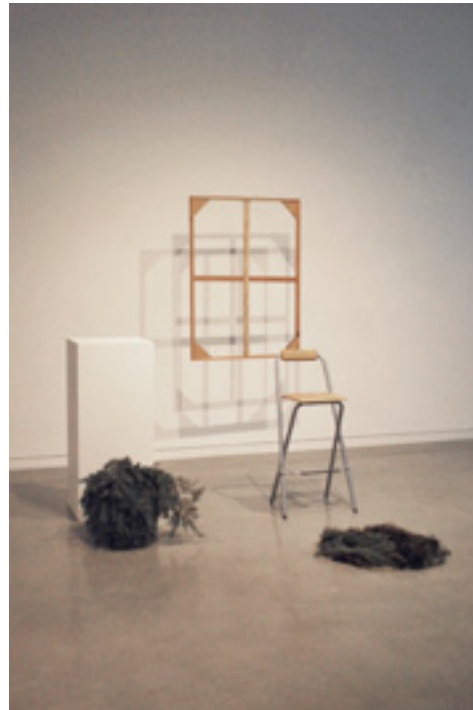


Figure 9. Beginning in the Middle (3) 2016, Conceptual performance & installation.

identities are a continuum of journeys of being and becoming as Aoki teaches. How, why and what should I trust within me and others is my lifetime educational journey of trust. This ought not be a question to answer:

instead, it is about relating to one another as we contemplate our differences and learn from one another. As a PhD candidate, I am beginning in the middle.

脳裏に潜在し得る他者との関わり方

自分が自分じゃなくなる。

自分を信じられなくなる程辛い瞬間が生きている間には幾度もある。

どうして取り戻せばいいのだろう…

脳裏を駆け巡る記憶に涙腺が緩んだ瞬間、少しだけ自分が取り戻される。

全ては自分の中の記憶が他者との関わりの中で高揚する感情に溺れる瞬間である。

脳の働きが尋常でない感情を左右する瞬間に他者との相違に意味を見出す。

自分が戻り始める。

ゆっくりとそして確実にその色を持ち得ながら…

そして自分が自分である事を感じる瞬間に私は声を上げて泣くのである。

Reciprocity of minds between self and others

Losing myself...

Becoming insecure in a moment of countless obstacles I experience in my life.

How can I gain back my trust to become confident with who I am...

The past tells me the meanings of incidents in my life...tears fall to catch my lost mind.

I can catch myself in a slight moment when my mind and senses

emerge with conflicts of perceptions with others.

I am coming back slowly and surely with some colours that only I can see perhaps...

The moment I feel myself as who I am becoming, I cry out loud in public.

(Gillard, 2013; 2017)

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CONVERSATION AS MEDIUM: MAPPING OUT INTERVIEWS WITH CANADIAN ARTISTS

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From Individual to Network

Over the course of the past two years, I travelled across Canada interviewing over 125 painters in their studios. Through in depth interviews with artists about their artwork, process and communities, and exploration of the studios through photograph documentation, my doctoral research examines the following question: What ways of learning, knowing and meaning-making are generated within the studios of practicing artists as they engage with research, art making and a community of artists? In this chapter I draw from several interviews with artists to propose, firstly, that conversation, which happens both verbally, and

non-verbally (through interaction with the art work and studio space) is a creative act in itself. Secondly, I propose, that mapping as a metaphor may be applied to both the art making processes described by artists, and to the analysis of my research methods. This mapping process allows for the open-ended, emergent and non-linear qualities of both art making and conversation.

I recently met for a studio visit with artist Cliff Eyland in Winnipeg. Eyland gave me a small painting he had made on a 3" x 5" inch wood panel (Figure 1). I carried that small painting, an image of a figure, with me across the country in my suitcase. Over the course of his career Eyland has made thousands of

these tiny paintings. Upon arriving at my final destination, Halifax, on the east coast, I went to see an installation of Eyland's work, over 6,000 paintings, in the downtown Halifax public library (Figure 2). The small paintings depict figures, landscapes, abstractions as well as old library index cards (alluded to by the size of the paintings). I thought about a time when I used those index cards to search books, before it went first to microfiche, then to digital, and I thought about searching through libraries for one book and often stumbling upon something unexpected. Upon looking at the library installation, it was hard to tell whether it was a clearly planned layout, making deliberate connections between each small image, or whether it was done in a random way, allowing the viewer to find the connections. As I scanned the wall of images, my eyes went to one section. Close together on the wall were two replications of index cards; on one it read "painters, Canadian" and on another it read "Oral History." Looking at this section of the wall installation, I thought, perhaps that section was telling the story of my doctoral research.

As I finished my interviews and I started to sift through the hundreds of hours of interviews and thousands of photographs, I thought back to Eyland's dynamic installation. Going from receiving that one art piece in our individual interview to viewing 6,000



Figure 1. Painting given to me by Cliff Eyland, Winnipeg, June, 2015. Photo by Alison Shields.

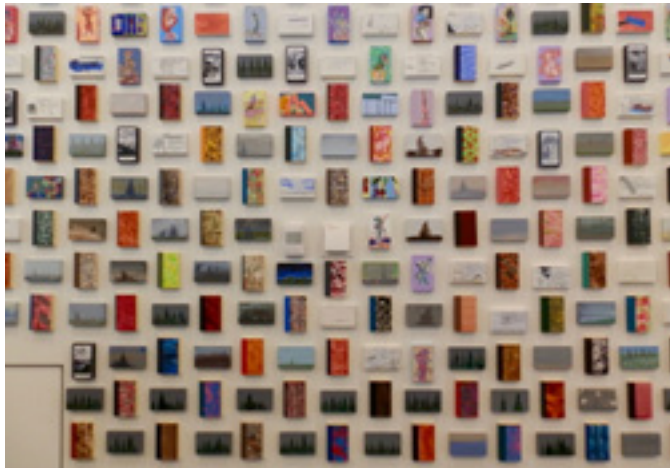


Figure 2. Installation by Cliff Eyland, Halifax Central Library. Photo taken by Alison Shields, November, 2015.

paintings, from a one-on-one conversation to drawing connections between 125 conversations, I see my process of coming to understand this art installation as paralleling my research process. I draw from two quotes from artists I met to exemplify this comparison. In one interview, Vancouver-based emerging artist, Rebecca Brewer ponders the personal, experiential process of painting and states: “Maybe something that comes up in painting is that the radicality is in the person, and it’s in the personal. So there is something completely personal about not only making a painting, but looking at a painting” (personal communication, June 4, 2015). Monica Tap, on the other hand, emphasizes the ongoing web of conversations in which each artist is involved:

These paintings are phrases that are uttered, they are parts of a conversation that extends beyond us. It’s not just the conversation you have with a canvas, but it’s the conversation that came before it that allows the painting to exist. This painting may help to move the conversation forward and it might just be in a tiny way, but it doesn’t exist on its own. (personal communication, July 30, 2014)

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to my analysis of my doctoral research. Drawing from the art making process described by artists with whom I met, I examine the relationship between art making and interview research methods. Through doing so, I propose that the interview (referred to as a conversation) is an artistic medium. If the interview is a medium, then what does it create? I propose that the interviews come together

to produce a map-like web of conversations, one that creates new conversations between artists, art works and research methods.

Conversation as Medium: At the Intersection of the Interview and Artistic Research

Professor of Creative Arts at Deakin University in Australia, Estelle Barrett (2010), argues that we need to continue to find ways to discuss research that emerges through artistic practices. She questions simply applying research methodologies from other disciplines to artistic research as being potentially reductive and not allowing for the generative ways of knowing that emerge through art making. As an artist coming from a fine arts background, I entered into my doctoral work in education from an artistic research perspective. Taking on social science research methodologies, I still approached my research from my artistic lens. In response to Barrett’s concern that methods drawn from other disciplines are being applied to artistic research methods, I ask whether the reverse is possible. I wonder, what happens when we apply artistic research approaches to social science methods – in this case, interview methodologies?

Gubrium and Holstein (2003) describe an “active interview” as a dynamic meaning-making process, where meaning is constructed through the active dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee. As such the interview is a social encounter that constructs and generates knowledge throughout the process. Their examination of the interview process allowed me to view the interview anew, as a creative act that is constructed through the process.

As I entered each studio and began talking to the artist and exploring the space, several conversations emerged (both verbal and non-verbal): conversations between me and each artist; conversations between me and the studio space; conversations between me and their paintings; conversations between paintings; and conversations between an artist and their painting. As the research continued and I visited more artists, the conversations expanded beyond the walls of each studio, and I began to see connections between the artists, between their paintings, and thus, conversations between artists. Throughout my research trip, the term conversation opened up more and more until I realized that an analysis of conversation was at the core of my research interests. How is conversation an essential component of art making? How might conversation be a medium in and of itself? And how does conversation create a connection between my artistic research methods and my understandings of social science interview methods? I apply the map as a metaphor to describe the ways these conversations emerged through the studio visits and constantly formed new pathways of connections.

Research as a Form of Mapping: From Getting Lost to Making Connections

In a project through the Visual Intelligence Research Project at Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Art in 2004, artist and professor Rebecca Fortnum (2009) studied the creative processes of visual artists. Through her interviews with artists, she found that a sense of discovery and a search for the unexpected was a dominant drive for art making. In my research, I sought to similarly

understand the creative process of artists, specifically focusing on painters. Furthermore, through studio visits, the interviews involved interacting not just with artists, but also with their art works and the studio space, and through examining their work I was able to map out several trails of the artists' thinking process. On my research journey, several artists described the art making process as research or inquiry that reveals more questions than answers or that seeks out impossible questions. Another artist stated that artists do not solve problems, they create problems that they cannot solve. Others described it as an experiment, while others described how a project often begins by stumbling across a book or an image or an article at random, and following it in a new direction, or discovering connections between seemingly disparate interests.

Montreal-based artist, Dil Hildebrand described painting as an infinite game and an ongoing process of getting lost:

It's like a walk in the wilderness where you don't know where you're going and every decision is based on what's there right now. It's not based on a map that gets you to where you are going. I don't have a map. I'm just walking through the woods and making decisions. There are problems with that because sometimes you do get lost. I get lost each and every time. (personal communication, August, 25, 2014)

Janet Werner (Figure 3) similarly talked about the connection between getting lost and creativity: "Ultimately you always learn from that experience of being lost, because otherwise



Figure 3. Janet Werner's studio, Montreal, September, 2014.
Photo by Alison Shields.



Figure 4. Carly Butler's studio, Halifax, November, 2015.
Photo by Alison Shields.

how are you going to find yourself. I think of the creative process like digging a hole and having to find your way out of it" (personal communication, August, 26, 2014). Lather (2007) analyzes research methodologies in social science and affirms the importance of not-knowing: "Undecidability becomes not the last word, but the first in making room for something else to come about" (p. 7). In describing the importance of "getting lost" in research, Lather challenges traditional notions of research that emphasize control and mastery. She opens up a conversation around research that embraces failure, unknowing and multiplicities of meaning.

Halifax-based artist Carly Butler (Figure 4) has devoted her art making career to notions of getting lost as she researches stories of sailors lost at sea and invests in nautical tools to exemplify the idea of desperately trying to figure out where we are, while never actually knowing where we are. She described her fascination as romantic, while also being critical of these romanticized fantasies: "Being lost at sea in a life raft is the pinnacle – I've escaped from society and am somewhere no one's ever been, doing something no one's ever done" (personal communication, August 22, 2014). At the same time, she described her fascination with rules and warnings on lifeboats, the signs and symbols of sea life. Through this juxtaposition, she draws parallels between this sailing metaphor, art making and daily life. Figure 4 shows a collection of her navigational tools and an old article about her grandfather lost at sea. Connecting these ideas to Lather's discussions of getting lost, I would like to extend this metaphor into research methods.

Drawing from artistic ways of thinking and making, Anne West (2011) proposes

ways for artists to approach research and writing that aligns with creative processes. Using the map as a metaphor for creative thinking, she describes the route as nonlinear, unpredictable, dynamic and messy. With regards to art making, she depicts the map in the following ways:

Mapping organizes relevant bits of information and fragments from the imagination into some kind of structure, creating a synthesis that carries understanding...A map can be viewed in its entirety or in its details. Maps are enterable from any side. We make the map, and the map makes us. Maps are living sketches of us immersed in our work. They have the capacity to stir the imagination of others. Maps question and maps clarify. Everything on a map signifies, points out a direction, intent. The maps we generate are like eyes. They give us perspective. Maps embody a point of view, reflecting tone, bias, curiosity, focus, choice, intelligence, and scholarship. Maps establish connectivity. Maps reflect multi-layered relationships. (p. 6)

Travelling across Canada for my doctoral research was similarly a form of mapping. This map, however, is not a direct map that outlines one direction between here and there, but rather one with multiple possible directions. It is not a linear map which one follows through time, but rather forward or backward as connections are weaved together like a web. Professor of art education, Rita Irwin (2013), refers to cartography so as to describe the importance of the un-

known in art making, research and pedagogy. She states: “A map is not a tracing. It is about experimentation: altering, reversing, modifying, among individuals and groups, across time and space” (p. 211). Emphasizing movement, the body, relationships and the event, Irwin describes the rhizomatic connections made through mapping. Artist Sarah Trigg (2013) performed a similar journey into over two hundred artist studios. She said that her project revealed not a unified theory of artist practices, but rather a constellation of viewpoints (p. 13). I similarly view the map created throughout the project as a series of unique conversations. Within each of these conversations there is a map of each artist’s ways of thinking. However, as I continued on my journey, the map expanded beyond each artist’s own studio and situated each of these conversations within a larger map that spans across the country.

From Researching to Writing; Mapping Conversations

Art theorist, Simon O’Sullivan (2010) uses the term abstract machines to describe the network of connections and extensions produced by art. Rather than a linear production of knowledge, O’Sullivan argues that art making may more aptly produce a diagram that opens up in multiple directions. It allows for a continuous mixing up and reconnecting of ideas to create new connections, like a puzzle that has no final image, but can instead be continuously reconfigured to create multiple new formations. Art making therefore leads toward thoughts, ideas and meanings rather than simply illustrating them. Art educator and researcher, Charles Garoian (2008) similarly explains that art making as

research becomes an “improvisational disassembling, exchanging and re-assembling of images, ideas and objects in ways that they were not originally designed” (p. 221). As I travelled across Canada and explored the studio spaces, I began to see the studios as maps. The spaces contain remnants of old works next to new works, sketches, notes, piles of books, trinkets, which when examined closely are connected together by following trails of thinking that reveal connections through various juxtapositions. I view these juxtapositions as opening up conversations between ideas, and between images.

In my conversation with Toronto-based artist, James Gardner (Figure 5), he described a studio as a pressure cooker (personal communication, October 17, 2014). He talked about the many layers of influence, from the landscape that surrounds him, to paintings he’s seen, to magazines and billboards he passes on his way home. These images stay in his mind and become activated through painting in a process he refers to as transference (Figure 7). Hamilton-based artist Daniel Hutchinson used similar language to describe intuition: “It’s everything you’ve ever learned bubbling up in random

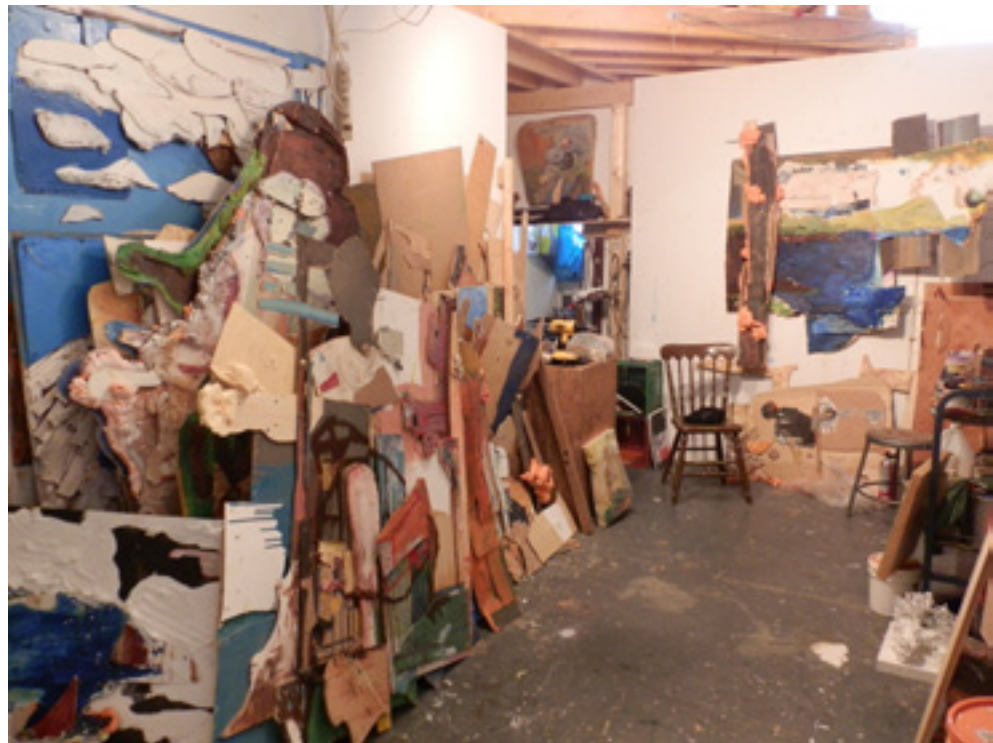


Figure 5. James Gardner's studio, Toronto, August, 2015. Photo by Alison Shields.

ways that you can't possibly understand. I imagine this kind of soup of stuff with this unimaginable depth of knowledge that I'm not fully conscious of" (personal communication, July 25, 2014). Hutchinson talked about his anxiety of overthinking influence, the anxiety of trying to figure out all the threads that come into one decision in the studio. These threads, form paths that merge together all the diverse and disparate influences and experiences into a web that highlights the complexity of the thinking process of art making.

Addressing how various ideas become connected together, Hamilton-based artist Andrea Kastner (Figures 6 and 7) compared her brain to a garbage truck: "You know when you see a garbage truck pull up and they throw the garbage in the back of it. Then the truck kind of mulches it, the thing comes down and all the bags break apart and all the garbage mixes together. And you have the old things and the new things and the important things and the not important things mixing together. That's how I picture my brain working" (personal communication, July 11, 2014). In our visit, Kastner showed me a photo of a house being pulled by a boat, images of old diapers, city scenes, piles of garbage and a mysterious letter that she found in a neighbour's garbage that she mistook for a connect-the-dots. She described the mournful moment when she attempted to connect the dots, and realized that it was not in fact an image, but was just a random assortment of points on a page. While unable to comprehend the meaning of this document, she held onto the letter and used the nonsensical assortment of lines and dots for a future painting. While a connect-the-dots has a pre-defined



Figure 6. Andrea Kastner's studio, Kamloops, July, 2014.
Photo taken by Alison Shields.



