

International Journal of Education & the Arts

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Editorial

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The Day of the Arts, a pre-Congress for the Eighth Annual Congress for Qualitative Inquiry, was created with the same aspiration that IJEA was: the aspiration to create a space for scholarship and research grounded in the diverse disciplines of arts education. In the late 90's, Tom Barone and Liora Bresler envisioned a journal that will serve as a communal space to enable cross-fertilization for sister arts education disciplines that have not traditionally been in close contact. Also, Tom and Liora—both students of Elliot Eisner—were hoping for the published research to be informed by and reflect artistic and aesthetic qualities and sensitivities, diverse media and forms of representation.

This special issue in IJEA, the collaborative editorship between Kimber and Liora, reflects a similar cross-fertilization. Both Kimber's and Liora's earlier enculturation was as performers, with a deep commitment to education, Kimber coming from dance, Liora from music. Both of us had cultivated multi-layered relationships with other art forms that became "home": the visual arts, drama, literature, and media.

We were delighted that the Qualitative Inquiry invitation resulted in as many submissions as it did, and with remarkable representation from each of the arts disciplines. The Day of the Arts resulted in two special volumes; one in the QI sponsored *International Review of Qualitative Research* (IRQR), the other in IJEA. Of the accepted articles, we chose to include in IJEA those that crossed disciplinary, geographical, and institutional borders, and that drew on the capacities of media, sound and visuals.

As we revisit the papers, we are reminded of the vibrancy of the Day of the Arts conference, the embodied ideas and presentations, the animated presenters, the engaged, attentive audience, and the energy of lived experience. Indeed, conferences make "ideas come alive" from one body to others, creating a collective, interactive presence. These are vividly captured by the pictures taken by Donna Murray-Tiedge (including images depicting the end-of-the-day party at Liora's house, a party, aesthetically created and executed by Karen Cast and Donna Tiedge. A journal, even with electronic possibilities, can never capture a conference, and is not intended to. But a journal, like works of literature or fine art, renders processes into a product that can be revisited time and again, enabling the generation of expanded meanings as a result of that prolonged engagement.



The special issue starts with papers by the two keynote speakers—Bruno Nettl, one of the leading ethnomusicologists of all times, and Andrea Eis, a compelling artist and art historian. Both clearly illustrate how ideas and aesthetic sensibilities from disciplines outside of education can inform and inspire arts education. Eis’ photographic fusions connect her with Greek playwrights, poets and sculptors; with historic figures who worked to understand the ancient Greek texts; and with her own sense of the meanings resulting from these juxtapositions. Nettl’s presentation contemplates the question, “what are the great contributions of ethnomusicology?” He responds by invoking musical aesthetics outside of the West, and points at contributions that might affect our understanding of the way music (and the other arts) relate to other domains of culture.

Karin Hendricks explores the relationship between expertise and tradition in instrumental music learning and the (sometimes) high price that is paid educationally. Hendricks, trained as an instrumental musician and initially quantitative researcher, presents a compelling (and heart-breaking) story of the journey of a teacher with a highly gifted and initially enthusiastic early childhood student. Continuing with the theme of relationships and early childhood, art educator Chris Schulte, reflects on *becoming-unfaithful* as a way to think differently about the relational complexities of being there with children through research. Schulte’s writing was augmented by the use of a video, part of his original presentation in the Day of the Arts, communicating the visual and kinesthetic qualities of interaction. Art educator, Kristine Sunday, uses video to create a narrative that explores the relational spaces of tension that occur in participatory research with children.

Art educator, Singaporean-born Koon Hwee Kan’s new global art connection draws on powerful images. It features a collaborative timeline redesign project titled *Wave-Makers 1910-2010*, which involves interactive and advanced web-based technology to connect and complement arts curricula at two higher education institutions, one located in China, the other in the United States. Through in-depth research, videoconferencing, artistic interpretations, and exhibits at both locations, students from the two universities gained appreciation and respect for 20 individuals who made a difference in their respective cultures and helped shape contemporary art worlds. Juxtaposing visuals with students’ personal observations through digital photo-collage, Kan’s paper shows how and why the wave-makers became inspirational models. Including such artists from Pan Yuliang, Xu Shichan, and Guan Pinghu, to Alvin Ailey, Margaret Bourke-White, and Jackson Pollock, Kan highlights such qualities as visionary commitment, exquisite sensitivities, admirable integrity, and solid convictions as they are manifested across cultures.

Also within a university setting, Brooke Anne Hofess’ study seeks to understand how artist-teacher renewal may be nurtured through aesthetic experiential play in a Masters of Art

Education degree program, and beyond. Aesthetic experiential play is described as a playful, curious, questioning, artful engagement with the world; an engagement that sparks an aesthetic swell, which moves us in surprising, unanticipated ways from play to its afterglow.

The following three papers address collaborations involving experts in different disciplinary cultures and in the Norwegian cases, also settings, each with their distinct own value systems. Beth Ann Miller, a music education action researcher whose pioneering work in the early 90s on collaborative action research has set a model in the field, extends that prior study that dealt with the effects of integrating a general music course of study with the total curriculum of a first grade class. The present study uses a similar plan in which a fifth grade teacher and a music teacher worked cooperatively to provide a curriculum that consistently integrated all subjects, including music, in a cohesive instructional plan.

Norwegian researchers and music educators Kari Holdhus and Magne Espeland, discuss what the increasing number of comprehensive national programs for visiting school concerts and art events in Norwegian schools means for the nature of arts education subjects in schools, in particular music; and what challenges this new situation represents for the artists as well as the teachers involved. They argue that the lack of school ownership of these practices can be understood in view of a dominating rationale based on romantic aesthetic theories, and that neither education nor the visiting arts programs have adjusted to an educational practice built on a pedagogy of relations. In the same area of scholarship (and geographically, West Norway) researcher and music educator Catharina Christophersen focuses on the Norwegian national program for arts and culture in schools. While arts encounters in schools are often portrayed as encounters between artists and children, teachers are typically involved as well. Christophersen's paper discusses teachers' experiences with this program in schools, portraying the perceived benefits of the program, as well as dilemmas, challenges and tensions.

The special issue concludes with yet another setting for arts education. Museum educators Elza Lenz Kothe's and Marie-France Bernard's work investigates the multiple layers of invitations that prompt viewers to become participants in the performativity of live museum gallery interpretation. Utilizing a/r/tographic methodology to interrogate interpretive acts in museums, the authors raise such questions such as "what knowledge is of most worth" when preparing a gallery talk, what lies outside of disciplinary knowledge, how invitations to participate invite and disinvite in the same gesture, and what new forms of interaction take place within acts of interpretation. These issues bring us full circle to the issues raised by Nettle and Eis, questions that we grapple with in our respective and shared space as art educators, that assume greater urgency when we cross disciplinary and cultural boundaries.

One of the (many) pleasures of being involved in IJEA for Liora was hearing from colleagues how much they benefitted from the free access aspect of the electronic journal (envisioned and made possible by the legendary Gene Glass) for their courses and advising. Indeed, we find this present collection of papers to be informed by practice and inform practice in various levels and settings, with a deep-seated commitment to education in its contents as well as its accessibility and communicative power. We hope this collection will generate lively discussions and conversations.

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Silent Conversations in the Labyrinth of Artistic Research and Practice

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Abstract

This essay explores silent conversations with the past, but also navigates through the labyrinth of artistic process, with its manifold passages of research, chance occurrence and aesthetic experimentation. The double metaphors of silent conversations and labyrinths apply to the essay and the artwork within it, to the research and to the practice. Unfolding as both explication and demonstration, this essay presents a manifestation of the process of artistic research and practice as well as a description of it.

Introduction

Art making might seem to imply an artist's movement toward a central goal, as one would intend to move upon entering a labyrinth. But if we can start immediately down a divergent corridor, "...let's imagine a Labyrinth without a central quid (neither Monster nor Treasure), so one that's a-centric, which basically means a labyrinth without a final signified to discover...possibly with nothing at the center" (Barthes, 2010, p. 121). Certainly, if one thinks of the final, physical product of art as the monstrous Minotaur/wondrous treasure found at one end of a directed, and directional, path, there must be a center. However, an artist's working process, research and practice, are not necessarily aimed at getting to one point, to a center. In the reality of artistic practice, moving forward also requires a doubling back, a move in the opposite direction from the original path.

To think of the artistic process as a labyrinth is, for me, both instructive and intriguing. Some might think the maze is a more useful metaphor, but I have always thought of mazes as best used to experience the joys of getting lost, which is not at all how I view my process. Labyrinths, to me, are a means to the exhilaration of finding. Most explications of the labyrinth, however, tend to focus on what was sought/found in the center. What of Theseus' journey back out of the labyrinth? Returning to the world required different attention from the journey in, and repaid attention differently. Theseus had to follow Ariadne's guiding thread to return (the feminist in me rejoices in the gender of the clever one in this tale), but I can also imagine Theseus, as he gathered up the thread, re-visioning the walls around him the second time through, with new experiences behind him. The world he emerged back into must have felt transformed from the one which he left, due to those experiences. The centralized encounter with the Minotaur was no longer an isolated, defining moment, a key, a core, a goal, because there was more to be experienced and a constant revision of the goal.

Re-imagining the artistic labyrinth as a-centric, as Barthes proposed, might aid in clarifying the tangle of this metaphor. While the practice of art does usually end in a physical product, art is a process not a goal – or, perhaps more usefully, in Barthes' words, "the path would be equivalent to the goal" (p. 121). Artistic research is an exploration of ambiguity not a determination of fact, an opening up of possibilities, not a pinning down of definitive knowledge. There is no final signified just waiting to be discovered, and there are many conversations to be had along the way.

My creative activity took such an a-centric path starting in 2008, in Greece, with a chance find of marginalia – handwritten notes in the margins of ancient Greek texts, in books dating from the late 1890s. My artistic passageways became infused with a series of silent conversations, with these notes and these texts, with Greeks of two thousand years ago and with an American woman of the early 1900s who wanted to understand them. At first, I only glanced at the

dialogues, and I kept moving, unsure of my destination. Finally, the past so thoroughly permeated my present, with these dialogues between the printed page and the handwritten word, that I wanted to join in on the conversations.

Marginalia

As this essay is both a description of artistic research and practice, and an example of it, another path starts now, following the intrigues of marginalia's emergence. The word *marginalia* comes from post-classical Latin of the 16th century or earlier (OED 2000). In order to keep my tangents under control, I will only briefly note an earlier synonym, *postil* ("a marginal note or comment; esp on a biblical text," first print citation c. 1395, OED 2012). The lyrical, mysterious quality of the word marginalia makes it my preferred choice.

The OED's (2000) first print citation for the word marginalia is from the November 1819 volume of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*: "The following is transcribed from the blank leaf of a copy of Sir T. Brown's Works in folio, and is a fair specimen of these *Marginalia*; and much more nearly than any of his printed works, gives the style of Coleridge's **conversation**" (my emphasis, to be returned to later).

Marginalia requires, obviously, a margin in which it can be written. The practice no doubt shifted and expanded (compared, for example, to marginalia in medieval manuscripts) after the invention of the printing press in the 1450s. The production of multiples would have gradually made works available to more readers who could own and interact with their own personal copies, in a dialogue with the text.

In the 1630s, a French mathematician, Pierre de Fermat, wrote one of the most famous of marginal notes. Detailing a theorem in his 1621 copy of the *Arithmetica* of Diophantus, he followed it with, "I have discovered a truly marvelous proof of this proposition which this margin is too narrow to contain" (this translation cited in Clarke and Pohl, 2008, p. 306). Most margin writers are writing for themselves alone, never expecting (or even wanting) to have their words made public. Fermat's proof was never published, and has not been found; perhaps it never existed. Some have speculated that, if it did exist, it was incorrect. Years after Fermat's death, however, his marginal notes in the *Arithmetica* were discovered and published by his son, and eventually these words became an international challenge. It was well over 300 years before a proof of Fermat's Last Theorem was published that was generally considered to be correct, a proof that was the work of Andrew Wiles, a British mathematician. Though Wiles (cited in WGBH, 2000) has noted that his proof and Fermat's could not be the same, due to Wiles' use of mathematical techniques unknown in Fermat's time, perhaps a larger margin could have shaved a few years off of the centuries that separated the two proofs.