Figure 7. Andrea Kastner's studio, Kamloops, July, 2014.
Photo taken by Alison Shields.

image, that is completed through following the plan and connecting the dots, Kastner instead looked toward this assortment of dots and created a new unanticipated image, thus creating a new meaning. Figure 7 shows Kastner's painting that depicts a collage of imagery that reference the "connect-the-dot image," garbage and photo of a house pulled by a boat. Kastner's view of the connect-the-dots parallels my view of the map. I could similarly lay out my research journey and begin connecting the dots, in multiple assortments and juxtapositions, in a way that asks: What might these artists say to each other? These conversations may be pieced together in any variety of ways that reveal the mapping of an artist's thinking process through the trails left behind by their art making, or through drawing connections between the layers of conversations that emerged between artists' practices. I continue to connect the dots. Through doing so the conversations continue to remain active long after the painting is finished, long after the interview ends and long after I leave the studio.

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III

Entangling

entangle / in'taNGel, en/ v. [Also entangling, gerund or present participle] **1 a** To cause to be held in a tangle that impedes movement or extrication yet invites and involves in difficulties, doubtful undertakings, compromising relationships. **b** The mind-body-soul axes that make separation complicated, intricate, like nets that entangle, in an Edmund Burke-ian form, like the wings of a tender conscience. **c** A sublime resistance in intellectual seduction as a rupture of temporalities, events, interlacings a situatedness, intuitiveness, connectedness of conceptual spaces, in sharp relief post-post-post meshing, braiding, mingling .

RESEARCH TECHNIQUES
IN VISUAL A/R/TOGRAPHY:
VISUAL QUOTATIONS AND THEIR USES
IN PHOTO SERIES AND VISUAL AVERAGE

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Visual Quotations and Dissertations

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the potential of photographic-based research techniques in educational studies: Visual Quotations and their uses in Photo Series and Visual Average. The visual information is presented through nine figures from two PhD dissertations carried out at the University of Granada (Spain) in which digital color photographs were the main research technique. One dissertation explores the concept of visual identity of university students while comparing similarities and differences depending on professional perspectives such as lawyer, sportsman, economist, professor, and so on (Molinet-Medina,

2016). The second dissertation analyzes how future primary teachers and social educators comprehend urban planning among middle and lower working-class neighborhoods, in order to better understand how to interact with people who live in that environment (Genet-Verney, 2016). Both research projects combine photos made by the researcher and photos made by people engaged in the research process. Participants in both projects were students from the University of Granada, mainly from the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training. For the purposes of this chapter we are interested in highlighting the qualities of the photographic techniques for educational research.

A/r/tography and Visual A/r/tography

A/r/tography is a methodological approach that has provoked a wide variety of connections with very diverse artistic positions, educational approaches and disciplinary fields. A/r/tography is a métissage (Irwin, 2004) that has occurred in poetry, theater (Lea, Belliveau, Wager & Beck, 2011), visual arts (Irwin & Sinner, 2013) and across many artistic disciplines (Gouzouasis, Irwin, Miles, & Gordon, 2013; Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006). More recently, other perspectives have been explored including hauntology (Cloutier, 2016) and cartography (Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2017), among other hybrids. Visual A/r/tography is a very particular perspective that posits visual images are the fundamental center of educational, artistic and research proposals. Indeed, the two doctoral dissertations shared here use visual a/r/tography within the context of the Faculties of Education. The combined results show how the photographic techniques are a symbiosis between research and creation, in which, according to Truman and Springgay (2015), thought processes are perfectly intertwined with the techniques of creative practice.

Visual Quotations

Visual Quotation is used in many different disciplines, but mostly where visual images are data or fundamental elements of research such as art history (Brown & Feldman, 2014), cultural studies (Roei, 2017), and visual methods in social sciences (Banks, 2005). Some painters and visual artists have used this term to title their paintings and exhibitions (Kaphar, 2016). Although it is not a new technique, its use is also not widespread.

In verbal language the use and meaning of *quotation* is clear and normalized in academic writing, yet Visual Quotation is not well known. Simply, a Visual Quotation is any image that appears in a research report that has not been made by the author or by the participants in the research. Visual Quotation images resemble word-based quotations within a text. The decisive element is that an author repeats exactly the images previously made by another author:

Just as writers may quote the exact words of other writers in their text, modern artists have produced iconographic motifs by older artists in their work for various purposes by using direct and clearly recognizable visual quotations. Sometimes called artistic appropriation -albeit somewhat inaccurately- visual quotations generally take the form of overt allusions to well-known works of art or hegemonic aesthetic traditions in images by modern and contemporary artists. (Latorre, 2008, p. 37)

While visual or musical quotations may be broadly used in the arts they are not described in publication style guides (for example, APA 2010). In academic writing, special care is taken to follow style guide rules for written quotations, yet rules are not outlined for Visual Quotations.

Why should we use Visual Quotations? As academic work regularly uses quotations, we believe arts-based research projects should use visual quotations. As indicated by the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA), quotations are part of the structure and content of a research report



Figure 1. Genet-Verney, R. (2013). *Casería de Montijo suburb. Fit together*. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Tabuchi, 2005), left, and a digital photograph by author (2012), *Two houses*, right.

because they serve six functions: (i) to recognize the work of other professionals, (ii) to provide a reliable way to locate those works, (iii) to support our own ideas and conclusions, (iv) to justify the necessity of our research, (v) to show the landscape of theories in which our research is located, and (vi) to justify the investigational context where our research is situated (American Psychological Association, 2010, p. 37). All these functions are used with text based quotations and are

directly applicable to the needs of investigations with visual images. Yet to date, Visual Quotations have not been used in visual methodologies or visual arts-based methodologies. This situation produces a great contrast between the written portion of research reports and the visual portion of the same report. In the written part, many statements are usually supported by quotations, whereas the images are presented without any connections with previous or contemporaneous

images of other authors. This produces the sensation that images have appeared in the mind of the researcher or in the minds of people participating in the research, without any connection with other images. In philosophy there is a classic expression in Latin to refer to these processes of spontaneous generation: “Ex Nihilo,” which means “out of nothing.” We believe it would be interesting to overcome this “naïve” conception of visual thinking. Just as academic forms of

writing guarantee that our verbal thoughts are constructed together with the words and writings of other people, the absence of Visual Quotations suggests that visual thinking springs up spontaneously in each person’s imagination. There is no evidence to support this point of view. The images we imagine are necessarily based on those we have seen and known. In fact, one of the main tasks of history of art and art criticism is to discover the complex web of references and visual

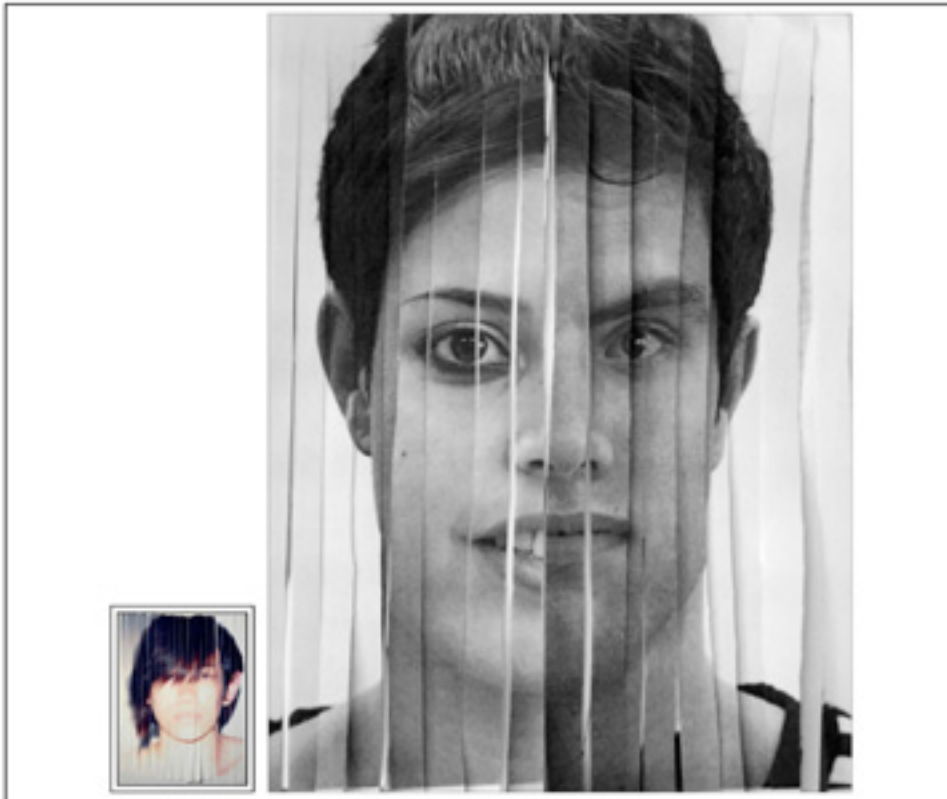


Figure 2. Molinet-Medina, X. (2014). *Identity interlaces after John Clang*. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Clang, 2009), left; and two digital photographs, Alba Garcia (2014) *Female Colleague I*, and by Pablo Lozano (2014) *Male Colleague I*, combined strip to strip, right.

backgrounds that, even in the case of the most innovative artistic movements and artists, explains these images.

It is possible that the absence of Visual Quotations contributes to the under valuation of the visual results of an investigation. The use of Visual Quotations could help to overcome the different consideration of written words and visual images in academic research papers. Using a Visual Quotation in a research report is as simple as reproducing the image cited within the report. The quotes in the written text do not appear isolated but introduce or comment on phrases written by the author. Therefore, Visual Quotations

should not appear isolated, as independent images, but rather, they should accompany visual images made by the author. To introduce text citations in a research report, one needs to use conventions whose purpose is to clearly differentiate the cited text from the words written by the author. There are APA rules about the number of words in a quotation as well as the typographical signals to distinguish the words cited. The main signals are: cursive letter, “quotation marks,” and “block quote.”

There are no generally accepted visual signal conventions that would differentiate a Visual Quotation. Layton-Jones (2008)



Figure 3. Genet-Verney, R. (2015). “Casería de Montijo” suburb. Windows and grilles. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Jimenez-Montano, 2011, p. 35), left; and a Photographic Series composed with thirty-four digital photographs by the social pedagogy students, right.

states that the lack of generally accepted standards on the use of Visual Quotation in academic writing inhibits their use by researchers, even in disciplines such as history of art and art criticism in which images, as visual evidence, is necessary. According to Layton-Jones, the lack of generally accepted standards on how to use the Visual Quotations and the restrictions on the maximum number of images normally accepted in research journals, are the main reasons to explain why the images continue to be considered merely as illustrations or as decoration in a research work. We suggest four basic ideas for the use of Visual Quotations:

- (i) In research reports that use visual methodologies or visual arts-based methodologies in which images made by the author or by the participants appear, the use of Visual Quotations should be recommended.
- (ii) Visual Quotations should not appear isolated, but directly connected with the images made by the author or the participants in the research.
- (iii) Visual Quotations should have a lower visual importance than the images made by the author or the participants.
- (iv) Visual Quotations must be clearly identified by some kind of visual device to ensure they are readily distinguishable from non-cited images.

Other decisions that we have adopted for Visual Quotations are of a more particular nature and could be adjusted to the specific

focus of each research report. The double-lined frame in the Visual Quotation is the equivalent of quotation marks or italics in texts. Just as in written text, the caption of images with Visual Quotations must explicitly state the author's surname, the year, and the page number if necessary, all in brackets. Then, in the References section, a complete reference of the image must be included.

Each of the nine images shown in this chapter includes a Visual Quotation. The preference was to display the Visual Quotation on the left side of the images, except in Figure 5 where the visual quotation appears at the bottom. There are two reasons behind this layout: firstly, the quotation should not occupy the most attractive visual area, thus it should not appear in the center or in the right side of the image; and secondly, according to the conventional reading order of Euro-American cultures, the Visual Quotation should come first as it is the origin or foundation of the whole image.

Figure 1 is composed with a Visual Quotation, on the left side of the image, and a photograph by Rafaele Genet-Verney on the right. The Visual Quotation reproduces a complete photograph of the French artist Eric Tabuchi (2005), who has developed an extensive work on architectures and cities.¹

The photography by Tabuchi visually combines vehicles and buildings in the contemporary cityscape. By matching vertical and horizontal lines of trucks and facades, the author manages to unify vehicles and architecture as pieces of the same urban machine. Rafaele Genet-Verney has used this same visual concept for photographing the

¹ www.erictabuchi.net



Figure 4. Molinet-Medina, X. (2015). *University student groups*. Photo essay composed with a Fragment Visual Quotation (Versluis & Uyttenbroek, 2014), left, and a Photographic Series composed with 36 digital photographs by the author, right.

neighborhood named “Casera de Montijo” in the northwestern edge of the city of Granada. In her photography, the corners of the old white house exactly match those of the cement and brick building, both seem to fit perfectly. The wild plants around the rural house reinforce the surprising combination.

Rafaele Genet-Verney focused her photographs on that neighborhood because an important part of her empirical fieldwork took place there with her students. One of the main features of this neighborhood is the urbanization and construction of large apartment buildings from the 1970s along with plots of land that conserve the old farmhouses that were once on the outskirts

of the city. She used the visual idea as a way of demonstrating the combination of new brick buildings next to traditional country houses. That’s why her final image combines a Visual Quotation with her photography.

Figure 2 shows a Visual Quotation of the Singaporean artist John Clang (2009): a photograph of a human face. The image is a combination of two photos of two different people, printed on paper. Each photograph is cut into thin vertical strips. The strips of the face of each of the two people, the artist and a friend, are combined to create a new face that is the combination of the two. The Visual Quotation belongs to the series of photographs entitled “Me and my

friends” in which the artist proposes several ideas that are very appropriate for inquiries into identity. For this reason, the students of Xabier Molinet-Medina in the Faculty of Education carried out the same process, specifically seeking a combination of male and female faces to create a synthesis of both.

In the two examples of Visual Quotations the process of elaboration of the final image consists of presenting both the quotation and the photography by the researcher. In both cases, the basic rules of a quotation have been applied. The Visual Quotation is presented in combination with the image made by the author. The Visual Quotation has a small size and is not the focus of the complete image. The Visual Quotation is clearly differentiated from the other elements of the image. Besides these three conditions, the final image has been elaborated in a coherent way, taking care of the thematic and chromatic equivalences, the proportions and the visual rhythm of the photographs by the researchers and the Visual Quotation.

There are several types of Visual Quotations. In academic writing two types of quotations are established: one, the direct or literal quotation, in which the words published by another author are reproduced exactly, the same number and order; and two, the paraphrase, which summarizes the ideas of another author but without using exactly the same words (APA, 2010, p. 171). A wider variety of different ways of referring directly to the works of other authors are recognized in the arts: quotations, paraphrases, versions, variations, appropriations, pastiches, etc. (Hoesterey, 2001). In the Figures in this chapter two different types of Visual Quotation have been used. One type corresponds to the *Literal Visual Quota-*

tions, which is an exact copy or reproduction of the complete original image, but of a very small size, just large enough to identify the elements that make up the image. The change in size is a necessary condition of a quotation despite the potential alteration of the original image. A small size is a necessary condition for any quotation, either for written text or for visual images.

In Figures 4 and 5 another type of Visual Quotation appears: *The Fragment Visual Quotation*. In this case the quotation does not reproduce the original image completely but only partially. In a similar way to text quotations, the selection of a fragment of an image must respect the general sense of the image to avoid transgressing or improperly altering its senses and meanings. There are other types of Visual Quotations but they have not been represented in the images in this chapter (Marin-Viadel & Roldan, 2010; 2017).

The main functions that justify the inclusion of quotations in a research report can serve as a guide to propose the qualitative criteria for Visual Quotations (APA, 2010, pp. 169–170): Does the Visual Quotation included in the research report recognize the work of other professionals working visually on the same issues and with a similar methodological approach? Does the Visual Quotation provide an adequate basis for the images created by the researcher? Is the Visual Quotation useful to justify the need for the new images proposed by the researcher? Do the Visual Quotations show the panorama of theories and authors in which the research is located? Have the Visual Quotations been used to justify the context in which our research has been located? Do the Visual Quotations support the arguments and the visual conclusions?

The Use of Visual Quotations in Photographic Series and Visual Average

Visual Quotations can be used in conjunction with Independent Photographs (a single photograph) as in Figures 1 and 2; but can also be used in conjunction with other types of visual techniques in a/r/tographic investigations. We will analyze the specific problems that arise when Visual Quotations are used in two different techniques: Photographic Series and Visual Average. Due to the length of this chapter, it is not possible to present each of these techniques in all their breadth and complexity. We will simply indicate some of its basic characteristics to analyze the functioning of the Visual Quotations.

Figure 3 presents, on the left, a Visual Literal Quotation and on the right, thirty-four photographs organized in four horizontal rows. The Visual Quotation is composed of twelve photographs, all of the same size, arranged in three rows and four columns. Each of the photographs display the same theme, a doorway to a private home in a neighborhood of Puerto Rico, and has been made with the same frame and lighting as the set. The thirty-four photographs of grilles and windows in the 'Casería de Montijo' neighborhood of Granada have been taken by the students of Social Education to describe the urban and architectural characteristics of this social environment. The students have taken the photographs. Their teacher/researcher has organized the final image. The two central horizontal rows show twenty windows with different grilles (10 in each row). In the upper row, the photographs show a wider area of the façade, with details such as advertisements, blinds, plants and hanging clothes; and in the lower row, details of the decorative elements of the

grilles. The small size of the windows, the low quality of the materials and the simplicity and vulgarity of the decorative elements indicate that they are cheap apartment buildings built in the 1970s in Spain.

The Visual Quotation has been used as a reference for the general structure of the image (the organization of the photographs in rows and columns) and also to establish the rhythm of the vertical elements and the chromatic balance of the whole. There is a clear equivalence between the whites, blacks, greens, ochers and reddish in the Visual Quotation and in the image by Rafaela Genet-Verney.

This way of organizing many photographs into a single image makes up a Photo Series. This technique differs from other visual techniques in which many different images are combined such as photo collage or photo montage (Hockney & Joyce, 1988; Renau, 1977). Its main feature is that the photographs that make up the image are organized according to a geometric and homogeneous straight-line pattern so that each of the photographs has the same thematic and conceptual importance.