New York Times essayist Sam Anderson (2011) recently offered a prosaic, if trendy description of marginalia as “a kind of slow-motion, long-form Twitter” (p. 1). Ironically, an internet search for images of Fermat for an earlier version of this essay sent me following a path to an unexpected end: a 2009 cartoon by Jocelyn Ireson-Paine in which Fermat types in his answer to the Twitter question “What are you doing?” with “I have discovered a truly remarkable proof which Tw...” Many years earlier, Edgar Allan Poe (1844) had written about the pleasure he got from the practice of marginalia, while noting what he called the “circumscription of space” (p. 484) – Fermat’s “narrow margin”. Poe felt this spatial constraint discouraged diffuse thought patterns, forcing what he called “Tacitus-ism,” after the Roman historian Tacitus, who often favored a terse expression of ideas that still managed to be intensely meaningful (though ironically, *tacitus* in Latin means “silent”). Whether Twitter’s limitation on comment length is creating a positive legacy on the power of brevity in any way similar to that of Tacitus, I leave to you to decide on your own.

In undergraduate school, I had, somewhat naturally, come to practice my own kind of marginalia. I was not then in art, but was a classics major, studying ancient Greek, struggling slowly through translating one complex sentence at a time. My marginalia was a student’s – not the argumentative type, but the explanatory, the helpful, the kind that reminded me of things I had looked up but might forget when called on in class.

After a year of graduate school, I moved on from the study of Greek, still fascinated with it, but unsure that the field was the right one for me. Eventually I went back to school in art instead, but I took the principles of Greek rhetoricians with me. Happily debating everything I read, I became a fierce practitioner of marginalia. When I read Susan Sontag’s (1977) *On Photography*, I disagreed with her, in extensive marginalia, responding in a focused, vivid and totally engaged way (Figure 1). Billy Collins’ description of the practice in his poem *Marginalia* (1998) is the very image of my encounter with Sontag:

Sometimes the notes are ferocious,
skirmishes against the author
raging along the borders of every page
in tiny black script. (p. 14)

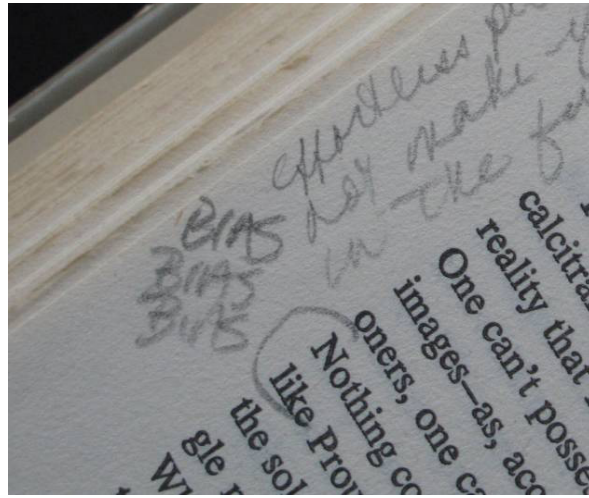


Figure 1. Marginalia in my copy of Susan Sontag's *On Photography*

Studs Terkel once said that reading a book should be a “raucous conversation” (as cited in Johnson, 2011, p. 1). By writing in the margins, I found a way for my own ideas to be voiced with equal force and equal weight in my own “raucous” counterpoint to Sontag’s, creating a rowdy, informal, dialogue with the silence of the printed page, much as Coleridge was said to have used his conversational voice in his marginalia on Brown’s works. According to Hill (1983), Coleridge’s marginalia were highly significant to own his sense of himself: “[I]n wishing to see his marginalia published, Coleridge recognized that they were anything but marginal to his whole *modus operandi* as a thinker” (p. 229).

Voicing the Past

A brief look back to my first encounter with ancient Greek, explains a bit more about my fascination with marginalia in connection with Greek text. Following Barthes (2010) once again, this essay becomes a Delian /Ariadne dance: “*parallaxeis* and *anelixeis*: circular movements, sometimes moving forward, sometimes backward, mimicking the detours of the Labyrinth at Knossos” (p. 117). Waiting in line to register for my first semester of college, I was handed a flier touting an educational experiment – a class in ancient Greek taught on the computer. I was apparently an early adopter before that term existed, and I jumped in. The computer we used resembled a teletype machine – there was no monitor, only printed out text and continuous rolls of paper. The texts were transliterated from the Greek into English letters. It was intriguing and oddly fun, but I was soon to find out that it was educationally disastrous, an experiment gone very wrong.

The first day of my second class in Greek, a different professor wrote a simple word in Greek letters on the blackboard, and asked the students what the word was. Not one of us could

answer, as we had never seen the word in the Greek alphabet. We had learned Greek as if it was learning English words that we just didn't know before. From that moment – a mixture of dismay, annoyance, and embarrassment – I went on to become immersed and obsessed with the Greek language – with its beautiful letter forms, inky curlicues of intrigue; with the accents and breathing marks, that could totally change a word's meaning; with the incredible depth of thought that could be expressed by the both the form of the sentence structure and the elaborate compound words. I took all of these fascinations with me when I became an artist.

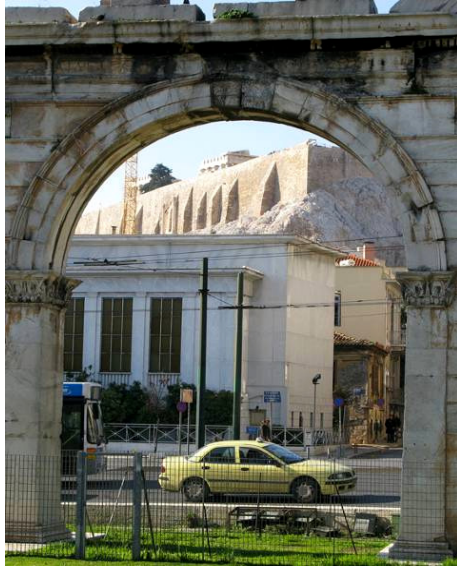
My artwork has, for years, been about giving visual voice to the expressive silence of the past. Eventually margins and marginalia became central to that process. In 2008, I went to live in Athens, Greece for my sabbatical. My academic past in classics had become a thematic reference point and visual source material for my art, so this period of time in Greece was critical to my work. I had spent a year of study abroad in Athens during my first undergraduate degree, and had returned many times since then. This time I was determined to experience it all differently, to search for another way to look at what had become so familiar. I was on my way through the labyrinth, again.

I decided not to climb up to the Acropolis for the first month I was there, but instead to look at how the Acropolis and the Parthenon, were actually existing (as I would come to realize later) on the margins of day-to-day life in modern Athens. The Parthenon was a note from the past, now on the border of a carnival and a popcorn cart (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Popcorn cart and the Parthenon

I made hundreds of photographs, many of a marginalized Parthenon (Figures 3 and 4). But I was not making art.



Figures 3 and 4. The Parthenon marginalized

At the library of the International Center for Hellenic and Mediterranean Studies (DIKEMES) in Athens, I began doing research on recent feminist scholarship in the classics. I had a focus, reading books that reinterpreted the ancient myths in ways that were relevant to some myth-based artwork that I had been doing. I did not know how this research would influence my art, or help me to create more, so I just kept pulling books from the shelves. I read and researched to find my way, rather than knowing my way ahead of time. Though this may seem an unusual process, I have since found that the sciences have a parallel approach in what is called “curiosity-driven research” or “blue skies research” (Linden, 2008, abstract, para. 1), a kind of research that does not have a clear goal, or an application that is immediately apparent. Barthes’ a-centric labyrinth returns.

One day, I started pulling out books that looked like the oldest ones on the shelves, mostly for the joy I felt in the object qualities of old books – the gilt edges, the stamped leather bindings, even the yellowed curves of pages warped by years of humidity and light (Figure 5).

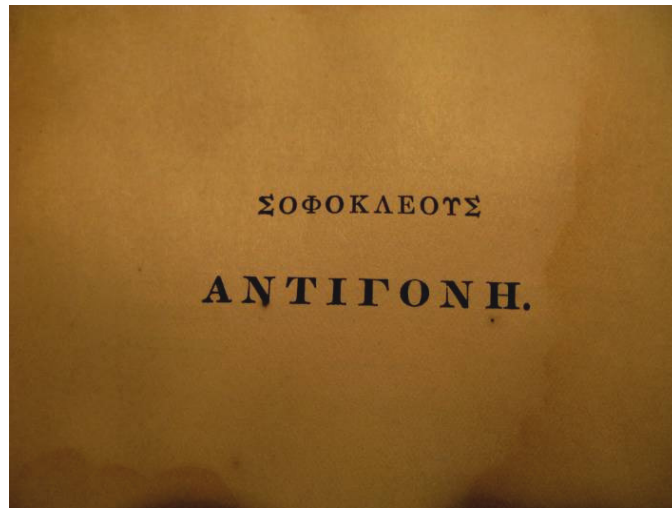
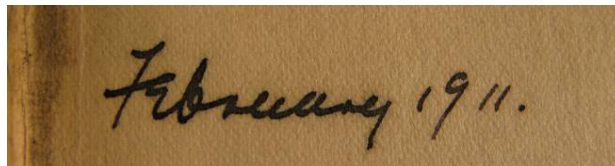
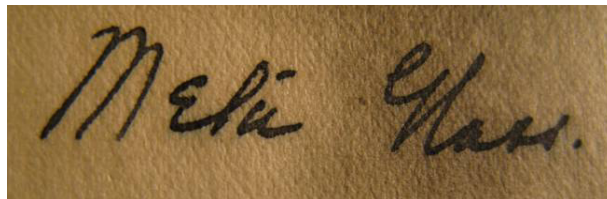


Figure 5. Title page of Meta Glass' copy of Sophocles' *Antigone* (1891)

I found a series of twenty Greek and Latin books, all originally owned by an American woman, Meta Glass. She had written her name and dates from 1909 to 1911 on the inside covers (Figures 6 and 7). Curiosity sent me to the Internet to research Glass, though I had little expectation of finding anything. Instead, there was a great deal, as



Figures 6 and 7: Meta Glass, February 1911

Meta Glass had been a woman of note. She had earned her Ph.D. in Latin and Greek from Columbia University in 1912 (a year after the last date in the books), and she went on to serve as the president of Sweet Briar College in Virginia from 1925 to 1946. I contacted librarians at Sweet Briar when I returned to the US, but they had no record of Glass ever being in Greece. They could not tell me how or why her books had ended up in a library in Athens, so that remains a mystery.

What was not a mystery was that Meta Glass was a champion of the importance of educating women, and of the continuing relevance of the classics. As a former classics scholar myself and as a current educator, I connected to her life and interests, and through her books, to her. She had made notations in the margins of nearly all of her Greek texts. As I paged my way through her books, I became familiar with her handwriting, her frustrations, and even her sense of humor (Figure 8).

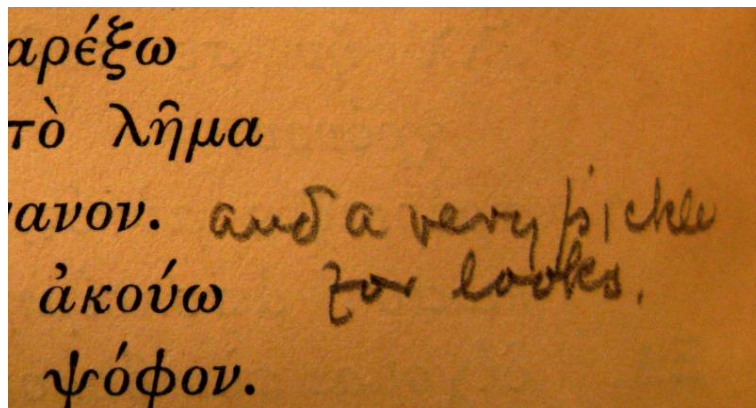


Figure 8. “And a very pickle for looks.”
From Meta Glass’ copy of Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (1906)

At this time I was living in Athens right on the edge (perhaps one could say on the margin) of the spot on Mt. Lykabbetos at which the buildings of the city meet the tree line. I had only my digital camera with me – no photographic lights, no tripod, no high-resolution scanner. I would bring the books back to my tiny studio apartment and lay them down on the miniscule kitchen counter, to photograph them under the only bright light in the place.