The Photographic Series has been widely used across different disciplines for many decades, because it is a very useful research technique to describe and compare a great diversity of phenomena either in development psychology (Gesell, 1945) or in media studies (Hunsinger, Klasttrup, & Allen, 2010). The Photographic Series is an ordered and consistent set of photographs, whose coherence responds to a criterion: thematic, conceptual, temporal, formal or stylistic. Several photographs of successive moments of an event can describe the process (Figure 6). Several photographs, each of a different

object or person, present and compare the elements of a set (Figures 3, 4, 5 and 7). The Photographic Series works as a descriptive technique of people, contexts, actions and processes. The systematic presentation of the members of a group evidences both the common characteristics and the differences within the group or over time. A Photographic Series does not usually have totalizing or generalizing pretensions. Repetition, as Deleuze (1994) argues, is not generality and must be distinguished from it. A Photographic Series is a visual narrative that moves between description, analysis, comparison and interpretation.

Figure 4 is a Photographic Series featuring 36 students from the University of Granada. The two most striking features of this series are the large number of photographs and the strict homogeneity of the frame, focus and lighting (all human figures are impeccably cut out on a white background). These features contribute to the sensation that the series can be continued in an unlimited way up and down, left and right. These traits come from the Visual Quotation that is part of the image. Its authors, photographer Ari Verluis and stylist Ellie Uyttenbroek began a photographic project in October 1994 entitled 'Exactitudes,' which they continue to work on. The project website² is a mosaic composed with 125 Photographic Series of 12 portraits each. The 1,500 portraits are made under the same strict photographic conditions: all the human figures are placed exactly in the center of the photograph, the frame shows the person from head to middle of thigh, everything is clearly focused, colors are nat-

ural and the background is completely white. Each series of twelve portraits groups people who wear clothes of the same color and material: ochre wool coats, black leather jackets and trousers, white coats, etc. The composition of the set of all the Photographic Series creates a chromatic pattern of similarities and differences that identifies professional corporations, urban tribes and social groups. Xabier Molinet-Medina used these same photographic concepts to examine the identity elements of university students according to faculties and degrees.

In Figure 5 the structure of the Photographic Series has been modified to introduce into the description not only people (in this case a group of Fine Arts students), but the context. The strict rows and columns organizing the image have been maintained, but the central row is occupied by a single photograph in which one of the walls of the clay sculpture workshop appears instead of people. The decisive challenge was to make the photography on the context visually congruent with the overall concept of the Photographic Series. The geometric tiling of white wall tiles stained by the use and the visual rhythm between empty areas and objects exactly matches that of the student portraits.

Photographic series such as those in Figures 3, 4 and 5 have eminently descriptive and comparative functions: would it be possible to solve, by means of photographic research techniques, other research functions in order to reach a conclusion or, at least, to point out trends? How can a synthesis of all the particular cases be established photographically?

Figures 6 and 7 show a procedure to synthesize in a single image the successive

² See www.exactitudes.com



Figure 5. Molinet-Medina, X. (2015). *Students and university contexts*. Photo essay composed with a Photographic Series composed with four photos by the author, top, a digital photograph by the author, center and a Fragment Visual Quotation (Versluis & Uyttenbroek, 1998), bottom.

phases of a process or the different descriptions of the same object. In both cases the ideas coming from the Visual Quotations have been decisive. Figure 6 is composed of a Visual Quotation, a Photographic Series and a Visual Average. The Visual Quotation corresponds to the artist Stephanie Jung (2016). Her photographic work seeks to find the vibration and frantic movement of cities. This photo, entitled “Museum Island,” is made in Berlin and represents several people waiting in front of the museum of ancient art. The Photo Series, located at the top of the image, is composed of three photographs that describe the activity of a teacher in her classroom. She is in the center of the group of students and is recording the sounds of the mobile phones of her students, approaching each one of them. The third photograph, larger size, is the Visual Average made by the teacher-researcher about her own teaching process. The complete sequence is represented in a single image, which emphasizes the teacher’s interaction with the students. Visual Average is used in computer science (Warner, 2016) and also corresponds to the first words to designate a semi-automatic technique to calculate the speed at which a vehicle circulates on the road. These two uses of the name are very far from our purpose. But in other areas, the name is used with a sense very similar to the one we use. One of them is the study

of medieval manuscripts (Hourihane, 2017). Jesse Hurlbut (2013) has developed the technique of superimposing the digital images of all the pages of a manuscript for discovering the fundamental structural qualities of the document, such as margins, organization of the text in columns and combination of text and illustrations.

The name Visual Average derives from the arithmetic average. This is a key con-

cept in quantitative research approaches in human and social sciences. The arithmetic average is a measure of central tendency, probably the most used and easy to calculate in a statistical analysis of numerical data (Salkind, 2007). The arithmetic average seeks to synthesize in a single numerical data a very broad data set, so that this single data is representative of the whole. Its main disadvantage is that the result blurs the



Figure 6. Genet-Verney, R. (2015). *Dialogue in the classroom with sound compositions*. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Jung, 2016), right; a Photographic Series *Rafa teaching*, composed with three digital photographs by P. Palau (2013), top; and a Visual Average by R. Genet-Verney (2015) *Me teaching*, left.

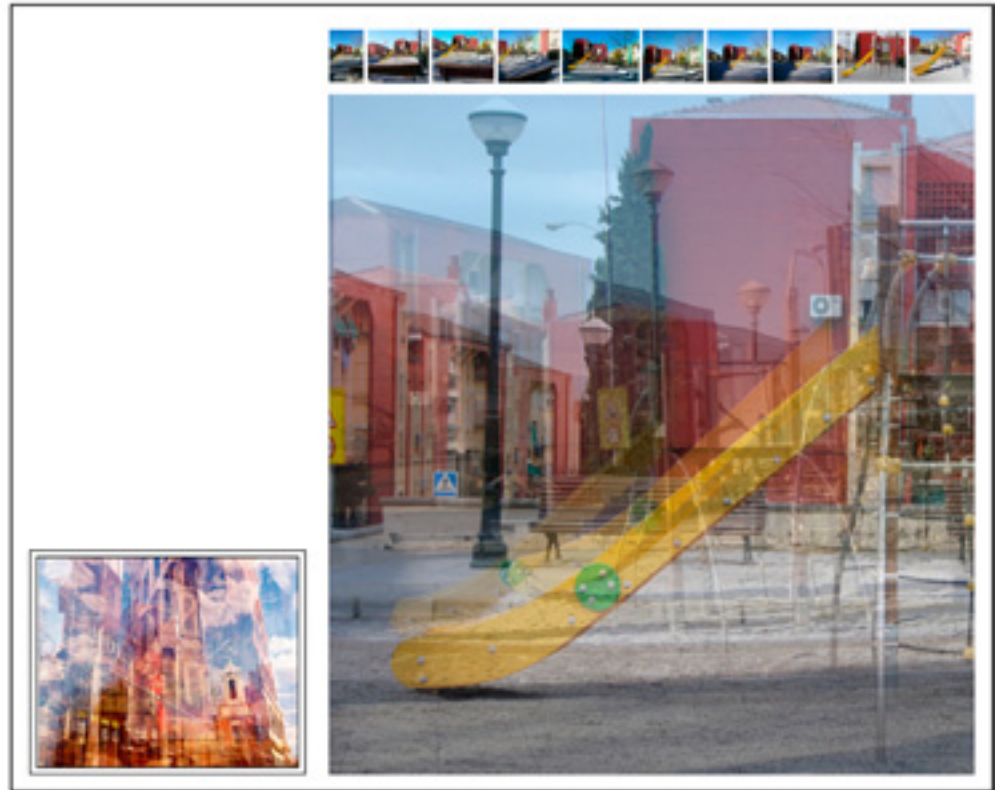


Figure 7. Genet-Verney, R. (2015). “Casería de Montijo,” playground I. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Keyes, 2005), right; a Photographic Series Record of playground viewings by the students composed with ten digital photographs by the social pedagogy students taken in 2013, top; and a Visual Average playground rendering by the students, by R. Genet-Verney (2015), left.

amplitude of the differences between the particular data. On the contrary in the Visual Average, this sensitivity to the irregularity or the singularity of the data is still perceptible because all the photographic data are still represented in the final result.

Visual Average is an image that synthesizes the set of original images. This is obtained by superimposing and adjusting transparency of each of the original images.

The use of a degree of homogeneous opacity does not generate a convincing result because it creates an insubstantial uniformity. The transparent overlap causes greater darkness in the common areas of the different images, while the contours, where the greatest variations are found between one image and another, the colors are weaker. The final result is an image in which the contours of the elements are blurred and vibrant, very simi-

lar to the concept of “sfumato” used by Leonardo da Vinci.

In recent decades, some artists have been recognized for their photo-overlays of photographs taken by other people, either by great artists, as in the case of Idris Kahn (2007), or by anonymous people, such as Doug Keyes (2012), Ken Kitano (2003) and Stephanie Jung (2016). Also, the artist Corinne Vionnet (2007), in her series *Photo Opportunities*, combines photos shared on social networks by tourists who have photographed the Eiffel Tower, the pyramids of Egypt or the Coliseum in Rome. The most usual point of view seems clearly perceptible in the visual result indicating that we all look at these monuments in the same way and focus our attention on concrete points of the building. The visual average corresponds to a multitude of simultaneous perceptions.

Figure 7 is composed of a Visual Quotation (Keyes, 2005), a Photographic Series and a Visual Average. The Visual Quotation by Keyes represents the old neighborhood of Beacon Hill in Boston, seen from different overlapping perspectives. The result is an innovative image of the city in which space becomes multiple. In the upper part of the image there is a Photographic Series composed of ten photographs taken by the students of Social Education of the University of Granada during a photographic journey. The Visual Average below the Photo



Figure 8. Molinet-Medina, X. (2014). *Identitary scribbles*. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Khan, 2007), right, and a Visual Average *Photo-Collages I* composed with a series of Photo-collages by primary teacher's training students, left.

Series summarizes these ten photographs. The yellow slide, in the center of a small public garden is the central element in most of the photographs. However, the point of view that each student has used is different.

Figure 8 is composed of two visual elements. On the left side we find a Literal Visual Quotation by the English artist Idris Khan (2004). This artist makes a cumulative superposition of the industrial architecture photographs of Bernd and Hilla Becher (2004). These two professors and photographers published a series of black and white photographs on industrial buildings, including water tanks, gas tanks, granaries, etcetera. They grouped the photographs in an



Figure 9. Molinet-Medina, X. (2015). *Two Visual Averages*. Photo essay composed with a Literal Visual Quotation (Keyes, 2012), left, and a Visual Average *School of Communication* composed with six digital photographs by the author, right.

orderly manner into a single panel with nine or fifteen different photographs to create a Photo Series. The photographs were taken in a very similar way: same framing, tonality and contrast. This technical rigor allowed highlighting the beauty of each architectural work with respect to the others. The artist Idris Khan superimposes in a single image all the photographs from the same Photo Series of the Bechers, creating a single building with blurred contours and multiple structures. On the right side of Figure 8 there is a photograph by Xabier Molinet-Medina which is a Visual Average of the 49 exercises of combining portraits through narrow strips between classmates. They were carried out in the art class of the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of the University of Granada during a visual exercise on the identity of the students. This exercise derives from the work of Clang (2009), which was already explained above. For this photograph, Xabier Molinet-Medina superimposed all the photographs taken by his students, to obtain a Visual Average of all the exercises. In the final image we recognize a human face but it is difficult to discern gender and peculiar features, or to recognize particular people.

In Figure 9, on the left there is a Visual Quotation from Keyes (2012), who in his project “Collective Memory Series,” creates Visual Averages from images made by other artists,

or published in magazines, books or online. The photograph on the right is a Visual Average that combines the half-length photographic portraits of a group of university students of the Faculty of Communication of the University of Granada, who selflessly accepted to pose for the author. To achieve this visual result each of the photographic portraits was prepared with a uniform white background, and the same frame and lighting conditions for each of the participants. All those photographic portraits constitute a Photographic Series that has been synthesized in this Visual Average. This highlights differences in the clothing and accessories of students. The overlapping faces are especially interesting. The characteristics of visual identification of a man (mustache, beard, etc.) and those of women (braids, bangs, etc.) have merged into an intriguing combination. The final image presents a summary of the identities of the current students of the Faculty of Communication in the University of Granada.

The Visual Average eliminates part of the original information obtained by each student to create a new image where the common visual ideas are reinforced and the differences are blurred. Unlike the arithmetic mean, in which it is perfectly established what are the operations that must be performed with the original data; it is not possible to obtain an effective Visual Average mechanically or automatically. The intensity of the transparencies of each of the original photographs has to be applied individually by the researcher to obtain an acceptable result. The procedure of obtaining a Visual Average is more similar to making a written summary of several texts than to the application of a mathematical operation.

Establishing Research Techniques

Although arts-based research methodologies have been used over the past three decades, the establishment of specific research techniques of this methodological approach is still very weak. In research, using photographs are almost exclusively of a documentary nature.

Visual Quotations are necessary in Visual Arts-Based Research because it is a specific type of quotation when visual images are used. We have shown how Visual Quotations may be used similarly to written text quotations in academic research. Visual Quotations can be used in conjunction with Independent Photography as well as other educational research photography techniques. Description and comparison are two very common processes in educational research. A Photographic Series is an effective instrument to describe and compare students, processes and contexts. Visual Quotations may support the use of Photo Series in educational research. The photographs of several contemporary artists support the use of Visual Average in a/r/tographic projects. The Visual Average is a technique that has been developed from an analogy with the concept of statistical average. Their main interest is to show how new visual ideas may occur through the search for analogies between contemporary photography and non-visual research techniques in education.

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**BEYOND THE VISUAL:
ALTERNATE WAYS OF THINKING THE ROLE
OF IMAGES IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

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***Building Visual Conditions: Form,
Content and Design of the Dissertation***

This chapter is based on the visual methodology I used to engage in dialogue with the images I created for my doctoral thesis, “Relaciones entre la Cultura Visual y la Perspectiva Educativa de los Proyectos de Trabajo en un Trayecto de Formación” (Baptista, 2014), in the Arts and Education Department at the University of Barcelona. During the narrative construction process, my foremost concern was with the nature of relationships between text, image and lived experience, and in turn, my core research questions became: Do artistic methods generate pedagogic knowledge, and if so, how (Hernández, 2014)? Can we frame visual methods with relational dynamics embedded in the design? A rich array of seminars,

workshops and academic appointments undertaken during the PhD stimulated my thinking about a process of construction, each taking into account not only the ontological, epistemological, methodological aspects of study, but also the linkages we bring from our lived experiences as researchers.

In order to investigate these questions, I drew upon the fundamentals of arts-based educational research (ABER) (Barone & Eisner, 2012) where qualitative inquiry in the arts focuses on how art is the basis for (re) thinking assumptions in education. Moreover, this orientation was consistent with my existing teaching practice. My academic life began many years after my professional career began, making the research I undertook for my PhD degree connected with my past teaching, as well with the field of arts and

design, and my current academic interests. More importantly in my research design considerations, I realized I was not primarily performing an artistic study, that is, the investigation was not focused on my art practice alone, nor solely on an existing collection of art. The focus was instead on how to create conditions in a study to use visuals and visual methods in ways that unpack experience as a precursor to what form and content emerged in the design of the dissertation, page by page (Macbeth, 2001), rather than simply analyzing the image as an end-product in artistic research, or as a resulting form of data from a qualitative perspective. From this point of view, I describe “the layers” that I have set for the images to perform this condition in the course of research design (Alexander, 2006). Lastly, I discuss additional factors that helped me reflect on and generate a way of narrating visual methods capable of creating a disturbance to visual thinking. In the process, I explore changes in the image/text relations on the actual pages of the dissertation.

Before I begin, I would like to point out that the focus of this chapter is not to corroborate a methodology, but rather to point out how I used some clues of the methodologies that work with images as data of an investigation, understanding therefore that this is a field that is under construction. The main idea is to provoke in readers possible dialogues between the investigation, images, and text: these are a reflection on the use of visualities, as suggested by Foster (1988), as a so-

cial issue that involves the subjectivity of the subjects participating in the actions, thereby displacing attention to the images towards the relationship processes that are constructed in an investigation in the attempt to narrate the facts with and through the use of images.



Figure 1. Art images, catalogues and books that have been building my visual culture. Layering images from my library.

Visual Conditions as Arts-Based Educational Research

As an ethnography, my research was constituted in relation to the field throughout the study: before I entered, when I prepared myself for field research; during my observational work in the field; and especially after, when the ethnology came together as a concrete material expression of being inside of a “performance text” (Denzin, 1997). Writing was the place where it was possible for me to interlace the field research with teacher reflections and at the same time mediate the theoretical texts knowing that my background as a teacher was always implicated, and always mindful that as a researcher, I

was increasingly concerned with the dynamics of the visual as a condition of research.

From my perspective, the questions that guided me in this process were effectively focusing my attention on how to make images play a role that can promote the construction of positionality, especially as an ethnographer who intends to understand how relations are built through interpreting the “other” and what a perception of the “other” means pedagogically as defined by representation strategies (Hall, 1997). My fundamental first step was to set which methodological axis would guide the research process of the thesis writing. The main idea would be to create a testimonial that did not talk about what exists and what one uses, but attends to what one produces in order to represent the relational spaces when one documents and explores pedagogical relations in the field.

In order to express this condition, I used visual referents for my language (Conle, 1996) which changed both the form and the content of the dissertation. This is a discourse I know intimately, and it is a location of thought where I felt comfortable generating a dialogic space. It was in this way I constructed a narrative plot about the research process in which I was able to articulate the experiences shared by the group. At the same time, my thesis was not explicitly about images or works of art as the main objective. Instead, I engaged in photographs I had taken from the group’s meetings and from visits to their school. These photographs were made while they were discussing, studying and reconstructing the educational perspective that led to their teaching practices. And while I was writing, I expanded the spectrum of images, referring to photographs from works of art and expositions I had visited previously

to prompt thinking through the conditions underway in the study. For instance, going to an exhibition inspired me to connect with the problematics of my ethnographic investigation and helped me “visualize” the way in which the group produced knowledge. Together these two streams of images had a reflective aspect, because they brought me closer to concepts and relational processes I was performing at that time.

This intuitive response insight led me to reflect on how artistic methods may generate pedagogical knowledge. According to Knowles and Cole (2008), the use of art in such a social investigation opens “possibilities for alternative perspectives, modes, media, and genres through which to understand and represent the human condition” (p. xii). Informed by Eisner’s proposal to reflect on the importance of the “qualitative forms of intelligence rooted into the artistic,” I then began to consider how visual conditions served me as a researcher, and much like Figure 1, how the visual conditions were an invitation to think about the relationships between “form and content,” specifically in terms of unpacking the role images played in research (Eisner, 2008, p. 12). If we engage in methodology as a form of living inquiry, a position articulated in response to innovations in technology and the way in which technology affects our subjectivity, my concern was to reveal something more in the design of the dissertation about the interrelated processes between individuals, images and pedagogical reflexivity.