I photographed every marked page in the Glass books, working with a documentary zeal, though I had no idea what I would do with these images. I also made lists of the marginalia, and found that they created a kind of poetry in this form. In *The Antigone of Sophocles* (1891), Glass’s notes are a spare but vivid inventory of the play’s substance and intent, of the playwright’s eloquence and nuance:

Doer of this insolence
My pain where it is
Work oneself weary
The resourcefulness/a sort of wisdom

Often used of getting what one wants
 An afterthought
 Possess
 Side by side
 When men are guided aright
 A deed to be proud of
 Intellectual powers/stretch
 The delicacy of the passive

I made one thousand, two hundred and forty-four photographs from the Meta Glass books, and began the work of transforming this raw material into art. Before I move on to that art, there is yet another path to take through the labyrinth – back to the work I had been doing prior to this, a contrast to reveal how the chance intersection with marginalia has altered my art.

A Lexicon, Grammar Books, and Artmaking

When I first turned to my academic past in the classics for artistic source material, I paged my way through my Liddell & Scott Greek lexicon, pulling out words that caught my interest, looking for good choices to combine with images of sculptures. In my final artworks, I always included the definition in English, so that the meaning would be accessible to more viewers, though the Greek text was still crucial visually, compositionally, and conceptually. In choosing sculptural images, I tried to connect to the expressive qualities I found in the sculpture, focusing on a fragment of feeling that I found in the lexicon text as well (Figure 9).



Figure 9. In silence

For another series, I found unexpected inspiration in prosaic grammar books, which managed to explain verb tenses in terms both exceptionally precise and magnificently poetic. To have a part of speech that one would use, as in *Imperfect* (Figure 10), when one wanted to suggest a

specifically temporal nature to the recognition, was more profound than any grammatical options in English that I had ever known. The text suggests a reading of the sculptural gesture as the moment of recognition. The raised hand, despite being stilled in marble, imparts the same immediacy of surprised acknowledgement as the verb tense implied, a moment that was imperfect, yet true (Figure 9).



Figure 10. *Imperfect*, from the *Greek Grammar* series

In the *Perfect* series, the unintentionally poetic nature of the definitions of the perfect tense were paired with the struggles of male-female interactions, in a philosophical exploration of the power plays in human relationships (Figure 11).

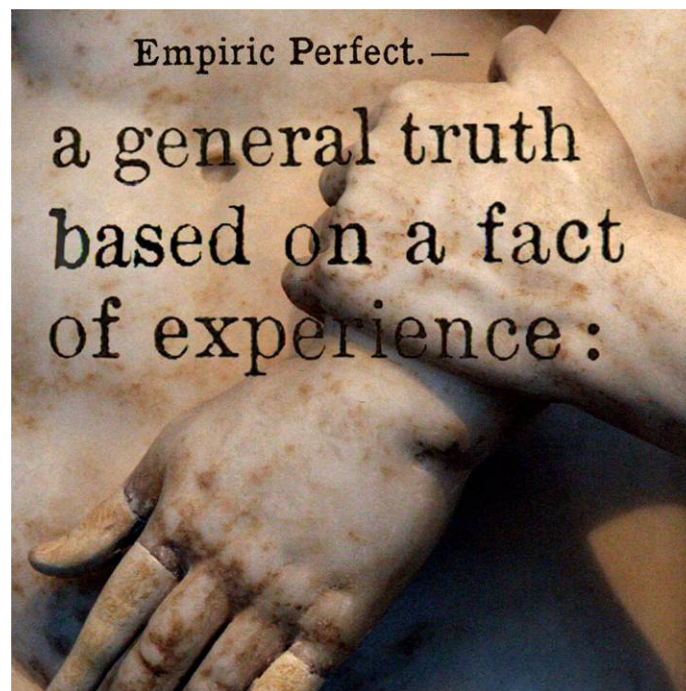


Figure 11. *Empiric Perfect*, from the *Greek Grammar* series

Realizing that others did not have the same fascination with the intricacies of Greek and grammar as I did, I also started working with English texts, extracting single lines of poetry to pair with the spare elegance of my photographs of sculptures. I recontextualized both elements by combining them, encouraging the revisiting of both the writer's words and the sculptor's forms within my structure of meaning (Figure 12).



Figure 12. As deep as absence, from the Poets series (Pär Lagerkvist)

With I dwell in possibility — (Figure 13), I altered the visual mood of the original photograph of the sculpture, intensifying the soft colors and flat light, trying to connect, through aesthetic form, to the eternal potential in Emily Dickinson's phrase. I carried this transformative aesthetic into my new work with marginalia, as I started creating physical manifestations of my silent conversations with Meta Glass and the Greeks whose words she was studying.

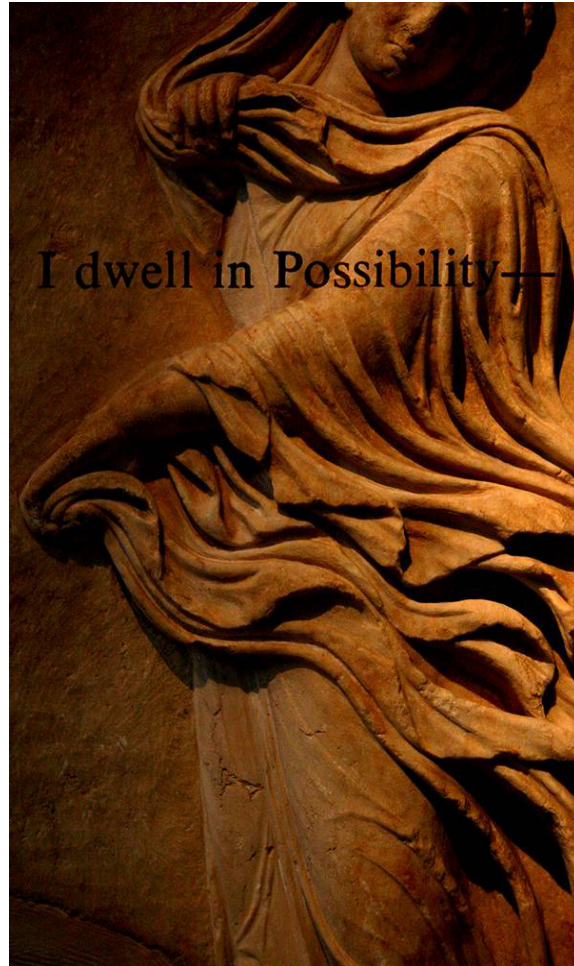


Figure 13. I dwell in possibility —, from the Poets series (Emily Dickinson)

Digital photographic fusions help me create images that are saturated with the past, but materialized in the present. The relief sculpture used in *Getting what one wants* (Figure 14) suggests the visual articulation of male power, both physical and conceptual, and is cropped down to emphasize the bicep. I overlaid a text where Meta Glass had noted that a particular word (*tuxein*, to happen, occur, meet with) is often used for its nuance, because it not only points out what happens to someone, but that this particular occurrence represents a point at which a person is getting what he or she wants.

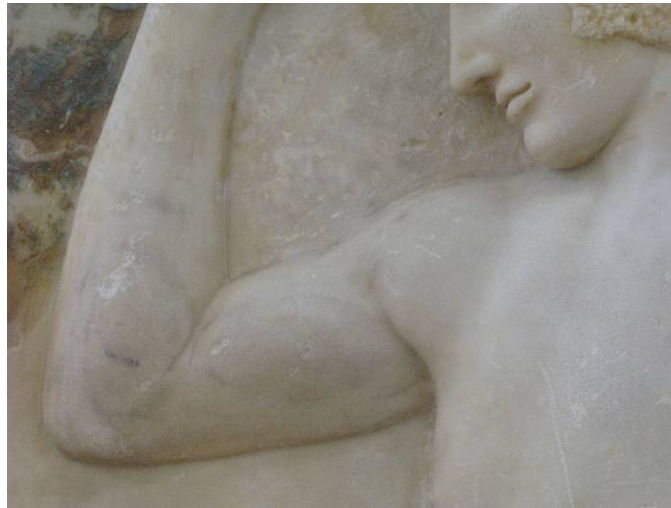


Figure 14.

Intensification of the color and contrast brought out the textural qualities of the paper, thickened the lines of the Greek letters, darkened the soft penciled English words, further emphasized the swell of the muscle, and made a small brown mark on the paper glow red. The intensity of the colors, contrasts, and textures moved the image from cool distant classicism to a vision of arrogant presumption (Figure 15).

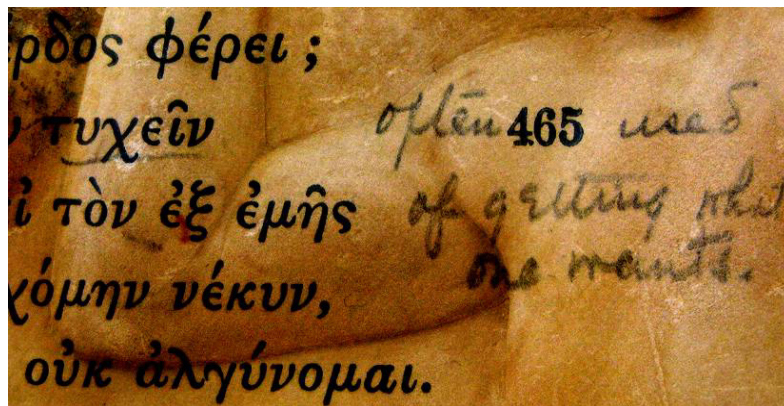


Figure 15. *Getting what one wants*, from the *Marginalia* series

The original text was from Sophocles' (1891) *Antigone*. At the time I created this piece, I did not go back to see which character was speaking or what issue was referenced in the play. From my perspective as an artist, that kind of information is not critical to my artworks – this is my *aesthetic translation* of the text, the marginalia, and the sculpture, and I am always taking liberties with the original intentions. After a presentation of this work to classics scholars at an academic conference, however, I decided to return to the original Greek text. I

found, to my surprise, that this was said by Antigone, not by Kreon (the king who was exercising his power over her). The line referred to the fact that if she “met with her fate” (i.e., her death, line 465) because of her actions to symbolically bury her brother in opposition to Kreon’s edict, this would be a painful result. In her marginalia, Meta Glass was pointing out that Sophocles’ word choice was quite specific, because this particular verb carried a valuable nuance: inferring that Antigone would not only accept her destiny, but that destiny would give her what she wanted, which was release from the evil in the world around her. While I still feel strongly about my original interpretation, made in creating the piece, my further research has given me an alternate that is equally intriguing – the words are now Antigone’s, but the ‘muscle’ (literally and metaphorically) is still Kreon’s.

Translation is an act of connection. Working through a person’s words, you try to figure out what was in his or her mind. You try to infuse yourself into someone else’s thought processes, experience, vision. Ultimately, however, you end with your own version. In my visual translation, one layer is the content and expressive form of the Greek text. Another layer is the original Greek sculpture, now removed from its original significance. Then there is Meta Glass’s marginalia, ambiguously interpreting, not directly defining. The English text becomes a hinge that bends back and forth on the edge of meaning, opening it, closing it, allowing things in and keeping them out. The final artwork melds these disparate elements, morphing them into my meaning, my emotional content, my 21st century perceptions of power and promise, of essence and energy.