I believe the above strategy encouraged dialogues to be established from a perspective of relational recognition. For example, teachers recognized aspects of themselves as they recognized some of their actions depicted in images (techniques, responses, fa-

citations). However, this reassurance generated strangeness (otherness) as well, and this resulted in ongoing reflective questions: Why were these photographs selected? What is so special about them? What are the teachers depicted doing differently? As we talked about these questions, the conversation demonstrated how other non-visual elements accentuated a sense of strangeness among my participants. These elements originated from a host of personal and professional sources: using the principles of ABER helped to reposition us in relation to images. ABER proposes a way of looking that is not what it addresses, but *how* it addresses. My intention was to reveal the mechanical and structural relations between image and words in a reflexivity process, and as a visual condition of research (Alexander, 2006; Macbeth, 2001).

Recognition is the first layer in this design. According to Barone and Eisner (2006), “arts-based research is defined by the presence of certain aesthetic qualities or *design elements* that infuse the inquiry process and the research ‘text’” (p. 95). The difference is in the way in which we were involved with the images (either photographs or sentences, drawings, scenes) in our research and in the ways the data became actively involved in the inquiry process, instead of being illustrations or decorations of what we reported. The methodological issues that prevailed brought me closer to the teachers, and more deeply entwined in the inquiry process, rather than the image. The image became the visual condition to *make visible the experience* that generated the images. In order for the images to achieve this aspect, it was necessary to change the traditional way in which the ethnographer conceived of the field: “...the register is a means by which the

field is doubled in notes (written register), in images (photography and cinema) and in sounds (tape recordings). Then the researcher “recollects the real the way it is,” that, “collects data...” (Guber, 2004, p. 166).

Contemporary ethnography recognizes the impossibility of registering “everything” (Guber, 2004) and a constructionist perspective (Ibáñez, 2001; Gergen & Gergen, 2011) understands photography is but a slice of “the real the way it is.” As a visual condition, the photograph informs field research with what Rose (2012) described in her book *Visual Methodologies* as systematization. When explicating and setting the research methods about and with visual materials, I found another way to have photographs assume the role of evidence for the research. Among her methods about socially constructed images for research, Rose (2012) refers to ‘photo-documentation’ as a relational condition constituted through a series of photos taken by the researcher in such a planned way as to document and analyze a phenomenon in particular. Adapting this practice, I came to understand that the photographs taken of the group had to *follow the problematics* that conducted the inquiry. In this way, I started photographing the situation as a research dialogue. In addition to this method, I also attempted to generate a text that created “spaces for the merger of multiple voices and experiences” (Denzin, 1997, p. 91). These voices represent the ones who took part in the research and were simultaneously prospective readers of the thesis as well, suggesting a double role: teachers as participants and readers. Thus, they could interact with their voices and project again their experiences in relation to the inquiry.

The continual refinement of the visual methodological approach allowed me to get closer to the image, the definition of the theoretical axis and the problematic, in ways that supported the writing process, informed my knowledge in the arts, visual culture and art education, and confirmed the artistic and aesthetic fundamentals that placed the links between text, image and experience in my research. All of this created a narrative in which the text itself became a visual condition.

Problematics is the second layer in this design.

Text / Image

What characterizes an image? According to Block (2008),

...the basic visual components are space, line, shape, tone, movement, and rhythm. These visual components are found in every moving or still picture we see....A visual component communicates moods, emotions, ideas, and most importantly, gives visual structure to the pictures. (p. 2)

We know that the ability to communicate ideas through images is different from verbal and written expression. Each of them, understood as another means of representation, is accompanied by its specificities for understanding. Mitchell (1994) de-

scribes this as the difference between the self and the other, noting that difference resides not only in the saying and the showing, but in the supposing of how and why we relate. For example, the word heard, quoted and inscribed, as well as the consequential actions – seen, figured or described – are entry points to understanding the conditions necessary for the visual in research.

I suggest that this notion of difference is the third layer of design in such research.

In turn, in an attempt to create a polyvalent text that welcomed the voices of the participants and the paths of knowledge construction that had been described during our meetings, the text in my thesis incorporated layers that were interconnected with sensorial conditions. They showed ideas (theoretical texts) and images – from either the meetings or the expositions – meetings excerpts, reflections about the facts, memories taken in notes during the fieldwork and interviews. All these features were interlaced to form the ethnographic inquiry field study wherein the researcher and participants were co-constructors, thus making the text a reading of multiple, possible evidences (Rose, 2012). According to Kan (2009), this “...open[s] up more channels for *others*’ reception of knowledge and perhaps stimulate[s] a sense of curiosity and motivate[s] readers also to examine the nexus of ideologies embedded in the axioms underlying their everyday decisions and actions” (p. 26).

In addition, from a design perspective, the assemblage process of field research held another layer of connections that was demonstrated by the visuality of the horizontal space offered by the actual double pages. In this way, the printed page prevailed in relation to characters, photographs, fonts, symbols, brackets and other elements. This was not performed so that the verbal condition was reinforced by text, but rather to have the images promote “their own theories,...their own power, their own say in the structure” (Elkins & McGuire, 2013, p. 1).

The Figures 2, 3 and 4 provide some examples in which the layers are in conversation with themselves.

In the dissertation as a document, each page was built so that the page itself highlighted the problematics analyzed. Through this kind of page construction, deeper meanings inside the representation could take place when viewed and/or read. In Figure 2, for example, we can see the picture from the group of teachers seated in a circle in one of the university rooms where the meetings were held. Below, we can see a banner where the university asks the teachers to put the desks where they were placed before, in order not to create problems with the other

teachers who used the same classroom. On these pages, I discussed the notion of university as a knowledge producer and if such knowledge was also part of the knowledge production of the group itself. The image of the page on the right dialogued with the theoretical text on the left when criticizing the university's imposition to have the students' desk organized in rows: thus visually reinforcing the idea that knowledge is not produced horizontally, but from top to bottom.

In Figure 3, the pages are not split into two parts, as visually suggested, but into three.



Figure 2. Pages 184–185 of the thesis “Relations between the Visual Culture and a Project Based Learning in a formation path” (Baptista, 2014).

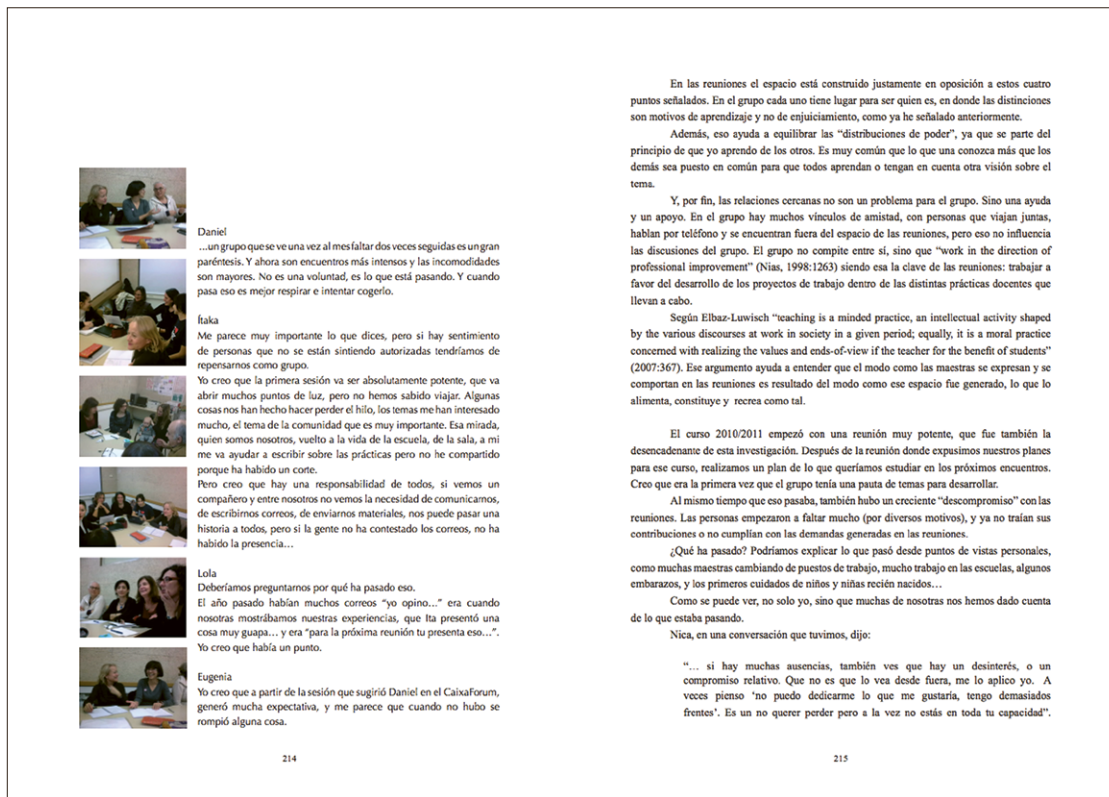


Figure 3. Pages 214–215 of the thesis “Relations between the Visual Culture and a Project Based Learning in a formation path” (Baptista, 2014).

The pages involve multiple movements from a vertical photographic sequence, and a fragment of dialogue from the meeting, followed by a horizontal mapping of theoretical text. These three spaces are progressive, ordered in ways to talk about the importance of affect in the knowledge construction process. In this case, the ethnographic distance was crucial. I had to distance myself as a group member in order to realize what I lived in the meetings. While I looked at the photographs I noticed again and again the affect among the teachers in the group, and I felt and understood that dynamic as a sensorial condition of research that was operating alongside conversations

about their teaching practices. This became the basis for layers within visual conditions that informed the resulting page in my dissertation. In fact, beyond the visual, this page is actually composed of a large sequence of 22 photographs, and this is the only sequence I used in the whole thesis. Through the excess, I intended to have the reader “live” the affect that was present in the meetings live the affect that was present in the meetings as a visual condition that then resides in the layers of the text of the dissertation.

In the third part of the sequence, I analyzed in the theoretical text the way “being supported” influences knowledge produc-

tion. While placing photographs in relation, I became increasingly aware of fragmentation as a further condition. That is, there were fragments of conversation shared by the group in which critical moments as teachers were shared implicitly or explicitly. At times, teachers circled back to those moments in conversation. I intended to show I was aware of the existence of the problems they described, about how the group handled them collectively in response by their ability to “visibilize” the field study in new ways (Lierberman & Miller, 2003).

In Figure 3 it is also possible to see the insertion of what I regard as a visual breathing space or *spare spaces* on the pages. In order to make the polyphony of voices possible in my narrative, I used three kinds of fonts and numerous shades of gray and a broad tonal range of black:

- i. Times New Roman, in black, for the narrative that structures the text;
- ii. Garamond, in gray 75%, for the most subjective texts, reflections that were coming out while I was writing, my notes in the field diary, and/or

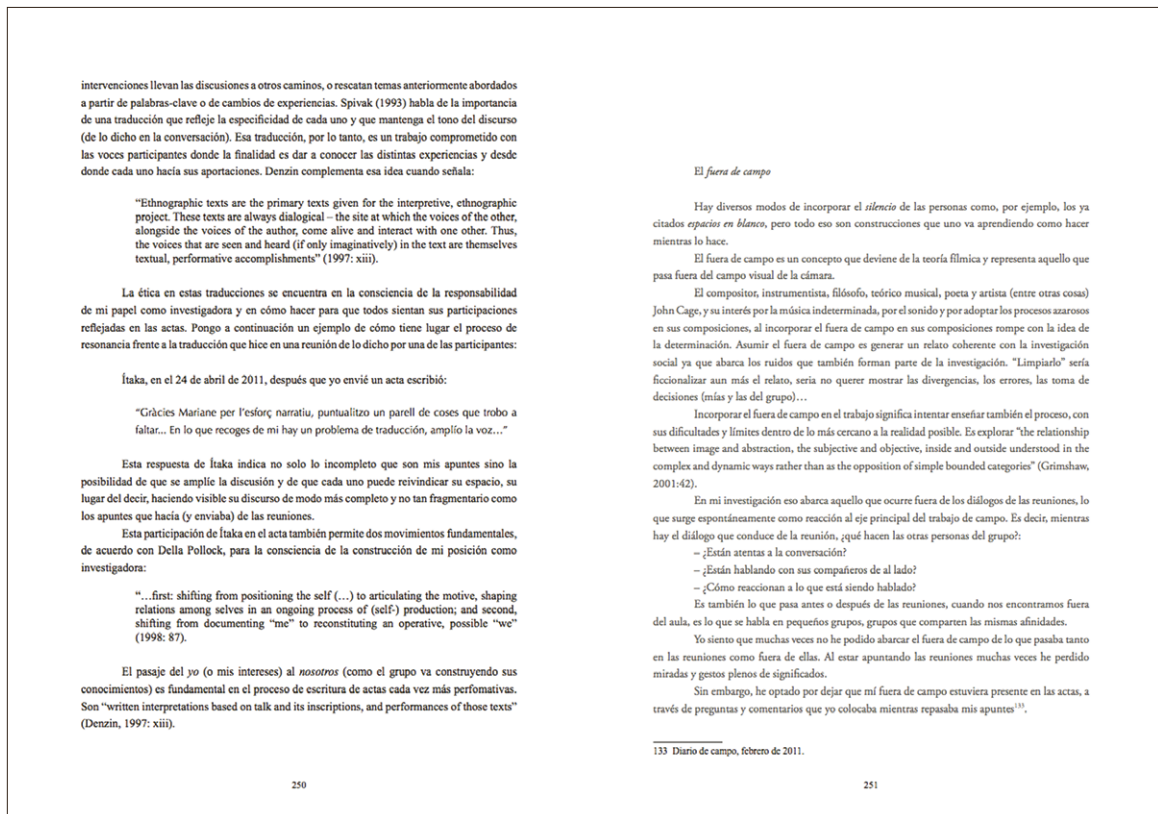


Figure 4. Pages 250 and 251 of the thesis “Relations between the Visual Culture and a Project Based Learning in a formation path” (Baptista, 2014).

my *dialogue* with the things
I could see in the meetings;
iii. Optima, in black (because
it was inserted in the narra-
tive that structured the text),
to the teachers' voices in the
dialogues of the meetings
and interviews.

It is possible to see some spare spaces on pages 250 and 251 (see Figure 4). Page 251 is placed below the top margin on the right, as compared to a full page 250 on the left. Such spare spaces were based on the idea that writing is always in action (Pollock, 1998) and when it finds its own form and moves, it becomes part of a performative act of design.

Spare spaces is the fourth layer in this design.

Reflecting now on the layers in the design of the dissertation, I regard the notion of the visual condition as a form of translation, be that visual, verbal, sensorial or intellectual. I recall that when I started transcribing the interviews, I began to understand how the silences and as well as the respiration of those interviewed were important. I noticed that their caoethes helped them to develop an idea. These indicators were also signs that they understood what they were talking about, since they interrupted the flow of their speech with silent moments, akin to spare spaces. I understood that it was important to keep some of those "gaps" for readers in the design of the dissertation, as the sample pages dem-

onstrate. This was a way to let the text open itself to continual reconstruction to take into account experiences of teachers and readers, and to maintain sustainability for the field research from that particular time and place. Applying a photomontage technique, I organized the problematic while I was in the others and while I was in the process of developing the field study. Moreover, I could then reflect on the learning processes that defined the way the group constructed knowledge within those set parameters.

Albeit this chapter is but a brief introductory conversation to a number of complex ideas, I posit that the pages of the dissertation became works of art themselves. This suggests we must now recognize that the form, content and design of the dissertation is another living layer in arts-based educational research. When we use the artistic and aesthetic fundamentals in social research, it is possible to generate provocative texts that open space for dialogue with research, about research, and through research. The artistic embrace of the visual condition in the design of my ethnographic study and my resulting dissertation, interprets what we see and read in the field and beyond, not only as a function of the text, but also as an interpretation of what we see and read as a function of seeing.

Such an approach to visual methodology allows us to have a shared conditionality, but not necessarily, a single view.

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MISE-EN-SCÈNE:
**TROUBLING THE VEXATIONS OF VISUAL ARTS
DISSERTATIONS IN EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA**

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Provocation

I begin this chapter with a metaphor.

In 1926, the Romanian artist Constantin Brancusi was travelling with his friend Marcel Duchamp to New York, accompanied by Brancusi's iconic bronze sculpture *Bird in Space* and other works, which were intended for an imminent exhibition at Brummer Gallery, an avant-garde space in Manhattan. Customs officials, upon examining the sculpture, found that the masterwork was unrecognisable as a bird, and as such, misrepresented as Art.

Because of this, the officials refused to exempt the sculpture from customs duties as an artwork, and imposed the regulation levy for manufactured metal objects, defining the sculpture in the category of *kitchen utensils and hospital supplies* (Giry, 2002).

Undeterred, and after the exhibition was a great success, the customs appraiser held his ground, stating by way of evaluation and assessment,

Several men, high in the art world were asked to express their opinions for the Government....One of them told us, 'If that's art, hereafter I'm a bricklayer.' Another said, 'Dots and dashes are as artistic as Brancusi's work.' (Kracke, 1927, in Giry, 2002, para 4)

Subsequently, legal action ensued, the essence of which was the question of what was to be considered as Art. By this time, Brancusi was well known, however his counsel had to establish that *Bird in Space* was indeed an artwork, was original and had no utilitarian

purpose (Giry, 2002). After much testimony from critics and fellow artists and the staging of a vigorous case by Brancusi's lawyer, the court was persuaded of the aesthetic validity of the sculpture. Thus the tax that the work originally attracted was negated: Brancusi's *Bird in Space* was valued as Art after all.

The fact that this legal scandal was embedded in the artworld makes it doubly relevant; this work is a sublime interpretation of Brancusi's lifelong quest to portray the concept of flight. The reason that I have included this account here as a metaphor, is that it artfully demonstrates the shock of the new and the significance of context, culture and exposure. It also speaks to cogency, acceptance and evaluation, all concepts that this chapter explores. When a style is new, original or innovative, audiences will often need to be educated in order to comprehend it. In the world of arts-based educational research (ABER), this point has been a sometimes exasperating lived experience for researchers (Cutcher, 2013; 2014).

Incite/Insight

Specifically relevant for this chapter, are the continued concerns in Australian contexts regarding how ABER is accepted, assessed and evaluated in doctoral dissertations.¹ In Australia where ABER traditions are doubly new compared to our North American counterparts, Schools and Faculties of Education have struggled with the proposition of a methodology that appears to be antithetical to educational research (Cutcher & Ewing, 2011).

This was certainly the case with my own doctoral research, completed in 2004 and arguably one of the first ABER theses in the country. The conservative Faculty of Education in which I studied, struggled with this new form of research and how it would be assessed (Cutcher & Ewing, 2011). Despite Kisber's assertion that there was a shift in the academy fourteen years ago as ABER was then accepted as doctoral submissions (Kisber cited in Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006), in Australia we were and still are trailing behind.

However, the sticking point does not appear to be the Art, or its use as a research method. Many institutions, including my own, openly embrace and encourage arts-based research (ABR) dissertations in schools of Fine Art, Design, Media Studies and Creative Writing, and have done so since 1984; although it was not until the end of the 1990s that creative practice PhDs were a more common variant and even a growth area in Australia (Hamilton & Carson, 2013). Indeed, the federal government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT), recognizing the increasing number of Creative Arts dissertations and a need for a consistent examination approach, recently funded a major project entitled *Examination of Doctoral Degrees in Creative Arts: Process, Practice and Standards* (Webb, Brian, & Burr, 2013).

The project found that there was great need in Australia to examine further, the practices for examination of Creative Arts PhDs and that there is insufficient support for examiners, whilst university policies

¹ The term 'dissertation' is a North American convention. In Australia, we usually use 'thesis' although we may also use dissertation. In this chapter the terms are used interchangeably.

and practices need major revision given the inconsistencies of standards across institutions. Webb et al. (2013) identified that ABR doctoral studies were most often an investigation of an arts practice or *through* an arts practice. This differs from the ABER project that most usually examines an educational concern *through* arts practice, using Art as the methodological disposition of inquiry (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2014; Sinner, et al., 2006; Sullivan, 2008). Although the OLT project is comprehensive in its scope of ABR in Australia, and lists the types of doctoral program offerings, it makes no mention at all of the use of the arts as methodology in Schools and Faculties of Education. This focus on only arts (and related) schools powerfully demonstrates the status of the ABER dissertation in this country: in this comprehensive national study, it is resolutely absent.

At time of writing, my own, small, regional university has yet to confer students who have completed ABER doctoral work. I am the only academic with a PhD in my school who is an ABER scholar, having commenced in mid-2011. Since that time, we have assembled a cohort of 8 graduate students. I have supervised an ABR thesis to completion, but it was as external supervisor on a dissertation undertaken wholly in our School of Arts and Social Sciences. This particular ABR study was completed by an artist and consisted of an exhibition and exegesis (see Eales & Cutcher, 2015). The student sailed through all of that school's progress imperatives and the examination process, which required live attendance by the examiners to the exhibition component, was seamless and problem free.

In stark contrast, my School of Education has in the past grappled with notions of evaluation, theoretical framing, processes,

style, methodological design and exemplification. It is no wonder that we are grappling, since there is little guidance in the Australian context for the examination of ABER (as opposed to ABR) theses. Northern Hemisphere PhD processes, whilst illuminating, do not correlate with those in Australia.

This is largely due to the differences in program and examination structures. Most usually a PhD program in Australia goes like this: Each student is allocated 2–3 supervisors who act as mentors and critical friends who provide continuing feedback on the inquiry as it develops. As Kiley (2013) explains, sometime early in their candidature, the student will present a proposal colloquium, where formal feedback is provided – at my university, this is called a Confirmation of Candidature. In many Australian universities, this process determines whether the candidate is allowed to progress onwards. The student subsequently presents a Mid-Candidature Review 18 months into the PhD and then finally prepares a written thesis of around 100,000 words for examination, or if a practice-based dissertation, an exhibition (or performance or other creative work) and exegesis. The thesis is sent out for evaluation by 2–3 external (to the university) examiners. Approximately half of all PhD theses in Australia are examined internationally and half of all Australian universities use three external examiners (Kiley, 2013). The examiners do not have contact with each other, nor does the candidate know whom they are until after the process of examination is complete. Each examiner then compiles an independent and thorough examination report detailing formative feedback, and subsequently makes a recommendation the university's higher degrees committee. This recommendation is

either “‘accepted as is,’ ‘accepted with minor editorial, or with more substantial editorial changes,’ ‘re-submitted for examination after substantial change,’ or ‘considered unacceptable’” (Kiley 2013, p. 3). The oral examination or defense is not a common practice in education faculties in Australia.

The issues with this process for ABER PhD scholars are many. Firstly, as Webb et al. (2013) assert, there is no consistent assessment rubric that has been developed by Australian institutions for ABR PhDs. There are few scholars in Australia who work through an ABER methodology and the available *lay* examiners are not experienced in the area of assessing an ABER PhD. If a School were to seek one or two international examiners to fill this void, then the imperative to engage directly with the exhibition (or performance) becomes challenging, in that most universities (and certainly my own) cannot afford to transport and accommodate multiple visiting international examiners, let alone the issue of their availability for the time it would require to do so. This is an inequitable situation for ABER PhD students and a vexing one for the institution. The assessment process for an ABER PhD candidate is marginalizing, due to the privileging of the textually constructed, portable, A4 size thesis document.

In this reality, I am reminded of Brancusi’s predicament with the customs assessment of his work in New York, in a cultural climate that was not yet ready and had no mechanisms to assess the artwork’s abstract, material or conceptual dispositions. Through the lens of history, we see this case as a startling blip on the American Art world’s development. As this case demonstrates, contexts and cultures must be developed and exposure is essential. Audiences change with time.

Although there has been much written regarding assessment and evaluation of ABER work (e.g. see Barone & Eisner, 1997; 2012; Cole & Knowles 2001; Diamond, 1998; Sinner et al., 2006; Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008;), some of which will be examined below, for us in Australia, where the examination processes controvert the ABER PhD, these are not applied holistically.

I am thus compelled to lean into the very thing that is at issue. That is, I am driven to turn towards Art as educational research, in order to find a way through, to unearth a way forward and, taking particular heed of Sinner et al.’s (2006) assertion that artfulness is at the heart of inquiry.

Thus, this next section of the chapter, in keeping with ABER and the themes of cogency, acceptance and evaluation, and in the spirit of offering a constructive contribution to the field with respect to these issues, will perform a visual/verbal poetic portrayal of the landscape of evaluation. This staging seeks to constructively destabilize the reading, interrupt the present discourses and, drawing down from the literature, create a scope and sequence of possibilities for the assessment of ABER PhDs in the Australian context. In homage to Brancusi, the imagery in the portrayal is thematically linked to the concept of flight and an altered gaze.



Mise en scène

Education is not a dirty word



in the spaces of Art,
spaces it doesn't easily digest,
doesn't see,
doesn't know,
doesn't really understand. Art is educative, it
bends, it
elucidates, it
tolerates. Art and education are a prime fit
really, if only science
would move out of the light.

In education, theoretical framing, methodology, data, discussion, conclusions and limitations and suggestions for further research are easily separated.

In Art, aesthetics and meaning, materiality and message are sinuous and moving, slippery and troubling; not so easily uncoupled.



In fact, somewhat insurmountable to detach. Methodology is

often ontology, epistemology, theoretical framework and portrayal at once, languages that are not easily translated to adhere and conform to institutional imperatives, to structural evaluation.



And so I am brought to these questions to guide my quest:

What is research for?

What is educational research for?

What is Arts-based research for?

What is Arts-based educational research for?

Questions of audience and purpose and contribution to knowledge resonate as they do for all doctoral theses, irrespective of form or content, technique or value. But,

Researchers disagree about the importance and/or desirability of establishing criteria for judging the quality of Arts-based research works. Art is constantly changing, they say, we can't limit artistic authority they say, an obsessive focus on criteria reflects the long standing anxiety of social science regarding the scientific nature of their work, they say.²

Different forms of Art need to be considered differently and their purposes are fundamental to this end. An ABR PhD in an Arts school has different imperatives to

an ABR PhD in a Health Sciences Faculty and these differ in essential ways from an ABER PhD. It's the education part, not the Art part that is

the trick. A

common language of evaluation to describe

ABER PhDs, explore

ABER PhDs and explain

ABER PHDs and their reception

is needed: assessment

frameworks/guidelines/scaffolds/criteria are

needed for the Australian context, culture and exposure, reflecting

the global that are valid, accepted

and continuously evaluated as the method

grows.

To wit:

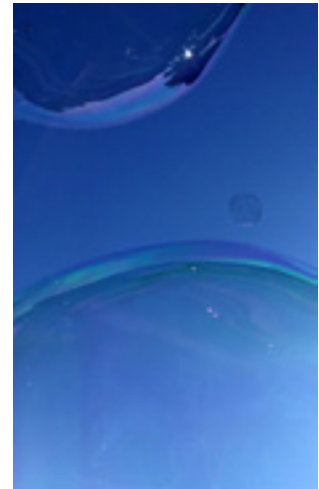
The creation of a virtual reality; the

sence of ambiguity; the

use of expressive language; the

use of contextualised and vernacular

language; the



² Lafreniere & Cox (2012, p. 321).

promotion of empathy; the personal
signature of the researcher/writer; and
the presence of aesthetic form.³

*Openness is a cornerstone of strong arts-based research... research questions emerge and change over time through a perspective of living inquiry... Arts-based research must demonstrate that artful expression is at the heart of inquiry.*⁴

To wit:

The articulation of a politics of hope, through symbolic and rhetorical means; the presence of aesthetic form; the effect created, such as empathy; the generation of new questions/inspiration for dialogue; effective, accurate, evocative, aesthetically interesting and engaging Arts-based research.⁵



But,

*...arts-based inquiry cannot be governed by pre-established rules and cannot be judged according to predetermined criteria. Those rules and categories are in part what the work itself is looking for.*⁶

³ Barone & Eisner, 1997, pp. 73-78.

⁴ Sinner et al., 2006, pp. 1238-1239

⁵ Lafreniere & Cox's scoping of the literature on these criteria includes the perspectives of a range of ABER scholars including Barone & Eisner, 1997; Denzin, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008. This review is most helpful in scoping the field and efficient for the purposes of this chapter.

⁶ Diamond, 1998, p. 392.

To wit:

Appropriateness,
clarity,
reliability,
rigour as well as
artistic criteria such as composition,
creativity,
originality,
thematic unity and
performative criteria of
emotions/feelings,
understanding,
response,
change.⁷



...the presence of the researcher must be “felt” in research involving the arts, explicitly revealing “the intersection of a researcher’s life with that of those researched.”⁸

To wit:

A/r/tography’s methodological concepts



of contiguity,
of living inquiry,
of openings,
of metaphor/metonymy,
of reverberations and
of excess.
Of self as a/r/t, and
of the identities
of and between.⁹

But,

⁷ Lafreniere & Cox.

⁸ Cole & Knowles in Neilsen, Cole, & Knowles, 2001, p. 215.

⁹ Sinner et al., 2006

*Can we evaluate ABER from a postmodern perspective and encourage border crossing, social activism, multiplicity, unauthorized methods, and unconventional styles? Might our purpose be to evoke and provoke all research in education? Are we called on to be the prophetic voices of resistance?*¹⁰

To wit:



Relevance to Education; Arts-based research is the methodology employed;

Significance;

Aesthetic Qualities;

Resonance;

Reflexivity;

Ethical Considerations¹¹

So much of ABER is about *feel*. It's challenging to criteriorize subjectivity, to determine what ABER is, what good ABER is.

But ,

we must try.
Brancusi would understand.



¹⁰ Slattery, 2003, p. 196

¹¹ Dissertation award criteria for the American Educational Research Association's Arts-based Educational Research Special Interest Group [AERA ABER SIG].

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REFLECTIONS OF THE TIDE: THE ADVENTURE OF THE WOMAN AND THE SEA

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Epiphany

What are the social, cultural and pedagogical implications of developing counter narratives through one's own story in creative practices as a form of resistance to historical (imperialistic) narrative about one's positioning in the world? This visual essay demonstrates how research inquiries can be taken up in deep and meaningful ways through critical creative practice.

If we consider the connective significance of our story, that it holds multiple discourses and voices and that sharing our story politicizes memory, we can interpret personal narratives as powerful spaces in which alternative histories can emerge (Smith, 2012). As we create, re-create and share such stories

our subjectivity becomes inseparable from the social because our personal stories act in relation to broader social/cultural dialogues (Pinar, 2012). Through this lens the story can be understood as an active dialogical counter-narrative that holds the power to contest dominant discourse. Importantly, through critical creative practice(s) we can learn how to (re)construct our relationships with ourselves, others and the Earth through a process of claiming, honouring and sharing our narratives, a process of decolonization (Smith, 2012) that recognizes and honours each contribution to our collective and continual unfolding multiplicity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of meaning and understanding of and in the world.

As an artist, poet, teacher and emerging scholar rooted in Indigenous ways of being and knowing, I enact methods of interruption of dominant discourse through contemplative practice and Indigenous methodology in my creative/artistic research. Embedded in Indigenous traditions of storytelling, my visual essays intend to create openings – spaces to engage with and develop alternative forms of knowing through emergent and evolving performative inter-text (Boutet, 2013; Irwin, 2013). My stories harness visual imagery, created using my own photographs and photo-digital collage processes, along with poetics to weave together experience(s) of selfhood, identity, loss of identity, erasure, connection, disconnection, spirituality, and my relationship to the Earth, my ancestors, Indigenous knowledge(s), dreams and memories.

Reflections of the Tide: The Adventures of the Woman and the Sea is a personal narrative of becoming that explores the complexities of decolonizing “self,” one that ultimately begins with the journey inward, followed by a plethora of work unravelling, restructuring and rebuilding self relationally, in connection with Earth and Others. By sharing my story, I invited the wider arts education community to consider the pedagogical value of advancing experimental perspectives and methodologies in artistic research and to offer a view into the nature and potential of the creative dissertation in art education research.

This story begins with a departure from scholarly obedience and enters into a rite of passage toward identity through relatedness. “Modsiw” is a character I created for this story as a transcendental figure that metaphorically represents my auto-poetic

self, a multi-contextualized self who evolves through a critical ontological process. Each image symbolizes Mo’s diverse and vast journey, traversing land and sea, as she resists the colonial lens and reshapes her sense of self. She is becoming, and through her becoming she is powered by the particles of energies within her whose origins range from a variety of known and unknown events in the universe. Modsiw could be construed as a cosmic being, a child of the Earth and a creature of the sea.

Reflections of the Tide: The adventures of the woman and the sea

The Emergence of Mo

In the shadows of the folds of her skin arose an illuminating light exposing the place where Mo emerged - on the inside of her middle finger. The power of this movement ignited energy in the universe so great that it created a crack that traversed sky and sea, revealing a large crescent moon. Now, a new space-time dimension existed through which Mo's emergence would change the course of her-story.

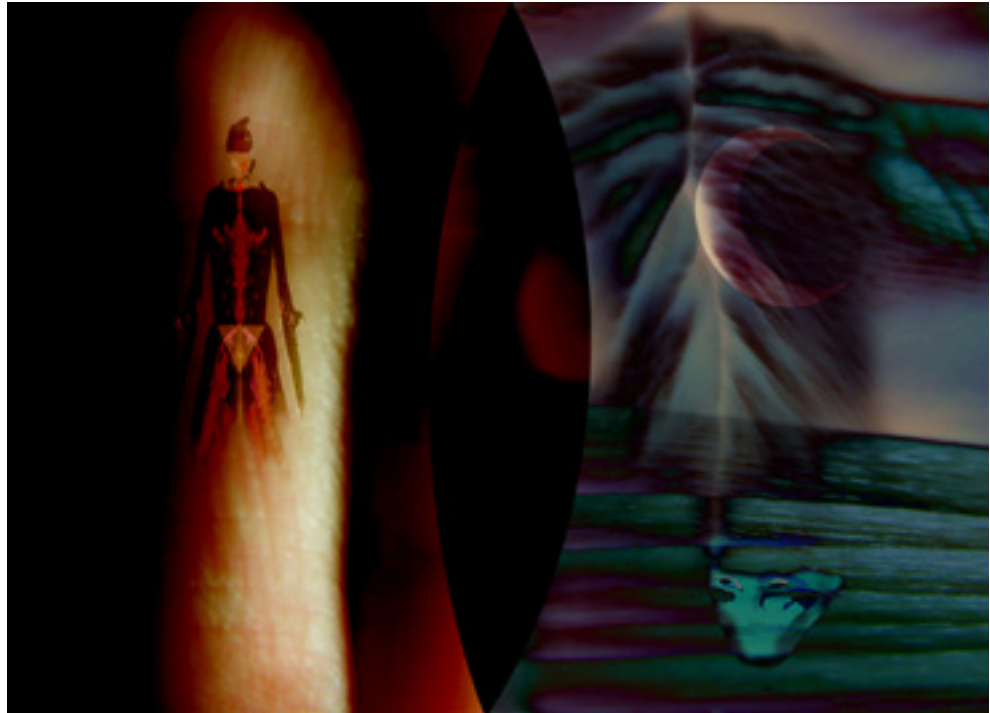


Figure 1. The Woman and the Sea

Every pore in my body opened itself up before me.

G A I A

a geo-physiological system wherein the resident life of a planet coupled with their environment together act as a single, self-regulating system (Lovelock, 2000). That this was significant only began to define the possibilities for Mo on her journey.



In thinking of where she came from and imagining where she could go Mo was certain of at least a few things. She wanted to develop a language of selfhood to define herself within various contexts and she wanted to experience authentic connections that would empower her abilities to act in relation to a multi-dimensional and living world.

The problem had been, however, that Mo felt she lost her self-power through the limitations of individualism, from the world she emerged, which she had to somehow now unravel.

[∞] Through critical creative practice we can learn how to (re)construct our relationships with ourselves, others and the Earth. The beginning of this path lies in the ability to reconnect with our inner knowing, to perceived things differently.

Epiphany # 1: Envisioning the possibilities of deconstructing the social and political forces that isolated and positioned me in opposition to others. Gaining insight into the elements and conditions that link me to the world;

Goal # 1: Reconfigure suppressive elements in my mind to regain a sense of belonging.