Art as Conversation

In the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, there is a red room. It was one in which I made many photographs, most of them too busy for combining with text, but still fascinating exercises in composition. Images that I use for my marginalia works need to be more visually minimal, to allow for the complexity of the text layer. Here, the sculpture of a woman raising her hand is pushed to the side of the red swatch of wall. The actual print of *Speak, tell me* (Figure 16) is large, nearly four feet wide, with a presence that suggests an oracular power.

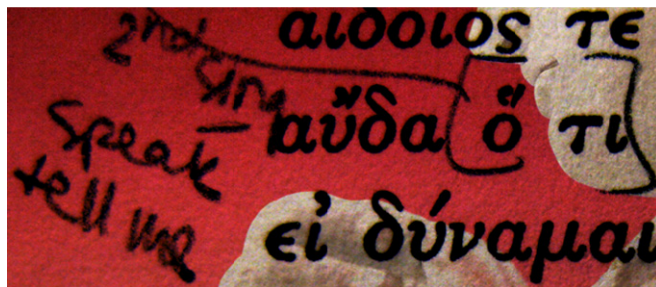


Figure 16. *Speak, tell me*, from the *Marginalia* series

Brackets are placed around the mouth of the mute sculpture, begging it to speak. The background is an intense red; the Greek letters are a dense and velvety black. It is not crucial to know what the visible Greek words mean, but the English is critical, with its notation of the 2nd singular: “you speak, you tell me.” The two thousand year old Greek sculpture becomes an expression of that moment when one is about to speak, about to tell something of import. The page of Greek text overlaying the sculpture is thickly textured, obscuring the original surface of the sculpture and adding a new layer of visual richness, harmonizing the background and the sculpture with a single surface texture, visually fusing the centuries together.

To me, the formal beauty of this image is deeply important, but this image also expresses my intellectual fascinations with what ancient Greece can tell us through its art and its literature, with what Meta Glass was thinking as she read the same text that I saw, with the physicality of the book she and I both held, one hundred years apart.

My art is a conversation with different expressive moments followed through time – from thousands of years ago, with the original writing of an ancient Greek text and the carving of an ancient Greek sculpture, to the printing of a book in the late 1800s, to Meta Glass’s notations on meanings in the early 1900s, and finally, to my artwork and contemporary viewers’ responses to it.

The past can be in dialogue with the present. I want to join that conversation, in whatever century it started. This is no longer about debates, as I had with Sontag, but about exchanges and communication.

For *Try to support me*, I found a relief sculpture representing a moment of connection (Figure 17). Continuing the search through my images, I found a more potent angle on the relief (Figure 18), one that could be combined with the more extreme angle of the text (Figure 19). The color and textures are pushed to an extreme, as the focus blurs radically into the distance (Figure 20).



Figure 17.

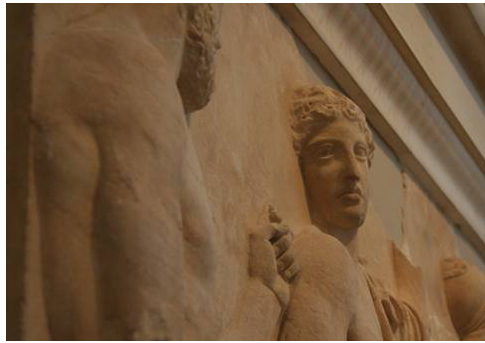


Figure 18.

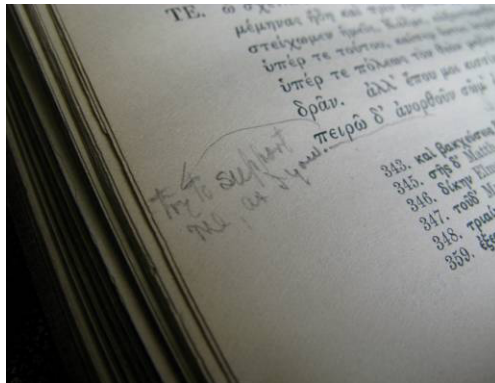


Figure 19.

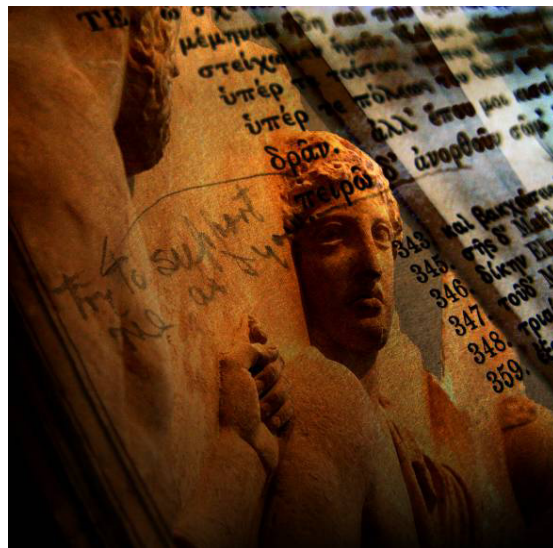


Figure 20. Try to support me, from the Marginalia series

Some notations are more spare, while the sculptures are more elaborate. In *Challenge* (Figure 21), the angle taken on the figure makes her seem to be facing the future, looking toward the testing she sees ahead.

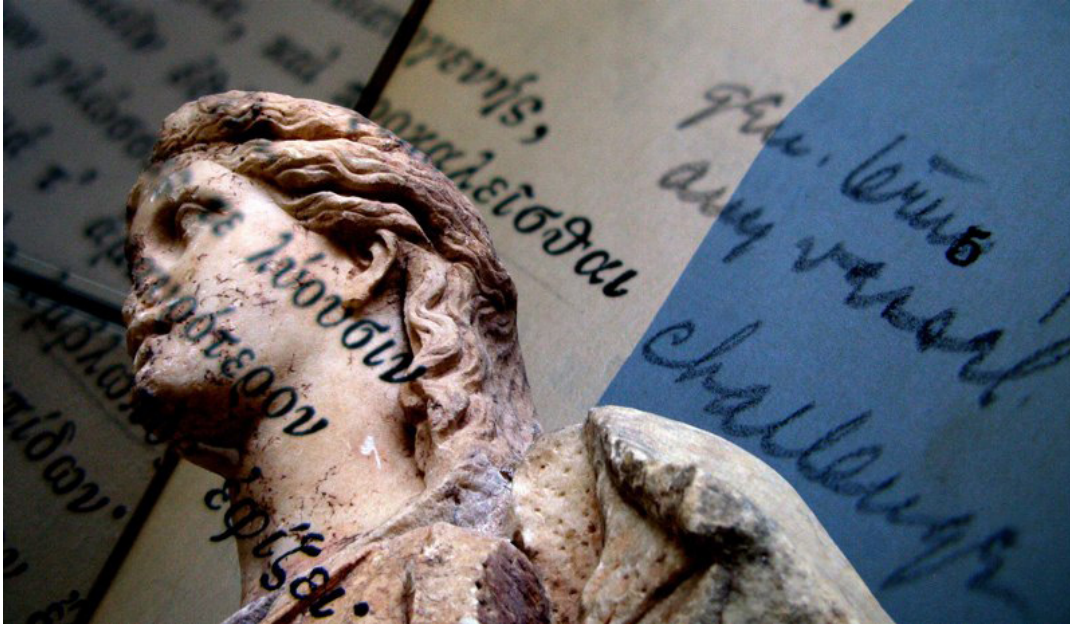


Figure 21. *Challenge*, from the *Marginalia* series

I've seen the Zeus/Poseidon figure in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens so many time, that it is as familiar as my coffee cup. So I tried to look at it differently, to find what the body language might say, rather than whether it represents this or that god. I don't look for the culturally specific meaning that the sculpture represents, but what the form, the confident gesture, the swelling muscles, say about human experience, how it can speak to me directly, across the centuries (Figure 22).

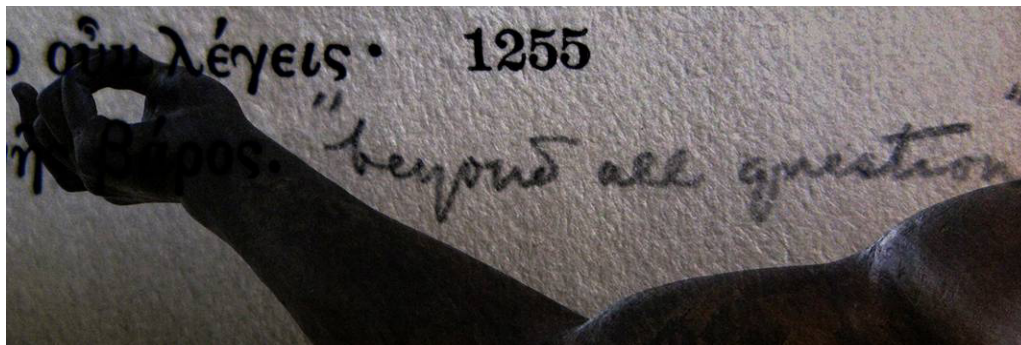


Figure 22. *Beyond all question*, from the *Marginalia* series

In *To be mindful* (Figure 23) the sculpted hand reaches out actively, while simultaneously remaining still. I saw a man striving, reaching, attempting to be conscious in his life and of his life. Then I worked through hundreds of text images, searching for words that related. The next step was aesthetic – connecting them visually. With this piece, it became a minimal expressiveness, an acknowledgement of letter forms, of a small graphic mark. The horizontality of the cropped frame emphasizes the stretching arc of the fingers, which echo and embrace the curls and contours of the ancient text, which in turn is grounded by the confirming check mark.

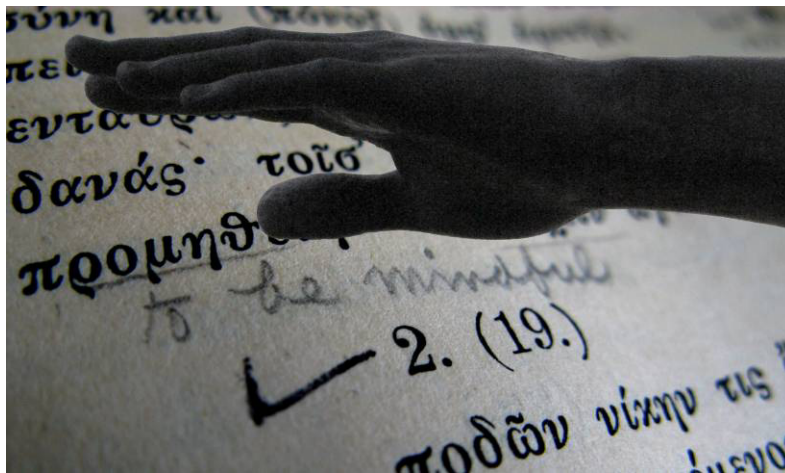


Figure 23. *To be mindful*, from the *Marginalia* series

I am interested in disintegrating the boundary between past and present, upending the traditional balance of power between margin and center. Dyed into translucent fabric (Figure 24), this image becomes a visual analogue for the complex ways in which the ephemerality of the past permeates the concreteness of the present, for the infusion and intrusion of ancient knowledge into contemporary experience. Conversely, the present is always a presence in our temporary retreat into the past; one cannot view the past in this artwork without also seeing the present in the world, emphasizing the value of interrelationships and associations over segmented isolation.