∞

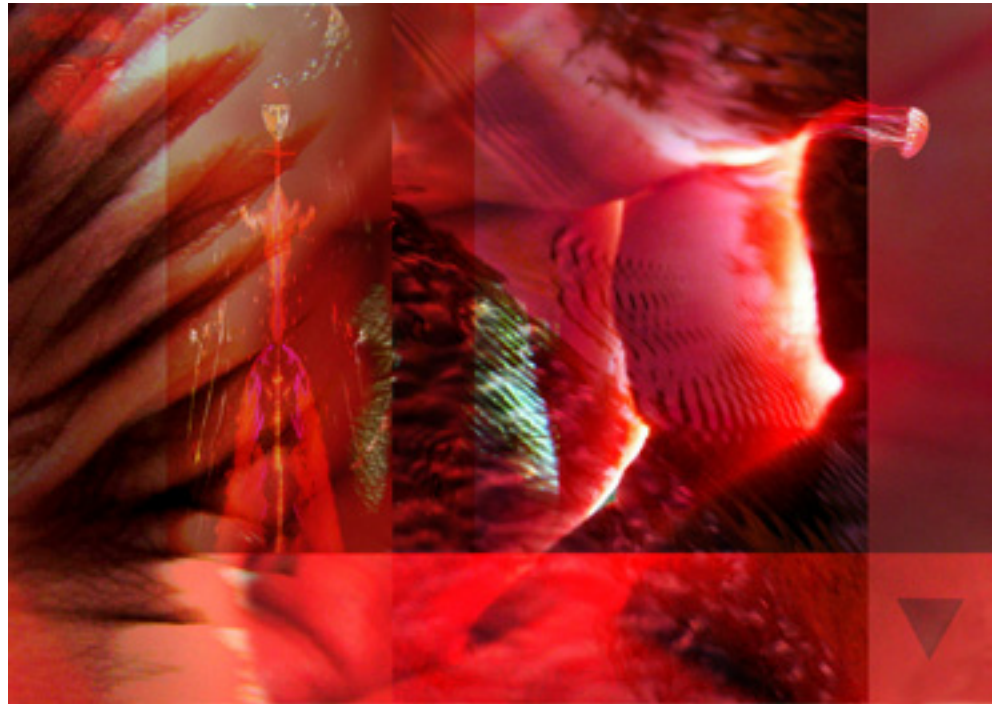


Figure 2. Sea (E)scape

[∞] As we create, re-create and share our stories we can experience the link between our subjectivity and broader social and cultural experience. Developing this connection is a process of decolonizing the "self," as we recognize our interconnectedness with OTHER.

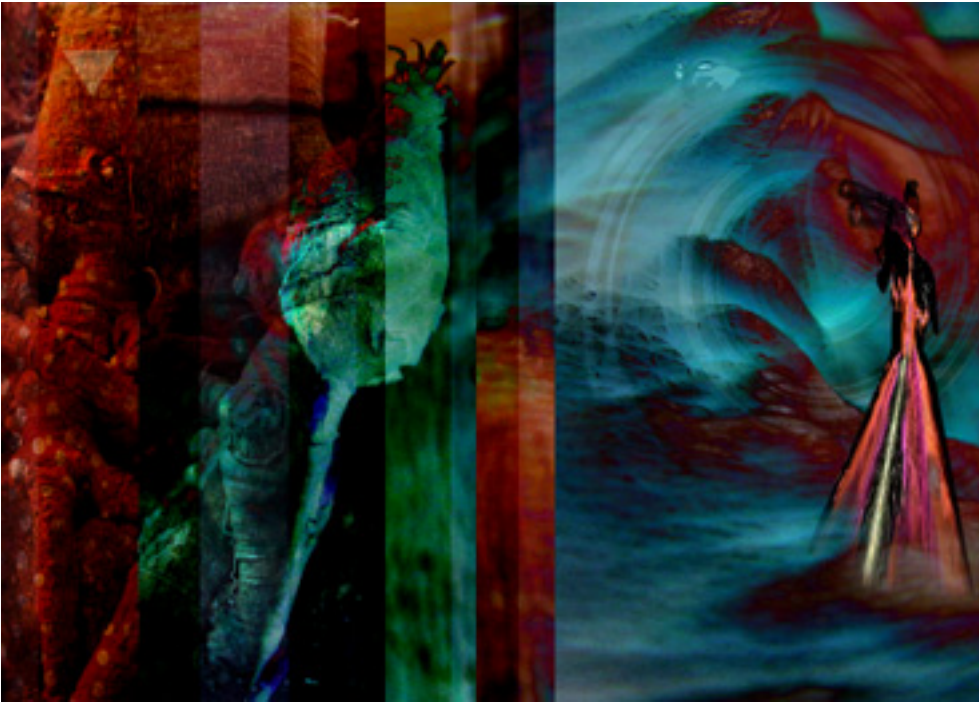


Figure 3. Binocular Vision

∞

Immense
blocks of ice;
landscapes
blaze my eyes;
bones singing
like small birds...

[∞]Resisting the colonial lens creates openings for provocative intellectual dialogue that explores alternative knowledge, expanding our perceptions to consider how we can envision "truth."

Mo's Remembering

Mo found herself at the edge of a universe standing in the smallest rowboat possible, floating on a surface that instinctually reminded her of an umbilicated belly. It was here that Mo encountered the great smoking mirror within a hermetic star. Legend has it that the great smoking mirror reflects our belief systems and what we hold as the "truth."



Figure 4. Row Row Row your Boat

DANCING THE DREAM

in front of my smoking mirror,
creating illusions,
through separation and disconnectedness;
M A S K S worn to fit into the hierarchical world;
internalizing the images, campaigns, rumors, gossip and judgments of others.

∞

Crying over you, it cannot be true
that YOU and I are
NOT LIVING –
for no one;
for something
for what?

Lying in bloodstained blankets; what is the dilemma?
Death certificate, birth certificates, seeds of origins –
Lost records.

Lying there cold and without tools to negotiate the contradiction,
to de-construct, mask after mask –
this hierarchy of gifts;
good little girl, obedient woman, pure woman, beautiful woman,
oh cursed independent woman, man-woman.
collected like marbles,
she had them in her chest where they congregated with her love poems.

[∞]As an active dialogical counter-narrative, stories hold the power to contest dominant discourse. The connective significance of our story is in the sharing, where alternative histories can emerge. (Smith, 2012).

Epiphany#2: compartmentalization and superiority—self-imposed restrictions, of being – from being - in being -- being in conflict with relentless expectations. Disconnected from spirit—isolated at the core, desperately running on the treadmill of imposing superiority over things, reducing ourselves, others, animals and the environment to objects for possession.

Goal # 2: get off the treadmill

∞

c o n s c i e n t i z a c a o

G	F	F	A	Q	I	O	Z	I	M	K	E	Z	V	C
L	L	X	S	M	Y	A	Q	T	A	N	D	Q	I	K
T	E	L	K	E	F	C	F	E	X	Z	K	S	R	I
G	S	K	R	Y	E	A	F	N	U	D	D	Q	R	E
L	R	J	P	S	C	Z	J	I	Y	F	X	C	G	Z
U	U	R	F	M	N	I	Z	U	Q	J	J	J	P	E
Y	O	L	U	Q	Q	T	I	U	M	B	T	V	H	V
S	Y	G	I	C	O	N	S	C	I	O	U	S	I	I
P	E	I	K	B	M	E	O	I	N	W	A	R	D	T
I	B	C	R	I	T	I	C	A	L	S	F	L	W	C
R	O	Q	P	Q	X	C	N	B	A	G	C	D	Y	E
I	O	H	O	P	I	S	M	O	D	S	I	W	T	L
T	X	A	V	Y	F	N	F	Q	L	G	I	W	U	F
X	T	A	X	B	Z	O	S	D	P	N	S	V	A	E
E	E	K	U	C	M	C	X	G	Y	H	K	B	Q	R

[∞]“getting off the treadmill” is an act of emancipation through conscientizacao (Freire, 1972). Through contemplative practice, as we focus and give our attention to discovering meaning and connecting to our inner source(s) of knowing and knowledge we liberate ourselves (Walsh, Bickel & Leggo, 2015). Can you find conscientizacao in the word search? What else might you find on your search?

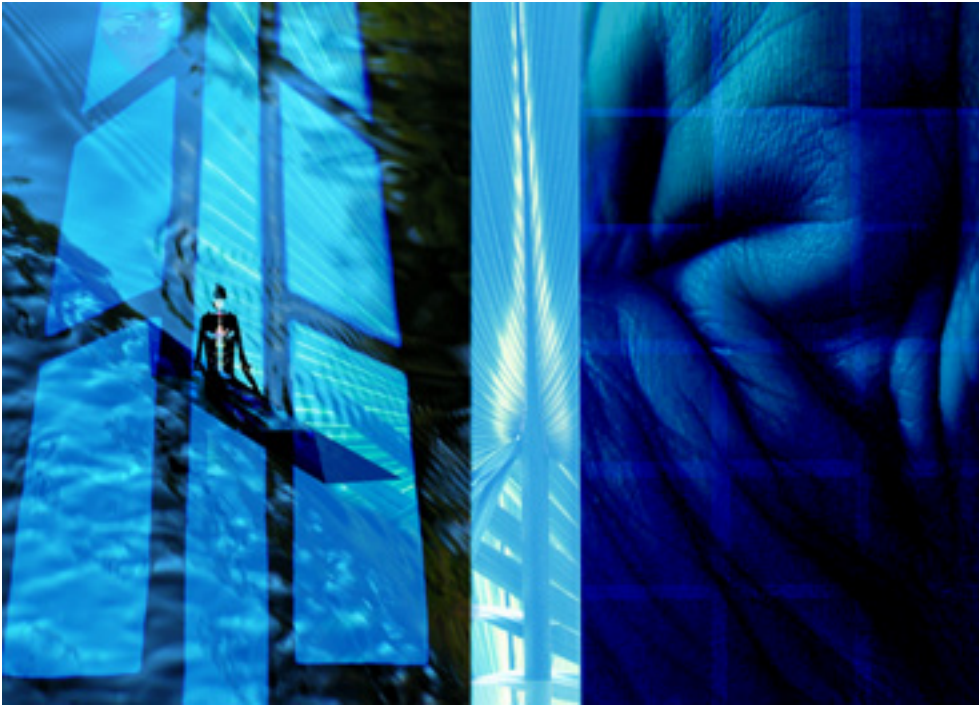


Figure 5. Through Cathedral Windows

I come from the earth,
resisting closed doors of silence,
drifting toward encounters of another language;
Sliding down rivers
in my refugee boat
with love in my hands;
Entering the motionless world where
fragrance of magnolia lifts the living wings of my heart;
re-awakens my spirit.
I am rooted in the cusp of singing birds
RAVENS
piercing me like a dart.

Mo was shown the interdependence and interconnectedness in those communities of the earth, sky and sea, galaxies and constellations and the forces that kept them together in equilibrium. She had felt deeply that the elder's visions of active liberation, creativity, clarity, connectedness and dignity could call for the return of the great cosmic grandmother to rest on the original patio with itchy palms and her flowery chest filled with gems and obsessive ideas.

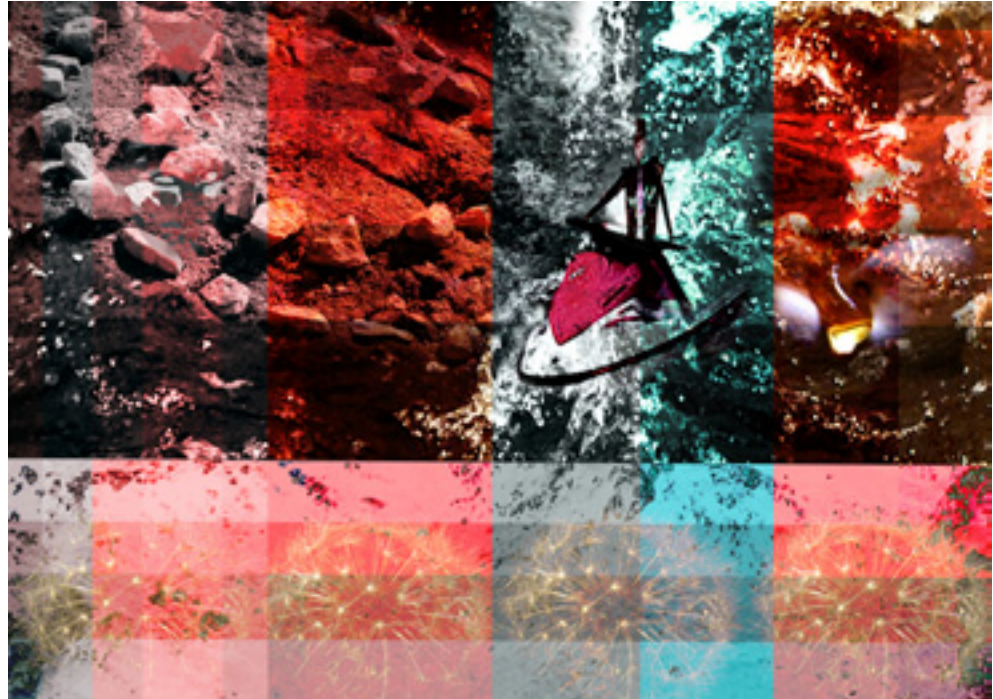


Figure 6. See-Do Medicine

∞

[∞] Claiming and sharing our narratives is an Indigenous pathway to learning. Each contribution to our collective and continual unfolding multiplicity (Deleuze & Guattari 1987) of meaning and understanding of and in the world is recognized and honoured. (Absolon, 2011; Archibald, 2008; Ermine, 1995; Kelly, 2015; Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers & Leggo, 2015; Smith, 2012).

S H E

is the keeper of ancient wisdoms

WITHIN

permeating your existence.

A river runs through her dress,
connecting her with the power of the lunar crescent moon and
the elements of the universe,
elements that cannot be captured, imprisoned, boxed or sold.

Her breath animates your soul,
lucid intuition that will scream hysterically to be heard,
through deafening cathedral bells,
sirens,
gunfire.

Cutting through confusion with a reckoning force and then,
slipping away down bends in the road,
making its way through your dreams.

w h i s p e r s

That she and the elders were in sync sparked Mo's sense of hope because she realized that blood is actually blue and emancipation, essential, critically and powerful, is very BRIGHT YELLOW – so bright that it can create a wild fire that will expose myths and decode power. Learn with the people how to T A K E P O W E R B A C K, one elder said, free yourself from the fear of freedom and proceed through authentic connections. Liberate your embodied spirit another elder told her, but you have to be willing to make the pilgrimage, to build bridges between the mind and imagination and activate alternative knowing.

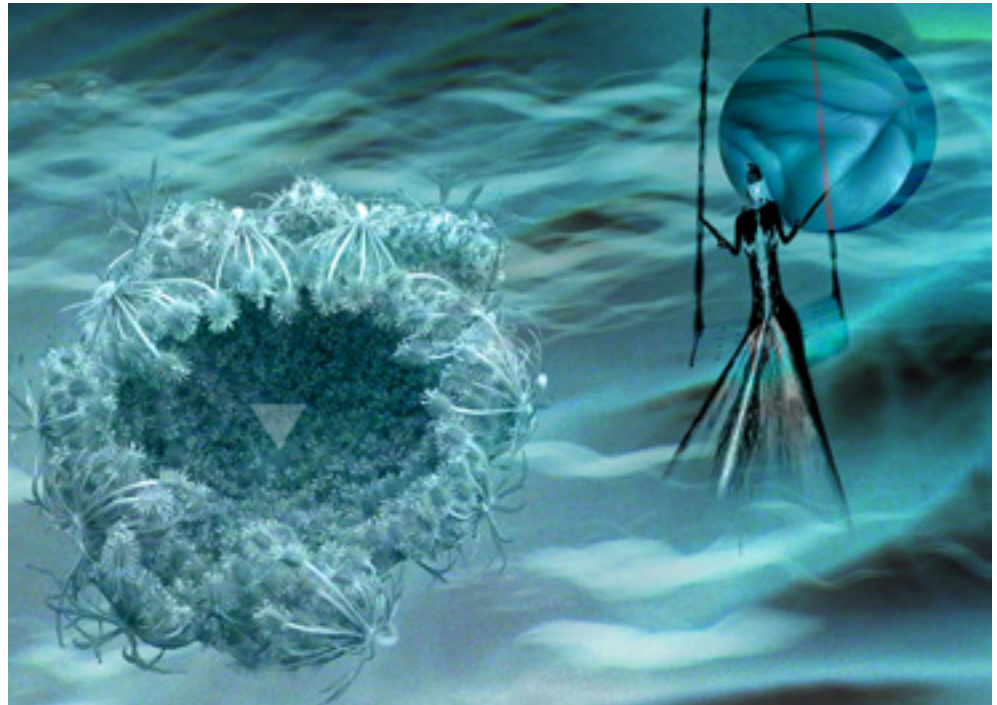


Figure 7. Freedom Swing

MODSIW

Although she saw it in a dream and it seemed to be nonsense,
like stumbling in branches,
she never-the-less believed
that belonging in ancient parks with defiant trees;
where wild seas coddle their coral like their testimonies of survival,
the emptiness of indifference barely succeeds;

Where mobs of alternatives,
fertilizing bees and rites of leathered skin,
ignite promises of joy,
prosperity and courtesy of heart;

Where fragrances of love and fragrances of death
congregate in dignity;
where liberty and where love exist
in the light of houses on a distant mountainside;
where, while carrying ancestral bones,
songs of night birds
rise over city bridges,
piercing silence
before vanishing in soft rains.

To have passage through the earth and emerge as we are –
all things, all bodies, each to itself adored,
necessarily magnificent of all reality.

Reflections of the Tide: The Adventure of the Woman and the Sea is a visual essay that invites the arts education community to consider a shifting paradigm in arts education research where politicizing memory, generating counter-narratives and sharing stories invites innovation and embraces the unfolding metamorphosis of scholarship in provocative, creative and intellectual spaces. Through critical creative practice(s) personal narratives are powerful spaces in which alternative histories can emerge, a critical process of decolonization that recognizes and honour each contribution (Smith, 2012) to our collective and continual unfolding of meaning and understanding. Radical forms of resistance are an expression of hope, and an element of transformation as we move toward creative dialogical approaches to learning, research and knowledge production (Giroux, 2001). Attending to such provocations not only challenges scholarly obedience but is an opportunity to advance experimental perspectives and methodologies through artistic research.

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PERFORMING INTERVENTIONS:
A PRACTICE-LED APPROACH
TO DOCTORAL RESEARCH

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***Abandonment:
A Conceptual Exploration***

In this chapter, I discuss my recent doctoral research entitled, *In/Visibility of the Abandoned School: Beyond Representations of School Closure* (LeBlanc, 2015), a visual and practice-led mode of inquiry in which I photographed closed and abandoned schools in Canada and I engaged in a conceptual exploration of the term *abandonment*.