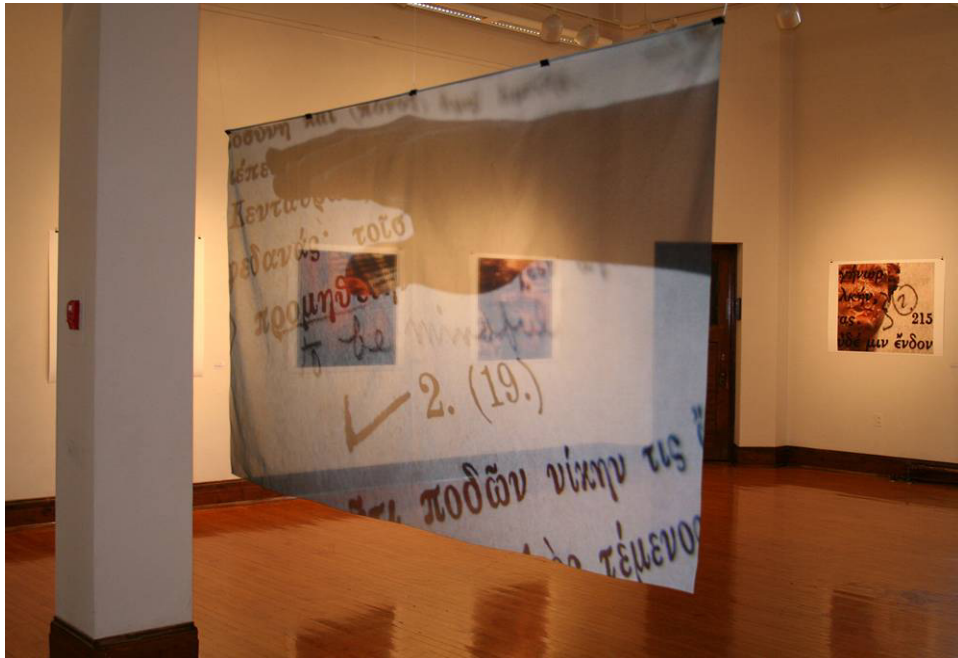


Figure 24. *To be mindful*, installation view of dye sublimation print on chiffon

Concluding Remarks

Meta Glass was not always confident and self-assured, but sometimes questioned her own understanding, and perhaps the classics themselves. In *Question at lines 83-85* (Figure 25), the ruined surface of a sculpture, dug up after centuries buried in the ground, reflects the imperfections of human knowledge, but also its capacity for beauty.



Figure 25. *Question at lines 83-85*, from the *Marginalia* series

Years of academic training in ancient Greek language and culture have given me a personal core of inspiration and knowledge, and a belief in the relevance of that knowledge. My creative process is structured by this past experience – and experience of the past, if a labyrinthine process that is a-centric can actually have a structure. Barthes questioned “whether or not a labyrinth can be *structured*,” seeing it as both a “contradiction in terms” and, simultaneously, as a “defining condition” (p. 116). My methodology views the past as an unstructured series of stratified (and therefore structured) conversations that I can join in on, dialogues that can illuminate the present. Marginalia becomes subject, content, and form, as it is central to the entire conceit.

Sometimes I work with individual images of the texts, altering them visually, but not layering them with other images. These photographs use the power of the words and the formal impact of photographic technique to carry the work (Figure 26).

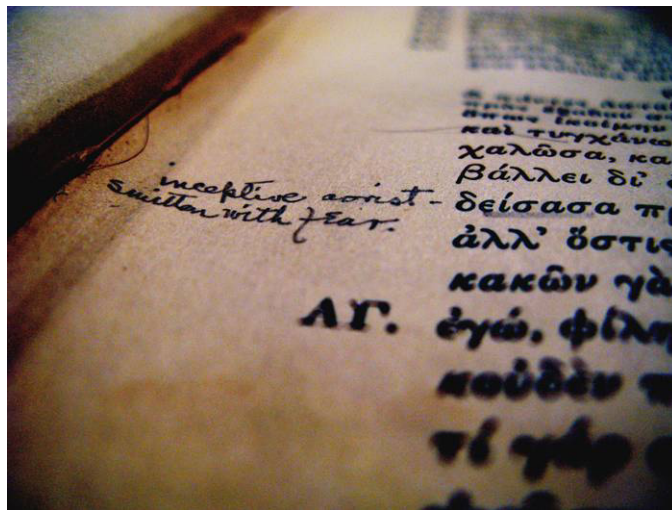


Figure 26. *Smitten with fear*, from the *Pages* series

The ‘tiny black script’ I found in Meta Glass’ books may be marginalia, but it is not marginal. It ties me to others through the universality of the expressions of human emotions. Through this work I am finding a way to make both the Greeks and Meta Glass speak again, though with my voice and inflections. I do particularly feel Meta Glass’ presence – not like a ghost, but as a real human being, who touched these books, held them in her hands, laid them flat to inscribe these words in them (Figure 27). Art is communicative, about making a connection, developing a rapport, finding a commonality.

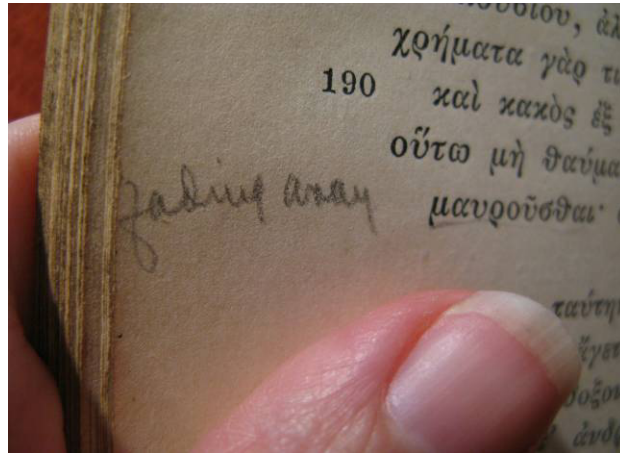


Figure 27. *Fading away*, from the *Pages* series

My work explores my intrigue with qualities of books that are being lost on a Kindle or an iPad – the sensual physicality of a book as a three-dimensional object. The books I used represent, as well, a contemporaneous visual record of the workings of one woman’s mind, still vividly present after one hundred years. Sam Anderson (2011) wrote that “...[marking up books is] a way to not just passively read but to fully enter a text, to collaborate with it, to mingle with an author...” (p. 1). My artworks are my efforts to collaborate not only with the original author of the Greek text, but to mingle with Meta Glass, to celebrate, as Anderson put it, “the pleasure of words in the margins” (p. 2).

I end with one last journey of coincidence, a book that I found two years ago in a bookstore in western Massachusetts, *Love and Friendship*, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, possibly the 1896 version. I opened it to find this dedication (Figure 28):

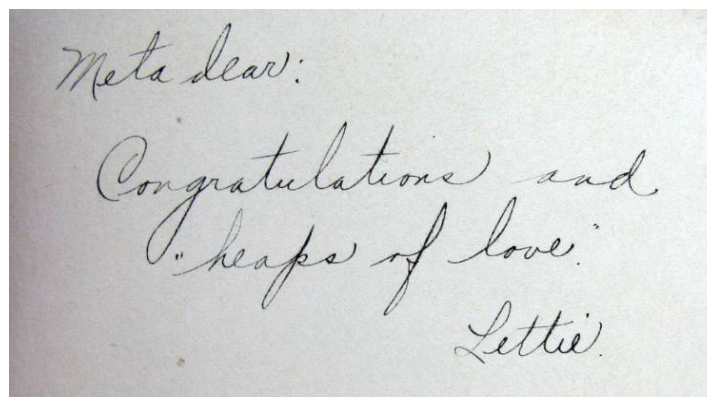


Figure 28.

Stretching it a bit, perhaps this could have been given to Meta Glass, on the occasion of her graduation from Randolph-Macon Woman's College in 1899. Or perhaps it is another Meta. For me, it expresses perfectly my feelings about my silent conversations and growing relationship with a woman who died over 40 years ago, but who lives in her books still – and who has left her own 'Ariadne's thread' for me to find and to follow.

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What Are the Great Discoveries of Your Field?

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Introduction

Ethnomusicology, the field in which I've spent most of my life, is an unpronounceable interdisciplinary field whose denizens have trouble agreeing on its definition. I'll just call it the study of the world's musical cultures from a comparative perspective, and the study of all music from the perspective of anthropology. Now, I have frequently found myself surrounded by colleagues in other fields who wanted me to explain what I'm all about, and so I have tried frequently, and really without much success, to find the right way to do this. Again, not long ago, at a dinner, a distinguished physicist and music lover, trying, I think, to wrap his mind around what I was doing, asked me, "What are the great discoveries of your field?" I don't think he was being frivolous, but he saw his field as punctuated by Newton, Einstein, Bardeen, and he wondered whether we had a similar set of paradigms, or perhaps of sacred figures. Did we have a Galileo, a Copernicus, a Darwin, -- or, more important, rather, what did these people learn that is essential to our understanding of music?

We're not in that league, of course, and ethnomusicology does not pretend to be a science, but rather, if anything, a field that combines humanistic and social science scholarship. Thus, the notion that we can make world-shaking and incontrovertible discoveries like Copernicus, or develop theories that in principle are universally accepted such as evolution or relativity doesn't apply. On the other hand, I believe that humanistic and social disciplines do make findings that, when they are interpreted, constitute something like the "great discoveries" to which my colleague from physics referred.

The question continued to haunt me, and I posed it to some of my graduate students. Well, we asked, each time one of my field-working colleagues comes upon an indigenous society whose music has never been heard (by musicians and scholars in the West) -- is that a "great discovery"? It wasn't any news to the indigenous people. Or discovering a hitherto unknown instrument? That's all small potatoes. No, I think the concept of "discoveries" doesn't really work here.

But instead, I suggest asking, "what are the great contributions of your field?" We ethnomusicologists -- there are maybe about 5000 who claim the title in the world -- spend most of our time talking to each other and impressing each other with new theoretical interpretations of musics and cultures about which we already know. But can we say that we -- as a field -- have made contributions that might affect everyone's understanding of music, of the way music relates to the other domains of culture? Let me give it a try, somewhat chronologically.

1) First Discovery: All Musics are Normal

Some years ago, a friend, a European pianist, knowing of my interest in various non-Western musics, asked me, "do you also do research on normal music?" Europeans have for centuries noted that the world's societies have different musics -- the Middle East, India, China, Native Americans -- and described them with little sympathy in various ways since the 17th century, implying that they are aberrations. To be fair, the opposite has also occurred. An Arabic traveler to Europe in the 14th century described the singing on the people of northern Germany as sounding like the howling of dogs, only worse. In general, the tone of the European descriptions suggests that there is a normal music, and that the musics of other societies are somehow abnormal departures from this standard. In particular, the system of pitches, their relationships, in Western music, were regarded as a universal norm. Europeans knew that non-Western societies used different, presumably abnormal scales, scales used in singing but even more clearly defined in the tuning of instruments.. They sounded out of tune to Europeans. Its interesting to see that there are still scholars today who regard the Western scale as a universal norm, as something imprinted on the brain.

But while there is still a lot of discussion about normal music, the issue seems to me to have been settled in a classic article by a British mathematician and scholar who undertook to measure acoustically the intervals of many cultures, using mostly treatises, and also instruments, publishing what is considered by many as the fundamental manifesto of the field that was to become ethnomusicology.

Ellis's article is titled "On the Musical Scales of Various Nations." It was a lecture given for the Society of Arts in 1885, and Ellis planned to elaborate it, but the article is itself a long piece which discusses the issues of measuring intervals and scales. But the most important things he says appear at the beginning and the end; let me quote briefly: The paper begins: "The title of this paper was meant to be "On the Musical Scale of All Nations," All is a big word and I have had to withdraw it...as I glance at Greece, Arabia, India, Java, China, and Japan." Ellis does more than glance, and then concludes: " The final conclusion is that the musical scale is not one, not natural...but very diverse, very artificial, very capricious."

The more general point is, of course, that Ellis saw the world as not one normal music from which some cultures diverge, but as a world of equally valid musics. We in ethnomusicology have never really departed from this perspective.

2) Hornbostel: Origins, Preservation, Comparative Study

If Ellis was a kind of genitor of ethnomusicology, the "pater," who nurtured the field and was the teacher of the most influential scholars of the first half of the 20th century was an Austrian by birth Erich von Hornbostel, who died in his fifties in 1934. I won't give in to the temptation

to talk about him but want only to mention one article, from 1905, that serves as one of the landmarks marking some of the principal contributions of our field. Titled (translated) "The problems of comparative musicology," this sets forth three issues that have occupied us ever since: The origins of music, the need to preserve the variety of the world's music, and the need to establish a methodology for comparative study of musics. Let me say a word about these.