Inspired by inventive engagements of contemporary art, my research explored the performative quality of the a/visual, an emergent motif in my practice that provoked the exegesis to take a conceptual turn,

disrupting with more traditional approaches to the dissertation format. Rather than trying to capture an event in a more traditional photojournalistic way, I engaged in a counter-photojournalistic approach (Cotton, 2009), in which the wake of an event was depicted by what had been left behind. This genre of photography, in which absence of the human body emits a powerful presence, plays with what is seen and what is not seen in the visual composition. The encounter – meaning, what is presented before the viewer and what the viewer brings to the photograph – becomes a method of imagining the economic, social, cultural and



Figure 1. The Void (Digital composite and photography by author), 2015.

political forces that have motivated the act of abandonment. It captures the static temperament of an abandoned school through a deadpan aesthetic, creating the conditions necessary for a dynamic encounter to unfold. As such, it is an invitation for the viewer to enter the image and to ponder the memories, stories, myths and meanings that an abandoned school provokes.

I developed five concepts for abandoned schools: the void, the ghost town, the crypt, the corpse and the wake, and through an examination of art-making as a form of inquiry, I came to understand abandonment as an act of surrender and reclamation that can be a tool for understanding the self in relation to places and/or things that are simultaneously engaged in a state of transition. My inquiry examined the role of photography in arts-based educational research and the function of the photo-essay, which allowed for multiple interpretations through emphasizing the rhetorical potential of images.

Recently, there has been a surge of arts-based researchers (Boulton-Funke, Irwin, LeBlanc & May, 2016; Irwin, 2013; Irwin & O'Donoghue, 2012; May, O'Donoghue & Irwin, 2014; Jensen, Ziegler, & Rajanti, 2018; Rolling, 2015), who are drawing from interventionist art practices, purposely staging interruptions into mundane, everyday events and activities in order to produce new

ways of thinking. An intervention is most commonly used in daily vocabulary as a method of disruption; confronting someone to seek help with a problem, a dependency or an abuse of some kind. In the discourse of contemporary art, however, the term refers to an artwork that is installed in a broad range and most often, public site (Sudenberg, 2000). Following in the tradition of site-specific art beginning in the 1960s and 1970s with Fluxus Happenings, Minimalism, Dadism, Environmental art, and Land art (Bishop, 2005; Grande, 2004; Kwon, 2000; Lippard, 2014), an artistic intervention is often described as a social practice or a relational form of aesthetics that is a re-territorialization of space (Smith, 2010), taking over an urban or rural site in order to speak of, address or influence the political, historical or cultural perspectives of the time (Debord, 2006; Loftus, 2009; Pinder, 2008; Smith, 2010). Conceptualized as a provocation, it is meant to generate a reaction or a debate. The focal point, therefore, becomes the dialogue and the exchange that takes place on-site, taking into consideration the event as the work of art (Bishop, 2006; Bourriaud, 2002; Kester, 2004).

To complete my research, I photographed sixteen closed schools in cities across Canada and I spoke with principals, students, board directors, faculty and community members about their experiences with school closure. For one of the final stages of my inquiry, I projected images of the inside of the de-commissioned school onto the physical structure outside and invited the public, community members who experienced the closure of the school, to take part in an immersive experience in which their own stories and imaginations became

an integral part of the artwork. In my dissertation, I articulate how this type of inquiry acts as an intervention – a social practice that ignites possibilities to materialize, not in form, but in moments of interaction. As a result, it is concerned with the encounter and with the experience that occurs because of art and because of the artist who is working as a catalyst within the context of the everyday (Loftus, 2009).

The Exegesis: A Virtual Spatial Configuration

Conceptualized as a work of art, my exegesis challenges the more traditional or formulaic style (Casaneve, 2010) of the dissertation structure, becoming an intervention within the academy. Rather than answering or advancing a hypothesis, it asks that readers/viewers consider artistic inquiry in a new way, perhaps even “provoking a shift in thought itself” (Bolt, 2007, p. 29). Bringing together art and writing, it shifts the focus from the artwork, as an objective artifact, to the spaces *between* the artist, the artwork and the viewer. By bringing together the written and the visual, the exegesis is situated as a spatial practice, or ‘spatial morphology’ (Stein, 1989; Trigg, 2012) that parallels similar concepts in geographic and urban studies, particularly how urban development is composed of an interconnected series of processes that lead to unforeseen situations and actions (Bataille, 1991, cited by Nielsen, 2002).

Inspired by artist and art critic Jane Rendell (2010), my dissertation explores the material, emotional, political and conceptual sites of artistic engagement by taking into consideration its site-specificity. Working within the realms of phenomenology and

psychogeography, it is a mediation of reality based on the projection of emotion, memory and imagination. As such, it is unlike a thesis in that it is not designed to answer, address, create or advance a hypothesis nor is it meant as an explanation of the artwork. Rather, it “give[s] direction to theoretical ideas” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxix) and it produces a multi-sensorial engagement where the potential for relationships and meaning making remain open, fluid, and unfixd.

The written report is organized as a topological configuration (Rendell, 2010), that is, it is divided into five concessions; the void, the ghost-town, the crypt, the corpse, and the wake. In the case of abandoned schools, concessions refer to the right to use land or property for a specific purpose, a condition normally granted by the government or other controlling body. Each concession, sounding both like ‘session’ and ‘confession,’ then is a written and visual act of disclosure, leading the reader/viewer into a different, yet

relational world. Conceptualized as an immersive exhibition organized into five subsequent installations, each concession is guided by a single metaphor that holds a specific vantage point, perspective and employment of space and time through which I weave together theoretical interpretations, journal entries, observations and images. In doing so, each concession becomes rhizomatically (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) connected as to remain partial, yet relational to one another. Entering the abandoned school, the reader/viewer encounters a myriad of images, some of which are overexposed, blurred, or intimately close-up and they are asked to entertain the affect or the impressions that they encounter in their wake – even if understanding is perforated, raw or formless.

My exegesis parallels other situation-based artworks found in many twenty-first century art practices in that the reader/viewer is invited to become an active participant with the work. This format not



Figure 2. The Void in 2 Perspectives (Photography by author), 2015.

only challenges the more traditional dissertation structure, it creates an engagement that asks the viewer to become engrossed in “a psychologically absorptive, dream-like environment” (Bishop, 2005, p. 10) that requires a bodily response that may trigger personal fantasies, individual memories or cultural associations. In this context the reader/viewer does not encounter a character on scene, but rather, is positioned in the scene as the protagonist of the story. This stance demands that they become attuned to how they are being positioned in space and time.

The Visual Exegesis

Comprising 2,487 photographs, my inquiry is positioned as a visual archive that, in the traditions of documentary and conceptual pho-

tography, records some of the overlooked places and textures as observed in Canada’s decommissioned schools. Each photograph, carefully selected and arranged in the exegesis, holds a specific place within the larger photo-essay that comprises the work. For Ricardo Marin-Viadel and Joaquin Roldan (2010), a photo-essay lends itself to multiple interpretations while exploiting the “rhetorical and narrative potential of images, not just their figurative or representational functions” (p. 11). Each photograph is curated as an intertextual form of imagery (Duncum, 2010), purposely staged in and through the written text in order to extend, and at times, disrupt what was written, asking that the reader/viewer pause and to look at the abandoned school as a visual (de)composition.

I employed visual organizational frameworks proposed by Marin-Viadel and Roldan (2010) who argue extensively for the role that photography plays in arts-based educational research (also see Marin-Viadel & Roldan, 2012; Marin-Viadel, Roldan, & Cepeda-Morales, 2013). In one sense, the entire exegesis can be understood as one entire photo-essay, however, each concession and each individual series (in the form of diptychs, triptychs, and so on), and each photograph,



Figure 3. Unfixed, The Void Un/Done (Photography by author), 2015.

can also function as singular units. As a photographic discourse (see Marin-Viadel & Roldan, 2010), my exegesis can also be interpreted as a congruent visual sequence in which the abandoned school, staged as a singular experience, transforms in successive stages as the investigation unfolds. The conceptual order in which they have been placed intentionally draws attention to the interrelations and the interconnections *between* each image, series and concession, which creates a visual line of reasoning throughout the entire body of work. Among the visual frameworks already discussed and proposed by Marin-Viadel and Roldan (2010), I also employ the conception of a photo-abstract, a series of photographs that synthesizes the main idea of the whole exegesis, along with visual quotations that are presented throughout the text at the bottom of the page like a footnote.

The A/Visual as an Emergent Visual Motif in the Exegesis

Combining literary tropes with my imagery was a way of working that emerged during my proc-



Figure 4. Visual Remains, (Photography by the author), 2015.

ess in which I used language in a figurative (or non-literal) sense in an attempt to make connections through: metaphor (similarity and comparison); metonymy (association and contiguity); synecdoche (interchanging of more and less inclusive terms); and irony (contraries and awareness of incongruity). These tropes created various layers in and through my photographic practice, producing multiple planes of meaning. Pauline Sameshima and Rita Irwin (2008) argue that literary tropes form “various layers of vibrant interpretation” (p. 5) because they create intersections that are emergent, connective, and relational. As such, each concession begins with a composite image comprising of one or more photographs that are in some instances superimposed and layered over one another with varying opacities, with a series of metaphors that play off the central metaphor framing the concession (see Figure 1). This image is an “ekphrastic text,” a rhetorical trope that creates a relation between one medium and another (Edwards, 2012; Russek, 2008). It is an invitation for the reader/viewer to not only look at the artwork, but to participate with/in the void that is present in both forms of representation. These images also suggest that the text be read aloud, provoking a performative, even theatrical response while allowing the work to be accessed in several ways (Edwards, 2012). In turn, I de-

liberately adopted this approach to my dissertation. Although the text in each image may be read from left to right as is the traditional mode of reading in the west, it may also be accessed through the various openings in the negative space that punctuate the text, the photograph, and the spaces in-between both, further opening spaces for thinking, imagining and asking questions pertaining to “the thingness” of the abandoned school, which as an object of contemplation and as a site of invention, is something that is both slippery and ineffable.

Both the photograph and the text present a void, the central visual motif that emerged in my work that renders the students, the teachers, the administrators, the faculty and the curriculum in the abandoned school as an absent, yet ever-present subject. Although the exegesis is largely built on a visual body of work, the unseen takes precedence, hinting to the immanence of the abandoned school, staging it as something that can only be imagined. Evoking the subterranean, the hidden and the ghostly, it also suggests my power as the artist, someone who sees but is not seen in the body of work. Cultural scholar Esther Peeren (2014) claims that the power of the invisible resides in the “avisual,” in which the things that are unseen are an accumulation of sensing the visual without actually observing anything visual. As such, the “avis-

ual” becomes a “phantom temporality” — something that continues to haunt because it never achieves “full visibility” (p. 36).

The Performative Quality of the Exegesis

Although it may not be apparent, the structure of my exegesis enables analogous strategies in which the five concessions create a multi-layering of process/es. William F. Pinar (1975) has long argued that we use analogous strategies constantly and consistently without explicitly thinking about them. For example, when we encounter a seemingly inexplicable conundrum or enigma, we may decide to back away from it or to do another task or a series of other tasks so that we may come back to the encounter at a later time. Pinar deduces that when we do this, we enable time to pass so that we may move to another ontological level in which the problem not only looks different, but is different. Pinar (1975) recounts, “we left the problem initially because we could not solve it on the conceptual level where we were.” (p. 3). Each concession speaks to the ontology of wanting, or desiring to know more about something that we are unable to see while “in-



Figure 5. Absence of Power/Power of Absence (Photography by author), 2011.

side” (LeBlanc, 2015) the abandoned school because an understanding of the present demands that we shift our perspective, our angle, and our point of view. This is an analogy for the difficulty that practice-led research entails in which movement can only be gained through the repetitive acts that art practice makes possible (Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Bolt, 2009). Drawing on the work of Martin Heidegger, Barbara Bolt (2007) argues that artistic practice enables a particular form of sight known as “circumspection” (p. 30) whereby knowing arises through handling materials *in* and *through* practice. The exegesis allowed my art practice to lead the inquiry, emerging and unfolding in space and through time. Inaugurating movement and transformation, it was conducive to the performative research paradigm (Bolt, 2009; Haseman, 2007), a mode of engagement that can only be understood belatedly as a form of retrospection (Stewart, 2007). In my experience, opening my art-as-research up to experimentation offered a new model of knowledge that can work with/in the academy (Arnold, 2012), allowing for new dimensions and definitions of knowledge and how they can contribute to learning.

Echoing Artistic Practice

My exegesis echoes artistic practice in that it does not provide any specific hypotheses or conclusions. The a/visual form emphasizes the superimposed and fragmented quality of my inquiry where, as a force, it produces a rupture/encounter (O’Sullivan, 2006) in that rather than providing a narrative, it creates a point of entry into narrative inviting the reader/viewer to participate in an ambiguous, transitional and anomalous

place (Ellsworth, 2005) that may even provoke bodily responses that lie outside verbal-semantic-linguistic representation (Bennett, 2005). The a/visual also pertains to my role as an artist/researcher, who had to trust the process as it unfolded not knowing where it would lead. As a form of inquiry, it was led and guided by an acute sense of wonder and curiosity about the world and my place with/in it. Furthermore, when the photograph and my photographic practice was examined, elaborated, generalized, and individualized, it became what Derrida (2010) describes as “a metalanguage through which larger philosophical, historical, aesthetic, and political questions [could] be brought into focus” (Derrida quoted in Richter, 2010, p. xxiii). Drawing on Martin Heidegger’s (1971/2001) concept of the nothing and Hannah Arendt’s space of appearance (1958/1998), this artistic and philosophical endeavor provoked me to shift my stance. It demanded that I look at things more closely and that I look at things again – from a varying angle and through a different lens. In return, the exegesis is staged so that the reader/viewer is invited to pay attention to the subtle nuances of the abandoned school while taking into consideration their (implicit) assumptions. With this stance, they may begin to pivot through multiple levels of perception, coming to understand that the abandoned school tells an alternate story to that of closure, emphasizing how several cultural, historical, political, and social lineages are simultaneously at work in the temporal exchange.

As an a/visual form of arts-based, practice-led research, this dissertation falls within the performative paradigm, which Barbara Bolt (2009) and Brian Haseman (2007) argue, differs from the more dominant qualitative or

quantitative paradigms in research. Although my exegesis presents a narrative, it punctuates it with negative space affecting the reader/viewer by work of omission (Russek, 2008). As such, I am telling a story through photography and through writing with a commitment to art and reciprocity so that the viewer/reader can participate in the meaning of the work while making further connections, questions, and insights, thereby opening the work up to possibility and to multiple interpretations. Situated within the context of curriculum studies, my exegesis speaks to the significance that subjective experience in which the embodied, the felt, the porous and the fluid, in conjunction with the outside, the hidden and the null curriculum (Eisner, 1994) holds for (re)shaping perspectives, dispositions, skills, and knowledge (Schubert, 2008). As a form of invention, it asks that we position ourselves within the work so that we may explore and discover new and alternate ways of teaching and learning.

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“STITCHING” VOICES INTO THE PATCHWORK QUILT OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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To Assemble and Stitch a Research Dissertation

When I learnt the art of patchwork quilting, the elderly teacher bemoaned the need to hold a quilt together with stitches. The joy in quilting, she explained, stems from a delight in fabrics, colours and the quilt design. She joked that were it possible to ‘whack a quilt together’ with glue, it would be preferable to the labour-intensive process of assembly by stitching. However, to ‘short-cut’ the assem-

bly process would not produce a quilt likely to be appreciated for its beauty, stability or warmth. I extend this notion to the doctoral thesis process.¹

Beginning doctoral research after more than twenty years as an early childhood teacher, the complex task of layering and constructing a piece of work with value for both myself and my colleagues in the early childhood sector demanded a methodological approach that would appreciate and

¹ The terms thesis and dissertation are used interchangeably in this chapter to discuss the written and illustrated doctoral thesis developed by a PhD research candidate.

feature the voices of participants, while acknowledging my own labour of love in crafting the research. I intuitively sought ways to retain my identity, while making sense of the complexities of research design and satisfying the expectations of the academy. As a quilter, I found myself increasingly applying familiar quilting terminology to visualise research processes and elements. Advised by my supervisors to investigate the arts-based educational research paradigm, I consequently embraced the invitation by Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis and Grauer (2006,) to “muse on the aesthetics, consider the ambiguity, and reside in the divergence,” which ultimately led me to visually deconstruct qualitative research and the dissertation construction process using a quilting metaphor (p. 1254).

Much like a quilt, the construction of an effective research design requires the methodological alignment of questions, aims and methods wherein the elements of the research project are joined together as a “cohesive whole” rather than “fragmented” parts (Creswell, 2013, p. 50); and where the methodological choices align with, and are informed by, the philosophical and theoretical assumptions of the study (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Kramer-Kile, 2012). My desire to conduct iterative research that appreciates the complexities of the case to reflexively evoke meaning (Flannery, 2001; Koelsch, 2012) was concurrently tempered by the suggestion that to credibly interpret and articulate the beliefs and interests of both participants and researcher requires a carefully-

constructed, intentionally pieced research design (Creswell, 2013; Kramer-Kile, 2012; O’Sullivan, 2015). Inspired by O’Donoghue (2015), these imperatives compelled me to embrace the provocative mind-set of an artist to articulate my ideas visually and to connect the familiar to the unknown in order to make sense of the world (and the research context) through artful design. Consequently, the dissertation process, envisaged as a *patchwork quilt*, was articulated and diagrammatically constructed from card, text, thread and transparent parchment to position the researcher as *quilt-maker*.

This chapter describes and illustrates how my thesis operates as a qualitative patchwork quilt, a metaphor developed to guide arts-based educational research that aims to not only appreciate and respectfully disclose the visual arts beliefs and pedagogy of early childhood educators, but to examine, interrogate and articulate my own voice, interests and methodological reflections within the complex construction of a PhD thesis by compilation.² These voices, stitched into the patchwork layers of the research, informed an emergent and reflexive exploration of the visual arts beliefs and pedagogy of Australian early childhood educators. In addition, I propose that not only is my rendered researcher’s voice the stitch that holds together the assemblage of research findings, but also that my intentionally hidden voice, slip-stitched into the seams and in-between spaces of the research story, further strengthens and stabilises the dissertation. The complex layers and processes of re-

² A higher degree research thesis by compilation enables the PhD candidate to include published or publishable journal articles and book chapters in their thesis.

search design and thesis construction are metaphorically aligned with the notions and elements of quilt making to propose a reversible research quilt where the pieced construction of an enlightening conceptual framework features equally with the research findings as a contribution to the academy.