Comparison has been accepted, for decades, as an epistemological necessity for understanding the variety of musics in the world. Actually, the field of ethnomusicology was known as "comparative musicology" until the 1950s. But eventually, the concept of comparison, implying deciding quality, got a bad reputation, and the notion that we studied musics only to compare them with each other threatened to give the field an undesirable aura. And comparing structure, function, and meaning was methodologically difficult.

But I think it's fair to say that we still spend a lot of time comparing, and trying to find acceptable methods of showing identities and differences, using comparison to draw conclusions about the nature of the musical world and perhaps its history.

The origins of music: A subject clearly worthy of a separate presentation: Many scholars and scientists -- including, in the 19th century, Darwin, the sociologist Herbert Spenser, the economist Carl Buecher, the psychologist Carl Stumpf -- all representing scientific and social disciplines-- contributed, all on the assumption that there was one such thing as "music" in the world. I can't today go into contemporary theories of the origin of music, but if ethnomusicologists have made contributions, it is from two perspectives: One involves seeking, among the musics of the world, universals -- universal characteristics -- that all musical systems share, on the assumption that it is these traits that must characterize the world's earliest, the world's original music.

But second, In recent times, ethnomusicologists have, in my opinion, contributed more substantively to the question: While they accept the general notion that music is a biological adaptation, part of evolution, they -- some of them at least, including me -- have come to believe that what we now call music -- and I mean all of the kinds of things that we include here, virtuosic performances to entertain and astound, religious music to approach and communicate with the deities, music for bonding mother and child, music for binding a society for self-protection (the ancestor of our patriotic music), music that fosters sexual attraction -- all of these and others -- may have had their own individual origin, as biological adaptations. Now, we in USA and Europe accept these all simply as "music," but many societies don't have a concept of music that includes all of these phenomena. Rather, societies of the world conceive of what we call music in lots of different ways, Some they think of these genres I mentioned as separate and unrelated components of culture. Only in some societies, including ours, were they all combined into a single concept of music. Thus, the variety of the world's musical cultures suggests to ethnomusicologists that what we consider

to be music may well have had multiple origins, that different uses of what we call music evolved biologically, and only later came in some cultures to be thought of as music. I don't know what Hornbostel, in 1905, would have said about this conception, but it goes back to his article.

And third, although Ellis already stated the idea, Hornbostel clearly made the suggestion that the world of music consists of musics, each a distinct system, each of which had its distinct character and grammar, and he wished to see the variety of systems preserved, and worried that the world's musics were being mixed and hybridized -- already in 1905. And indeed, preservation of the world's musical variety has been a major contribution of ethnomusicology through its history.

Hornbostel foresaw that musics would combine, mix, hybridize, as communication became more efficient. But throughout his career he actually took little interest in the particular ways in which the musics of the world affected each other. He wished to preserve the world's music in their individual forms, but not so much by encouraging their continued performance -- he may have considered this beyond the power of individual scholars -- but rather by careful and industrious recording. And indeed, the development of the concept of preservation, of constructing archives, of providing documentation, all of this seems to me to have been one of the important contributions of ethnomusicologists.

It was Hornbostel who principally established a method for even-handed, objective, and non-judgmental comparison of musics, going well beyond Ellis's interest in scales. His approaches were developed further by the generation of his students, particularly George Herzog and Helen Roberts, both of whom were concerned principally with Native American music, and then further yet by the great collector Alan Lomax, who developed a system of analysis which he called Cantometrics.

While Hornbostel and his school limited themselves to elements of music with which theory teachers of Western music are also concerned -- melody, scale, rhythm, perhaps harmony, and an element usually called form which actually contemplates the relationship of various units of a piece to each other, Lomax added elements -- he called them parameters -- that involved the various ways the voice was used, the ideas of tone color and quality preferred in each society, the relationship of the various performers to each other, such as hierarchical, egalitarian, cooperative, competitive, etc. These were approaches that had not been developed in the study of Western music, and thus qualify as contributions of ethnomusicology to the understanding of music by other kinds of music scholars.

And one more word on preservation: Ethnomusicologists have been involved in three ways. Most important was the idea of recording all of the world's musics, or significant samplings in each. Of somewhat less importance was the concept of encouraging the world's societies to continue practicing their traditions. And finally, after c. 1950, there developed an approach in

which scholars -- fieldworkers -- were encouraged to learn to perform the music they are studying as observers and recordists, putting themselves in the hands of local teachers. This approach has its controversial aspects, but on balance, I believe it has made contributions to the understanding of musics, and also in various ways, to the preservation of the world's musical diversity.

3) The Study of Music in Culture

In the 1950s, when the term ethnomusicology began to be generally used in USA and elsewhere, it began to be defined widely as the anthropological study of music. Central to this approach was the work of Alan P. Merriam, whose book, "The Anthropology of Music," published in 1964, began to be read widely by students of musicology at large, and by social anthropologists, and thus ethnomusicology began to have a substantial influence on other kinds of musical and cultural research. The approaches of Merriam and his contemporaries began to affect all of musicology.

Central to Merriam's contributions was the development of a conception of music fundamentally different from that used in earlier research. It involves music in its relationship to the rest of human culture -- culture as the concept was developed by anthropologists. Now, of course musicologists of all kinds have always had some interest in the cultural and social background of music, but the sound, the music itself, was totally central. Merriam, however, tried to develop a model of music that gave equal attention to music as human activity, music as a group of ideas and concepts, and music as a system of sound. The three components had equal significance and interrelated with each other. I don't know whether I can provide an illustration that would make this set of ideas significant, but let me try this by contrasting, for the music of the Blackfoot people, with whom I did some research in decades past, the sound and the system of ideas. Sound: It doesn't seem terribly interesting to us, and as sound, perhaps even to the Blackfoot people.

But when it comes to the system of ideas about music and song, we are talking about something far more complex. I can only give you a couple of examples: First, there is the notion that music is a kind of system that parallels the rest of culture. "The right way to do anything is to sing the right song with it," I was told. Now, everyone in Blackfoot society wasn't always singing songs to accompany whatever activity is being carried out. But it is important to understand that to the Blackfoot, there is a musical universe that is parallel to the rest of the cultural universe.

A second example: Songs come to humans, it was traditionally believed, from visions in which supernatural figures teach songs. This has several practical results. For one thing, Blackfoot people say that they learn a song in one hearing; whether this is in fact usually the case -- well, it varies. But the IDEA that a song is learned in one hearing comes from the

concept of the vision, in which a vision being, typically an animal, sings a song once to the visionary. Related to this is the notion that a song is a thing, an object, which can be given, perhaps sold, something that has existence like physical objects. There is one fundamental myth that tells about a man, a great hunter, who gives away animal skins -- the dressed skins of all animals and birds of the area -- to a supernatural figure, a combination of man and beaver, and this beaverman in turn gives him songs, singing each one once, so that he received in return the supernatural power that goes with each object.

A related point: Since songs are like objects, they cannot be changed, varied, altered. In real life, of course changes occur. But the point is that in the world of music as concept, a song can no more be changed than a ceremonial rattle, for example. Of course people make mistakes, but singers are supposed to try to sing songs exactly as they learned them.

There is lots more, but these examples may illustrate how important is the set of ideas about music, even in a society whose songs are relatively simple from our perspective. And you can see how Merriam's notion of music as consisting of three portions is an important contribution to the way we may look at the musical cultures of the world.

Here's a related development: One of the principal questions of our field is this: What determines the style or styles of music that a society selects for itself? In other words, why did western music develop in the direction of a sophisticated system of harmony, and why did sub-Saharan Africans develop a similar kind of rhythmic sophistication? What accounts for the differences between Japanese, Indian, and Native American music? We have no answer, alas, but most ethnomusicologists believe it has something to do with the character of a society's culture. In other words, the way people relate to each other and to their environment has something to do with the kind of music they develop and prefer. It's not just a matter of individual genius. The promulgation of this perspective is, I feel, also an important contribution of ethnomusicology.

I have time only for mentioning a couple of other contributions briefly:

4) Looking at Our Own Culture as Outsiders

Gradually, ethnomusicologists began to look at their own musical culture with the perspectives they gained from looking at other cultures, and from this found ways of critiquing their own musical culture, and also their own field of ethnomusicology and its approaches. Finding that musical structures and performance forces sometimes reflected social and political characteristics, and sometimes opposed them, they began to try to study in more sophisticated ways the relationship of music and other domains of their own (usually Western) culture. I tried my hand at it, studying American university schools of music after I had worked in several non-Western culture.

5) Looking at the Ways Musical Cultures Interact

In its beginnings, ethnomusicology worried about authenticity, and regarded the mixing of music as undesirable in the world of music, and certainly not as something to study.

Gradually, beginning ca. 1950, they began to take a greater interest in the ways musics interacted, and in the decisions that peoples made when they had to absorb outside musical forces, particularly Western music, while also trying to maintain their older traditions.

Ethnomusicologists developed a series of concepts that described the kinds of interactions, and their musical results. Two of these are Westernization and modernization: Westernization suggests that a traditional music changes (I'm talking about music as if it had a life of its own) so as to become a part, a kind of subdivision, of the Western musical system, incorporating, for example, Western harmony and the Western tonal system.

Modernization suggests that a traditional music incorporates certain different elements of Western musical culture, those, perhaps, that permit it to retain its essence. Thus, South Indian classical music has adopted certain Western instruments and a Western-style concert tradition, to permit its traditional music to remain relatively unchanged.

6) Doing People Some Good

Finally, an important contribution is the development of a field loosely called "applied ethnomusicology." Broadly speaking, people involved in this branch of the field are interested in doing someone some good. In most respects, ethnomusicologists -- in their publications and their courses -- address only each other and their students, or perhaps other academics. Applied ethnomusicologists try to find ways in which the insights of their field can be harnessed to help in such diverse areas as medical issues, conflict resolution, education for understanding ethnic diversity, tolerance of minorities.

I can't claim to have provided a comprehensive survey; what I've described is surely just a selection, and colleagues of mine in my field might well have come up with an alternate list. I don't know whether I have been able to cite any great discoveries, or great insights, but I think we can claim to have contributed to the ways that our society understands music in the world with an alternate list. I don't know whether I have been able to cite any great discoveries, or great insights, but I think we can claim to have contributed to the ways that our society understands music in the world's cultures in a number of significant ways.

About the Author

Bruno Nettel was born in Prague, received his PhD at Indiana University, and spent most of his career teaching ethnomusicology at the University of Illinois, where he is now professor emeritus of music and anthropology. His field experience has been with Native American people, in Iran, and in India. Best-known books are *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music* (1995), *The Study of Ethnomusicology* (rev. ed. 2005); and *Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology* (2010). He has served as president of the Society for Ethnomusicology and as editor of its journal, *Ethnomusicology*.

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Songs My Student Taught Me: Narrative of an Early Childhood Cello Teacher

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Abstract

Out of the mouth of babes (and even more nonverbal) has come perhaps the wisest music teacher education I have ever received. In this narrative I share my foibles as a young, over-confident, and naïve music instructor who, through a great amount of error, eventually learned the value of letting a child lead his own music learning. Throughout this narrative I highlight excerpts from teaching and parent journals that I collected and analyzed during a twelve-month period in which I taught Danny - a four-year-old cello student whose already refined sense of musicianship and innate desire to learn rarely meshed with my efforts to teach certain skills and repertoire that I thought would be “best for him.” I candidly share my arrogance, mistakes, and personal learning experiences while also revealing tensions that emerged through various parent-child-teacher interactions (manifested in shades of perfectionism and the clash between expressiveness and technique). In contrast, other stories reveal spontaneous and tender music-making moments at times when Danny, Mother, and I would just simply “play.”

Introduction

To this day, whenever I teach my graduate students about McPherson & Williamon's (2006) adaptation of Gagné's (2003) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent, the "Chance" box seems to animate itself and jump out of the screen at me. Sometimes I tell my students why, and sometimes I keep Danny's story to myself, as a kind of special memory to share with them on a different day – a day when we have a lot more time. In any case, whenever I see this model I can't help but remember my serendipitous acquaintance with this boy who, similarly to the "Chance" box, literally reached out and caught my attention, and eventually my heart.

My bias and personal opinion are both obvious in this narrative, but are actually central to the account, since Danny's story is as much about my own shifting perspective over time as it is about the musicianship of this young self-proclaimed maestro. It is, after all, a story about what Danny taught *me* about *teaching* that I wish to share.

Background

This narrative tells the continuing story of Danny, a precocious young boy whose pre-lesson musical history I have shared previously, prior to the beginning of his formal cello lessons (Hendricks & McPherson, 2010). The first phase of this longitudinal study described Danny's parent-child interactions and musical predisposition in the form of a case study, in which I merely acted as researcher observing the family environment. However, I present this second phase in the form of an autoethnographic narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ellis, 2009; Barrett & Stauffer, 2012) in order to provide a more intimate account of my personal interactions with Danny and his family, as well as our influence upon one another.

Danny's precociousness. Danny had an atypical interest and affinity toward western classical music that, while encouraged and supported by his parents, also stemmed from Danny's aural and emotional sensitivity. My chance meeting of Danny was a result of common nonmusical interests that I shared with his parents, but after I introduced myself as a cello teacher, and the parents revealed Danny's keen interest in learning the cello, we considered ourselves a match made in heaven.

By the time he started cello lessons at age three-and-a-half, Danny was already very familiar with every major orchestral instrument, as well as many obscure instruments that I had not even heard of. He listened incessantly to CDs his mother checked out for him from the library, watched videos of orchestra concerts, and spent tireless hours constructing pretend musical instruments out of just about anything he could get his hands on. His conversations with adults (individuals with whom he best associated) tended to center around musical

instruments, which, incidentally, he could pick out aurally by listening to recordings. His father Eric describes Danny prior to starting lessons:

People always ask us who he gets his musical interest from, me or [his mother] Riley. The answer is, really, that he came up with it himself. I come from a pretty musical family, and took piano lessons for years. I also played trumpet in the band, and learned to sing. None of that, however, leads to having a son who can name, describe, and pick out by sound all of the instruments in the orchestra by the time he turns three. I'd pick a younger age as the cut-off for that, but it took him several months to reliably differentiate the oboe, the clarinet, and the English horn.

All of this, he came up with by himself. Riley and I have been continually stretched to answer his questions. What IS that part of the violin called? What is a flugelhorn, anyway? . . . He loves to watch concert videos, and listen to the radio. While he was still two, he called me at work, pretending to be Zubin Mehta. How many people even know who Zubin Mehta is? Everywhere he goes, he takes some object that has become an instrument to him, and people who know him simply assume now that he has that coat hanger because it makes music for him.

My arrogance and naïveté. At the time I met Danny, my world was still two-dimensional; I was taught that there were rules that guided actions and those wishing to achieve “success” (using the most narrow of definitions) were wise to comply. My task as a cello teacher, therefore, was to hand down the rules that had been handed down to me, like master to apprentice.

“Like master to apprentice.” I liked the sound of that.

That made me the expert here. While I advocated the “Suzuki Triangle” of Teacher-Parent-Child (Suzuki Association of the Americas, 2003; Suzuki, 1981, 1983), my interpretation of it was one of TEACHER-teaching-Parent-teaching-child. Our roles were not equal in my view. In a kind of “trickle-down” approach, I would teach Danny’s mother Riley cello lessons, and also teach her how to teach her son. Then she had the task of figuring out how to motivate Danny to practice with her each day, because, admittedly,

I didn’t have a clue how to do it myself.

Motivation in Danny’s World

How does one motivate a three-and-a-half-year-old? Stickers? Charts? Praise? (Dare I mention candy?) My attempts to motivate Danny through extrinsic rewards were irrelevant at

best. Stickers were hardly looked at, let alone celebrated. And they certainly did not help him focus on the music or the techniques I was trying to teach him. In truth, Danny demonstrated an atypical passion for music that provided him with more intrinsic motivation to *play* (not practice) than I had ever seen before in any student of any age. My attempts to steer him towards my own version of “rightness” were simply frustrating, if not painful to him.

Danny’s parents recognized their son’s unique interest in music, but told me that they were somewhat hesitant to start him in music lessons at such a young age. Yet, as his father reports, they felt a drive to do so if, for no other reason, out of a fulfillment of what he called his son’s “intellectual needs.”

There is only so long that a kid can go around telling people that he wants to be a musician and a conductor when he grows up before you have to consider putting him in lessons of some kind. I mean real lessons, not just buying him a recorder and trying to teach him fingerings. He plays with [homemade] “instruments” of all kinds, but comes back most often to the string family, and the bassoon. Bassoons are problematic, being approximately twice as tall as he is. Strings are built down to 1/16th scale, so the physical limitations of being only three aren’t quite so insurmountable. He picked the cello to learn first. Of course, once he learns the cello, he said, he wants to learn the violin, then viola, and then the bass.

We had been reading a book on gifted children called, “Some Of My Best Friends Are Books,” about how reading can help children meet their emotional and intellectual needs. The idea that gifted children, my gifted children, have intellectual needs, and that the opportunity to meet these intellectual needs can have strong consequences on their emotional growth, was something that I had not considered before.

Is there a part of Danny that will feel incomplete if his chance to be a musician consists of carrying around PVC pipes fastened together with elastic bands and calling the collection a bassoon? Being smart and interested in music is one thing. Feeling like a musician trapped inside a little body that can only pretend is another thing. What is really going on inside him when he has taken wooden spoons and is using them to play cello along with Vivaldi? Is he playing a game, or is he coming as close as he can to touching the picture he sees of himself inside?

There are people who are willing to answer that question for me. He’s only three, they say. It’s a phase, they say. I did Suzuki lessons, but I didn’t start until much later, they say. But THEY don’t know Danny, do they? They don’t go to the library looking for CDs, because their three-year-old has been asking for a clarinet concerto

for a week now. They don't have three-year-olds that would call them out for putting on the oboe CD and telling him it is a clarinet concerto. I do.

Despite his rationale for going ahead with lessons, Eric kept a cautious eye, observing how such lessons might influence his son's innate love of music. His journal entry shows his initial awareness of the depth of Danny's intrinsic interest, in contrast to the techniques and extrinsic rewards I was trying to impose:

So I don't know. I do know that we won't find out if we don't take the chance. I will be watching to see if he can look his teacher in the eye for ten seconds. I will watch to see if he can hold the cello between his knees while in rest position. Later, I will watch to see if he holds his bow properly, and if he keeps his elbow up. But, I will also be watching to see if he holds his head differently, if he plays by himself differently, how he relates to the self-portrait in his head differently. I don't know how I will know these things. I don't know if I will know these things. The criteria are more subjective than the sticker chart his teacher has.

Yesterday I came home from a meeting and instead of running out and demanding my attention, as is his wont, he continued what he was doing with play food inside a cardboard box. I went into his room to see what he was doing. He looked up at me and said, "I'm listening to my music." He had on the Suzuki Cello volume 1 CD. Three days ago, it was cello music. Today it was HIS music. I feel like something in how he listens has changed for him since we brought the cello home. Am I attaching more significance to that than what it deserves? Maybe. Time will tell. He did seem more centered than usual, if that word has any real meaning in this western society. But if that word doesn't have any real meaning here, I think that Shinichi would still know what I mean. And he would approve.

"Shinichi would still know what I mean." I confess: When I first read this blog entry, I was quite taken aback at Eric's audacity to make such an informal reference to Suzuki. Suzuki followers rarely (if ever) call Shinichi Suzuki by his first name, but more commonly refer to him to as "Dr. Suzuki," traditionally out of deepest respect.

Later, however, as I became more aware of Eric's interest in the writings of Zen master Shunryu Suzuki (1997), I wondered if this discussion of his son seeming "centered," and his use of Suzuki's first name, might have been in reference to spiritual commonalities between Shunryu (Zen master) and Shinichi (music pedagogue). Was Eric aware that Shinichi Suzuki's philosophy expanded beyond a paradigm of performance and technical standards, to one of love and connection (Hendricks, 2011)? Was I aware of this? Eric's use of Suzuki's first

name might have, for all I knew, denoted a strikingly uncommon level of intimacy with the founder of the Suzuki method – one that he certainly did not acquire through my pedagogical influence, which privileged technique and perfectionism over spirituality and connection (despite anything I might have professed to the contrary).

The Clash of Expression and Technique

Danny and music were inseparable, but Danny and technique were most certainly at odds. His awareness of musical form and his knowledge of western classical masters (both composers and performers) was, at his age, already superior to that of most adults. So, perhaps unsurprisingly, his three-year-old body and impatience for externally-imposed form fought mercilessly against his ageless sense of musicianship. His father described the conundrum:

When we started talking seriously about having lessons, one of our concerns was how he would adapt to having a teacher rein in his style. The boy has spent so much energy watching artists play that he has very clear ideas of how things should be done. When playing a wooden spoon “cello” he likes to shake his head like Yo-Yo, and when he plays a “double bass” he slaps it, and twirls it around like he’s a Beatnik. He puffs his cheeks like Dizzy, and makes faces like Zubin. He’s learned from the Masters.

Unfortunately, most of what he has learned from the Masters is what a stylish performance looks like to a three-year-old. He doesn’t know yet what goes into making it sound like that. Unless a teacher can rein him in, he’ll be like the novice singer who shakes their jaw to get some “vibrato.” It’s an approximation, but it isn’t the real thing.

Now he has a teacher telling him how to sit, what to do with his body, where and how to play notes. [...] If he is going to become the musician that he wants to become, shaking his head like Yo-Yo, he needs to start with the components that allow that intensity. He needs to hold the cello between his knees so it is solid as he starts to use the bow on it. He needs someone who will enforce the step-by-step aspect of learning, in a way that I can’t do. I’m not removed from him enough to be able to stick wax in the end of a recorder so it won’t play, and make him finger through three blind mice when he wants to turn it sideways and make it a piccolo.

It’s the third day since his lesson, and Riley, who is the one who practices with him, already has questions about how to keep the balance between allowing him to move on so he doesn’t get bored, and holding him back so he gets the basics more solid. He has started to embellish his bowing. Yesterday he was bowing all the way to the floor,

with wide hand waving. He can do it the right way, but it isn't as much fun. "I am ready to learn," indeed. Good thing she can ask the Teacher.

"I am ready to learn" – Eric's father was alluding to one of several traditional statements that Suzuki students say to their teachers out of respect, as they bow to them at the beginning of a lesson.

Ta Da - I had them convinced.

I was the expert, they knew it, and they would defer to my wisdom. And with their blessing and trust, I moved forward, doing what I believed was best for the boy – which, at the very beginning, meant taking the cello bow away from Danny until he could learn some more basic skills. The cello bow – the primary maker of sound – was getting him much too excited and causing him to shift his focus away from technique. It would, therefore, have to be hidden in the closet of *my* studio (not at his home) until I deemed him ready and deserving to get it back. I confess I was proud of myself. By keeping it in my studio space, he would understand that I held the key to his musical future. If he truly loved music, which he obviously did, then he would of course comply. It was what was best for him. Knowing how sensitive Danny was, however, I warned his parents in advance so that they could prepare him emotionally.