The imperative to undertake a PhD thesis emerged from my own “professional” and “educational” life (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1237) and was underpinned by my desire to present research “that matters for others” (Chambers, 2004, p. 7, cited by Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1238). After two decades as an early childhood teacher I was concerned about the pedagogical impacts of an apparent lack of visual arts confidence and content knowledge amongst early childhood educators. My research therefore presents an examination, appreciation and articulation of the visual arts beliefs and pedagogy of twelve early childhood educators located in four early childhood education and care settings in two regional communities in New South Wales, Australia. A comparative case study design utilised interviews, observation, document analysis, environmental audits and photography to gather rich data. At the same time

my research aims to stitch together a dissertation that connects the expectations of the academy with my own desire for expressivity. Supporting this desire, Eisner (1997) encourages researchers to align qualitative methods with their personal interests, strengths and aptitudes. My use of familiar quilting terms progressively demystified the complexity of research design and enabled me to embrace my identity as a researcher and align it with my identity as a teacher and artist.

Quilt Layers and Research Layers

While others have previously utilised a quilt metaphor to linguistically describe the assemblage of research data (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Flannery, 2001; Khalfa, 2003;

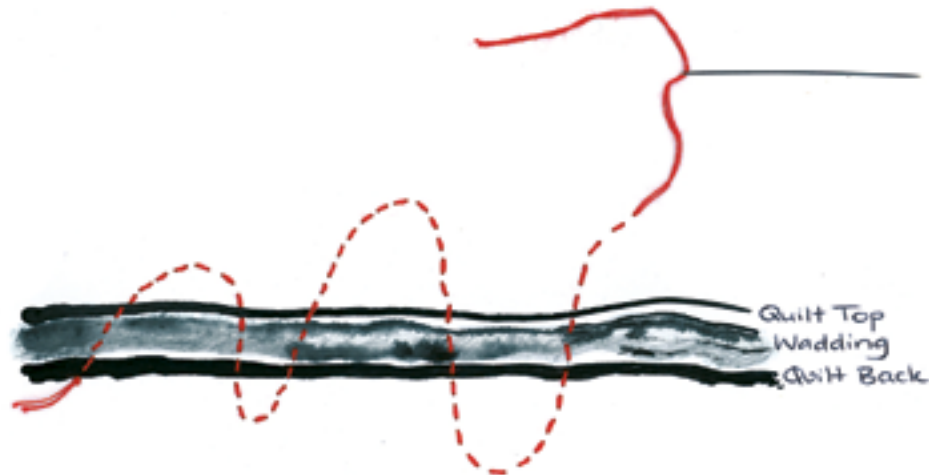


Figure 1. The quilting stitch holds three constructed layers together.

Koelsch, 2012; Parr, 2010), I extend the metaphor to interrogate and a/r/tographically (Sinner et al., 2006) visualize the layered components and construction of research dissertation. Parsons' (2015) suggestion that metaphors can be visually illustrated inspired me to construct stitched diagrams from card, text, thread and transparent parchment to enlighten the layers and components of the research design process. Indeed, the images presented in this chapter offer a methodological metaphor by aligning visual makings and text.

A patchwork quilt is constructed from a decorative, pieced top layer, a fabric backing and, between these layers, a piece of wadding. The three layers are sandwiched and held together by a decorative running stitch known as the quilting stitch (see Figure 1). Aligning quilting with research, Flannery (2001) suggests that the quilt top represents the research data that is seen by others and that the backing of the quilt, while not readily visible, aligns with the knowledge and expertise that underpin processes of inquiry. She further aligns the completed quilt with the publication of findings (Flannery, 2001). While my research design shares several metaphorical design elements with Flannery's imagery, it extends upon these ideas to consider both the component layers of the research design as well as the thesis construction. I now share my emergent journey as a researcher, aligning quilt-making layers

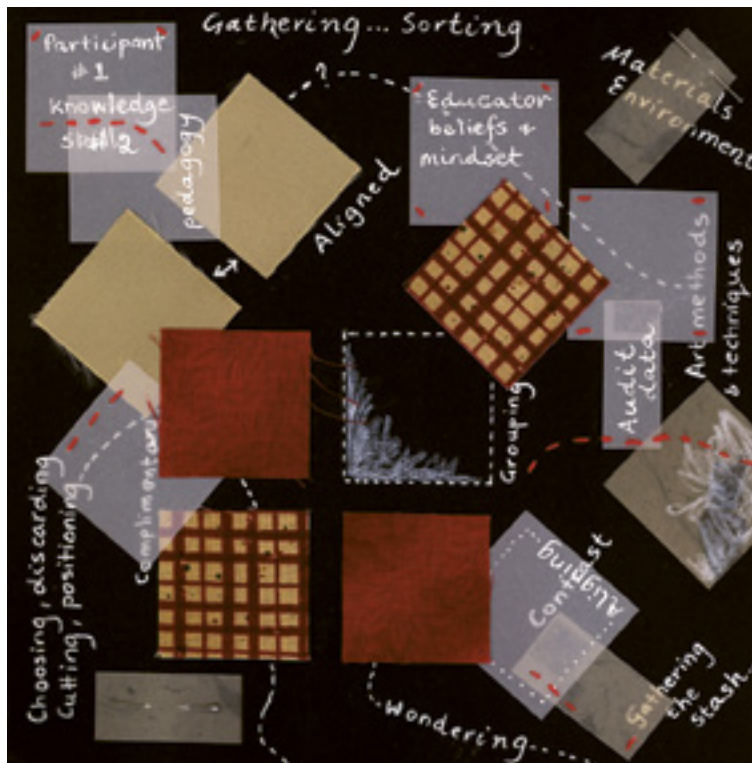


Figure 2. Gathering data and theories.

and steps within my research study and positioning myself as the stitch that constructs, connects and embellishes the multiple elements of the research.

Commencing the Construction of a Qualitative Research Quilt

The first phase of my research journey was an overwhelming tangle of confrontation between my prior knowledge and experience, my desire to gather information that would matter, my developing identity as a research student and the demands of constructing

a PhD proposal within the new and unfamiliar constraints of academia. The processes of reading, wondering, data collecting and musing, alongside the multitude of decisions to determine theory, epistemology and methodology are aligned with the early stages of quilt construction (see Figure 2). This helped me to appreciate the necessity in gathering, sorting and even rejecting some of the ideas I collected. Choices must be made in the construction of patterned blocks of data. Therefore, rather than becoming overwhelmed by the choices before me, the quilt metaphor enabled me to accept this messy reality as vital to the research process.

Valuing Voices: Research as an Emotional Construct

To value the experiences and voices of research participants requires that personal stories, knowledge and experiences be acknowledged, both within the data and within the researcher's interpretation of the data. My intention to honour both the voices of the participants and my own voice as a pre-school teacher and researcher was informed by Dewey's (1934) ideas about inquiry and uncertainty. Dewey explained that clear understandings of the dominant themes within examinations of lived experience might not develop "without exclamations of admiration, and stimulation of that emotional outburst often called appreciation" (p. 2). Mindful of the responsibilities and the risks in selecting, appreciating and disclosing the beliefs of the research participants, I sought

to present patterns of data to support the reader to question and interpret the phenomenon through my eyes (Eisner, 1998). Drawing upon Dewey's notions of holistic inquiry, Siegesmund (2012) proposes a/r/tography as a methodology that joins together "brain and heart, spirit and flesh, conscious and unconscious" (p. 103). Similarly, while I pragmatically employed the research principles and methods of traditional case study design, I consciously valued my experiences as a teacher and sought ways to express the construction of my research dissertation with artistic sensitivity. This desire to sensitively envelop and inform the research



Figure 3. Sorting and piecing data.

problem through the presentation and theoretical interpretation of each participant's lived experience aligns with the quilt-making process in which fabric is collected, selected, layered, pieced and stitched to form a patchwork construction.

Sorting and Piecing Together the Collected Stash of Data

A quilt top is constructed from pieces of plain or patterned fabric that have been cut and stitched together to form patterned blocks. Similar to Flood's (2009) "textsapes" and "threadsapes," the constructed "patchwork blocks" within my research heuristically



Figure 4. Thematic assemblage and overlay.

represent the visual arts beliefs, pedagogical content knowledge and stories of the research participants (p. 59). I therefore sought to feature participant voices without judgement to enable the reader to interpret the shade and pattern of educator beliefs about visual arts pedagogy. Yet, data is a delicate, sometimes slippery, fabric; prone to fray unless the researcher

skilfully aligns, and shapes it into narrative patterns and summary blocks. Just as there would be no quilt without a quilt-maker, there would be no research were it not for the intent, action and purpose of the researcher. Consequently, it

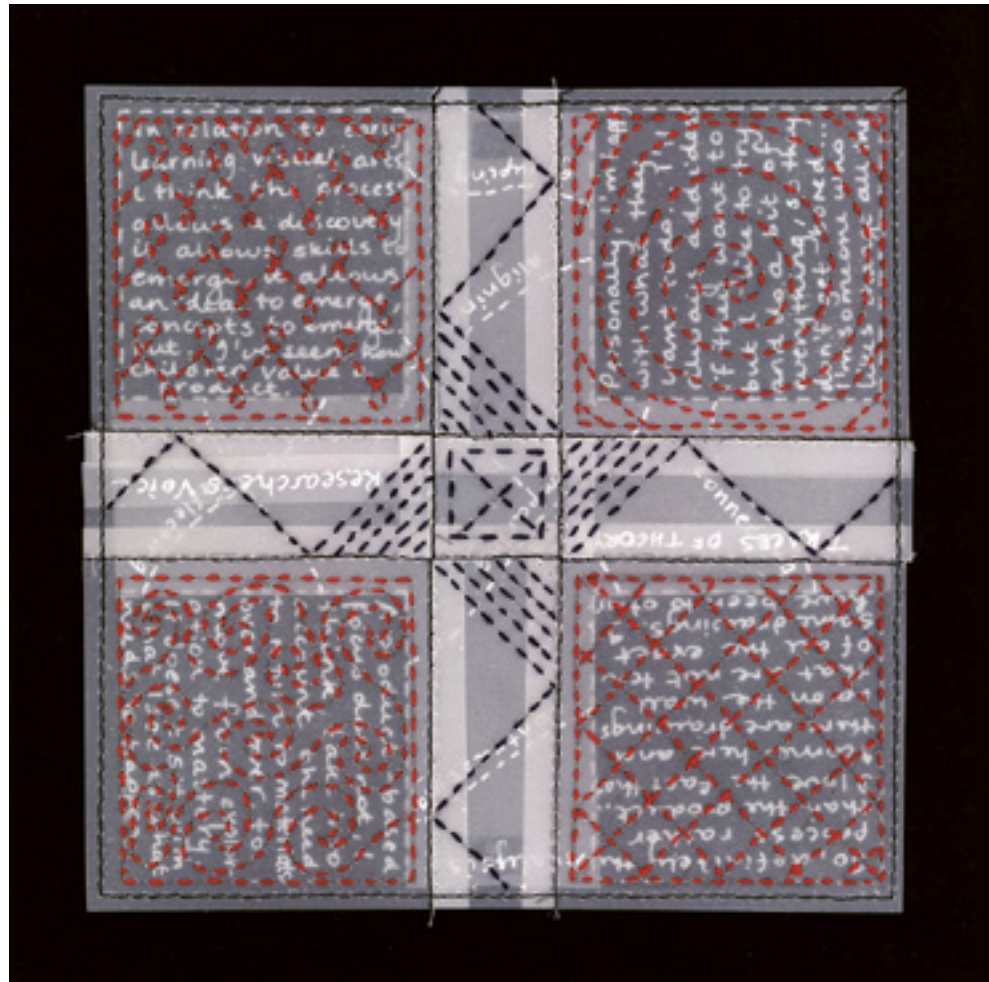


Figure 5. Seen and unseen stitching.

was also necessary to acknowledge my own role in stitching threads of connection between the audience, participants and myself (Flood, 2000) as I drew upon my knowledge and experience, along with the conceptual framework, to analyse, compare, connect and stitch together the case study narratives (see Figure 3).

Conceptual Backings: A Reversible Research Quilt

In a real quilt the backing is the bottom layer of the quilt ‘sandwich.’ It is traditionally comprised of a large piece of fabric that serves the dual purpose of stabilising the quilt and encasing the messy stitches and frayed raw edges of the pieced quilt top. However, in seeking a single theoretical framework to guide and inform data analysis in my study, existing theoretical lenses were as unsatisfying to me as a plain singular stretch of fabric backing on a patchwork quilt. Instead, the foundational backing of my research is comprised of an intricately pieced socio-political, historical and conceptual synthesis of the art-centric pedagogical values jointly articulated by John Dewey and the Italian Reggio Emilia educational approach (Lindsay, 2015; 2016). This conceptual lens inspired, guided and anchored my analysis and discussion of the visual arts beliefs and pedagogy of early childhood educators, just as the fabric quilt backing on a quilt stabilises the whole quilt. (see Figure 4).

The pieced data and the pieced conceptual framework in my dissertation contribute equally to the research field and to my desire to create contexts for pedagogical reflection about early childhood visual arts beliefs and pedagogy. Indeed, my socio-

political and historical analysis of Dewey’s influence on educational philosophy and pedagogy in Reggio Emilia constitutes an academic contribution to early childhood visual arts research in its own right. I therefore determined that my dissertation should be positioned as a flipped or reversible quilt, where both the research findings and the constructed conceptual framework are presented with equal value, and where the presentation of research data is concurrently enlightened and stabilised by constructed layers of theory.

The Researcher as Both Seen and Unseen Stitch

A quilt is made up of countless stitches that connect many pieces of fabric that subsequently form the quilt blocks and layers. Once complete, a final decorative quilting stitch anchors the quilt layers together, concurrently strengthening the quilt and enhancing the design (see Figure 5). This embellishing stitch, while adding another layer of complexity to the design and drawing attention to particular blocks, also enables the quilt to withstand examination and use. Applying this notion to my research, Barone and Eisner’s (1997) ABER conception of the researcher as a connoisseur and critic of the case positions my researcher’s voice, formed through years of pedagogical experience and informed by the constructed conceptual framework, as the stitch that both holds together and enriches the complex layers and elements of the research.

At the same time, I heed Irwin, Beer, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong and Bickel’s (2006) notion that rich learning occurs in the “interstitial” and “in-between-spaces” (p. 72). I

acknowledge that it would be impossible to express every element of my research journey, including the multiple reflections about which threads of data and findings should feature and be explicitly rendered in the dissertation. Instead, this background work on my part remains located in the seams and wadding of the research quilt. I explicitly reveal that in constructing my dissertation there were times when I deliberately placed the threads of my overt voice and opinion into the seams of the research data – as the unseen stitch - to intentionally strengthen and feature the fabric of participant voices and beliefs. Sinner et al. (2006) affirm that arts-based research, in sharing lived experience, seeks to “include voices in research that may not otherwise be heard” (p. 1249). I contend this sometimes demands a disciplined silence on the part of the researcher. Though not always visible, I am still there; still explicitly involved in the construction and strengthening of the dissertation.

Satisfying and Disrupting the Expectations of the Academy

Recognising the ongoing “tensions in the academy concerning arts-based inquiry” (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1227), my approach to PhD research sought to both satisfy and disrupt the dissertation requirements within my academic context. Although arts-based educational research and a/r/tographic methodologies are well established in some academic communities, such as those articulated by Sinner et al. (2006) and LeBlanc, Davison, Ryu and Irwin (2015), I identify with Bogumil, Capous-Desyllas, Lara and Reshetnikov’s (2015) view that such method-

ologies remain neglected in some contexts.

In my own research journey, I initially perceived a subtle expectation that PhD dissertations should follow traditional research design patterns. Additionally, although presented with the option to develop a thesis by publication, few guidelines were provided to support the non-linear piecing together of traditional thesis chapters and published articles in order to satisfy external examination. Amidst this ambiguity, and despite the fact that my thesis must undergo external examination, I was emboldened by the notion that ABER is located in the “liminal space” between traditional approaches to research and artistic practice and should not be “judged according to predetermined criteria” (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1229). Additionally, Dewey’s (1934) philosophies about aesthetic inquiry and experiential learning have inspired my determination to construct a dissertation of “genuine artistry in scientific inquiry” where I proceed “neither by rule, nor yet blindly, but my means of meanings that exist immediately as feelings having qualitative colour” (p. 125). Similarly inspired by Dewey, Siegesmund (2012) suggests that because a/r/tography is a “methodology that seeks to capture, record and artistically re-present” new perceptions and wisdoms, it supports researchers to embrace uncertainty and put aside externally imposed pre-occupations with “production of knowledge” (p. 106).

However, located as I am in the seam allowance between traditional research expectations and my own ABER aspirations, it was necessary that I carefully align and stitch my preference for a creative, dynamic and emergent process of inquiry together with traditional patterns for qualitative re-

search. Sinner (2006) also combined traditional qualitative research methods with ABER to tell “a subjective story of lived experience” that may have otherwise been overlooked in more traditional paradigms (p. 369). Therefore, while I employed traditional case study and data collection methods, I positioned the research process as an emergent, flexible and responsive practice to embrace my own creative inquiry and to shape assumed dissertation formulas into more satisfying patterns. I applied quilting imagery and metaphors to not only make sense of methodological processes for myself, but to provoke the academy within my context to consider the visual articulation of research methodologies, so that my dissertation might offer a localised platform for expanding approaches to educational research. In crafting a dissertation that stitched connecting threads between traditional case study design and my own desire to artistically express research “practice, process and product”, I sought to “trouble the understood framework of qualitative research” and redefine “methodological vehicles” in my own educational research context (Sinner et al., 2006, pp. 1255; 1225).

Quilting the Dissertation

The construction of a research dissertation is a long, intricate process. As with a traditional quilt pattern, once the research design is established and the methodical collection and construction of data is underway, the principles of rigour and trustworthiness, along with the external expectations of dissertation examiners, discourage significant deviation from the plan. However, as with quilts, not all research is traditional. While

basic standards of sound design and construction must remain constant, contemporary quilters employ processes akin to art design, where play with fabric, form and colour align with visual arts processes, and where the quilt artist intuitively develops the quilt design in response to the gathered materials and intent of the project. Similarly, ABER and the methodology of a/r/tography encourage me to reflexively situate my “own presence and contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process” (Bogumil et al., 2015, p. 3).

My research journey highlights the complex patterns and layers of interpretative meaning-making embedded within a research design and aims to appreciate and articulate the research process in ways accessible to both researchers and practitioners. By metaphorically visualising the elements of research design as the pieced fabrics, layers and stitches of a quilt, the often-alienating language of research inquiry is rendered accessible not only to the early childhood educators that this research aims to inform, but to researchers seeking a reflexive expression of their own identity.

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This timely book contains a splendid variety of essays in the diverse and developing area that is visual inquiry & doctoral study in art education. With eloquently presented studies, conducted by art educators using a range of art-based methods. The richly illustrated investigations from ten countries, mean that there is something for everyone in this volume. Whether you are an artist, educator, researcher; or consider yourself a combination of all three, I believe this is a necessary addition to your bookshelf.

Glen Coutts,
President- Elect, International
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