The fateful lesson day arrived. He came; I confiscated the bow; and then taught him a few fundamental techniques (including, of course, pizzicato). We bowed to one another to signal the close of the lesson (as is customary in Suzuki studios), and the family left. In my arrogant naïveté I believed – honestly – that the boy's tears at the end of the lesson (which turned into fortissimo wails outside my house once the door was shut) were because he was so sad to end the lesson and go home. However, Eric's journal tells a different story:

We talked to him over and over before his . . . lesson Saturday, about his teacher taking his bow. He knew it would happen, but I don't think he really BELIEVED it would happen. It was almost lunchtime when he got home, so his blood sugar was low, which makes it hard for him to deal with adversity. In this case, he bawled all the way home, and half-way through a cup of juice. After he was calmed down, he mused about it most of the day. "WHY did she have to take my bow?"

Ah, but he would understand in time, right? Eric at least gave me hope for as much by providing this report:

By Sunday, he had come to terms with it. His favorite way to practice is to give us lessons. He shows us how to bow to start and finish a lesson, the various rest

positions, how to sit. . . . He even explained to me why he had to take away my cello bow, so I would be able learn the things I need to learn before I can play “Twinkle, Twinkle.”

I don't think I ever expected Danny to leap for joy at practicing technique – rarely do any of us do this, regardless of age, right? Who really likes to practice? Isn't practice something that we all *have* to do because someone who knows better is telling us what to do? Like master to apprentice? Or like . . . like . . . or . . .

Hmmm.

Is this an apprentice model, or a dictatorship clothed in the guise of love?

At a loss for ideas. I suppose the first wakeup call came as I noted over our year together just how extremely resistant Danny was to this refining process. The same boy who would sit for hours on end watching videos and live concerts - the same boy who would tirelessly study the intricacies of musical instruments - the same boy who turned anything he could get his hands on into a sound maker - couldn't last more than two seconds when I would ask him to place his fingers in the “correct bow hold.”

In technique-teaching moments throughout the year, Danny would often slump down and freeze into a heavy ball (with hands fixed in a fist and inaccessible under him); or he would start rolling around on the floor; or he would, very frequently, make a quick dash off his cello chair, run out of the studio, and hide under the living room coffee table and start meowing like a cat. So most often I would share my technical strategies with Riley, whom I advised and encouraged to take cello lessons as well, and trust her to do the work with him at home. Thanks to Riley's creativity and effort, she was able to slip moments of technique work into playful songs and games, which Danny then cooperated with – perhaps because of the music that she promised him would come from technique, but certainly, I believe, because of the intimate and playful attention he got from his mom at such times.

Developmentally inappropriate practice. I knew Danny's passion for music was there as I taught him – but discussions of technique turned him off instantly. After some observation, I noted that his tiny fingers (although quite strong when he grasped a conducting baton) seemed too weak to hold down the strings, and it was difficult for him to differentiate between each finger's duty when he held the bow. This is not rocket science for anyone who understands child development, but it was a big breakthrough for me: His fine motor skills were still developing, and I was asking him to do things that he was not yet able to do. In my inexperience, my technical requests took him far beyond his reach, without the scaffolding he

needed to stretch appropriately. My heart sank as I realized that this boy, with music filling every aspect of his life, may (as far as I can tell) have been devastated at his inability to perform music the way he envisioned it in his mind, ear, and heart.

Music and Play

When Danny was allowed to play his cello outside of lessons and formal practice, he was fully active and engaged. When he was invited to give “concerts” to neighbors and friends, or when his mother and I played cello duets and invited him to “play” along, he would very eagerly take his cello (named “Carolyn”) out of “her” case and saw away – making all sorts of cacophonous noises that only a mother could love – all the while making virtuosic expressions with his face similar to those his father described above.

I eventually discovered that Danny was willing to try out some of the techniques I wanted him to learn during lesson time if I rewarded him by taking his requests to perform certain cello pieces for him, or if he could see – tangibly, with markers on a board – that his opportunity for “free play” (his turn to make whatever sounds he wanted with his cello) would be coming up next.

His parents and I noticed bits of technique start to work their way into his moments of “free play.” While he would often delight in stochastic scrubbing with his bow *under* the bridge to make high-pitched screeching noises, he would also pause at other moments to demonstrate the difference between a “T” (straight bow, perpendicular to the string) and an “X” (angled bow, recipe for bow placement problems) and other such issues that we had discussed together. Perhaps he was not opposed to these ideas, but seemed to want to work them into his music in the way he saw fit - without pressure for perfection, but with creative interest.

A year of freedom versus restriction. Danny’s passion for music in general never waned throughout the year. Once his mom shared a video of a random moment where she walked in the bedroom and found Danny wearing nothing but his socks, jumping on the bed with a broom in his hands, poised like a rock guitarist who was screaming unintelligible lyrics. Perhaps he had decided to branch out a bit from the classical genre? But in any case, his actions and dress were the epitome of expressive freedom. He also kept his family’s living room full of his musical projects and toys, with keyboards and drums and clarinets and bassoons and conducting podiums and batons and music stands and ... you name it.

Throughout the year, when I would visit Danny’s family at home for social occasions, Danny and I would spend time together as if we were the best of friends. I read him bedtime stories; we “jammed” together on his various real and homemade instruments; we would laugh, play,

roll on the floor together – we simply shared a natural play experience. But when Danny came to my home for formal lessons, the energy was strangely distant and confining.

Despite our best efforts and a few highs along the way, nothing really changed that much over the year.

Danny's Last Lesson

At the end of the school year Eric got a new job. They would move away, and this marked the end of our cello lessons together. Danny's final lesson was at his house instead of mine, amidst packing boxes.

As I walked in, Danny reported in a sad voice that Ellie [Danny's 18-month old sister] had not been letting him practice. I asked for clarification and he said that she was too noisy. I thought that was an interesting thing to bring up, but Eric reported later that he had told him this as well. Was this his excuse for not feeling ready for the lesson? I can't count the number of times I've heard excuses from students before lessons begin. Different excuses, but similar both in desperation and in incredulousness. Boy, we learn those tricks young in our lives.

Throughout the year I had gradually come to realize that I had pushed Danny too hard, and I wanted, at least in this final lesson, to let him just simply play and enjoy himself. However, this lesson, which I had hoped would be a significant musical event to bring us closure, was more like a microcosm of the push-and-pull year we had experienced together. My journal entry illuminates Danny's strivings for musical freedom, in contrast to the technical and perfectionistic demands that his mother and I had gotten into a habit of imposing:

The lesson was bumpy in progress. Danny was very interested in music but not much in the cello. I tried to follow his musical lead and Riley tried to persuade him to do what she thought(?) I wanted Danny to do. Since we were in a different environment, I wanted to play more and teach less, yet Riley was determined to make up for the change in location by keeping things formal. In the meantime, Danny appeared frustrated because he wanted to be involved with the activities, but not according to someone else's rules . . . That living room has always been Danny's kingdom: He is allowed to build forts there, he gives "concerts" there, and he makes up a lot of the rules of play there. Add to that the fact that he had not eaten breakfast, and it was a difficult thing for him to have a lesson.

Knowing Danny was hungry, I decided to try a game I named “feeding the cello” to help him focus on his tone production. We fed our instruments puffed millet (light bow) and added sugar (heavier bow) and milk (slow and then fast bows). Danny grasped the concepts brilliantly but did not play them as well as he talked about them. As he played I looked in his eyes and saw a bit of a glaze. He had not completely awoken yet, and this was all a struggle for him.

We managed to talk Danny into a few good bow holds, and got him to keep his feet on the floor. Then we finally allowed Danny to use his conducting baton to lead Riley and me as we played our cellos. Danny told us all the right notes to play as we performed an antiphonal dialogue version of “See-saw” [with our cello bows]. Riley appeared frustrated although she was putting forth an incredible effort.

I felt more like the researcher than the teacher today: I observed all of us a little bit from an outsider’s perspective and saw three perfectionists, all with different agendas, but all with a competing desire to please someone else. I thought to myself that this was no fun at all, not for any of us.

After recounting the lesson, I took a moment to reflect on the year – a year that ended very differently than I had imagined it would. Here I was, the so-called “expert,” struggling to keep the interest of a boy who, at the beginning of the year, lived and breathed music. I wrote:

Of all the things that I have learned this year, the one that is most deeply embedded in me is how music is meant to bring joy. Perfectionism, although intended to pave the way for greater happiness, never really does. Danny’s love of music will be suffocated if he worries so much about getting it “right” (whatever that is). The jury’s still out for Danny and what he wants to do. Will our overzealousness cost him his dreams? Were they really his dreams to begin with? It’s such a fine line between developing proper habits and stifling the love of playing. But in watching a 4-year-old who loves music and has struggled to maintain that love on the cello this year (thanks to our efforts to impose our limiting ideas on his free spirit), I think I know what I would hope for him now.

Yet this boy still felt a need to please me; to do things the way he thought I wanted. I reported in my journal:

After his last lesson was over, I took the video camera and recorded a conversation with Danny. I asked him what he wanted to do with the cello when he was in his new home. He told me that when he came back (perhaps not comprehending the finality of

the move) he would be playing in an orchestra. I asked him what songs he would be playing. He said, "ALL the Suzuki songs." I asked him what else. He hesitated, and then showed me his left hand, with curved fingers, and said, "This one." I asked him if it was the tunnel song [technical exercise to curve the left fingers] song and he said yes.

Danny gave me all the "right" answers – that is, at least what he seemed to think I wanted him to say. In other words, "When I see you next, I will have the perfect technique that you expect. I will play in the orchestra like you expect. I will play all the songs that you expect me to learn." But what did Danny *really* want? I considered the answer to this question in my journal:

Perhaps he doesn't know. That's simple enough to imagine since it is human nature to change one's mind about something to which we are so emotionally attached.

Certainly we know that he loves music, loves the cello, but just wants to be able to play it without patiently trudging through all the steps and games that are typically enough for a child his age. His mind and ear are far beyond his developmental capacities to play the cello, but music is in his heart and head. He regularly sings to himself, and adds expression, emotion and variety (in range, timbre, and articulation) to songs when singing with others.

Musical instrument preference comes and goes for him, interest in playing the cello waxes and wanes, but some sort of encounter with music is always going on in his play, actions, and in his interactions with others. He still gets extremely emotional if he doesn't get his way with group music activities, and he randomly conducts (always as expressive as Bernstein). Danny is a Pre-Twinkler [Suzuki student in preparation for the first song "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"], and progressing quite naturally and expectedly according to his developmental abilities. The difference between Danny and other Pre-Twinklers, however, is that Danny is already a developed musician. Perhaps this makes the frustration too much for him to bear.

Saying Good Bye

I had promised the family that I would find a new cello teacher for them in the area to which they were moving, but I just hadn't been able to bring myself to make the necessary calls. Finally, after the shocked surprise and encouragement of a teaching colleague to get on the phone and "find this brilliant boy a teacher" (I admit I was completely persuaded by ego), I started working with the connections that I had. Riley and I also spent some time on the

Internet looking at Suzuki Schools in the area to which they were moving. Unfortunately, nothing we found seemed *good enough* for Danny.

Reflecting back. In my frustration, I thought back to the previous fall, when I first asked Riley if she would like to take cello lessons along with her son. I was taken aback as she immediately started to cry – I had no idea she cared so much about music! To her, she said, music was “a window to the soul.” Later, I asked Eric about Riley’s spontaneous tears. He explained her emotion as a result of never feeling “good enough” to study a musical instrument:

There are a lot of things that she never got to try when she was a kid. In high school she was on the tennis team, but I don’t think that she had any kind of lessons or joined any leagues or anything. And I think a part of her has felt like if she had shown enough talent in something her parents would make that a priority, because her younger sister took piano lessons, because her sister had some musical talent. And so to have somebody say, ‘You can do this’ was an affirmation that I think she had never had.

Riley’s lessons and duets with me that year had been, in my opinion, fun, free, and nonjudgmental - more like two good friends playing music together. In the last few months, however, she had showed much less interest in playing, similar to the lack of interest in lessons that her son displayed. Had she stifled her musical aspirations? Was she too busy now? Or was she simply no longer interested? Or – or maybe – had the perfectionism in our “triangle” been too much for her as well? I really didn’t know.

But I wasn’t about to let it all end like this.

A new idea. One night just before they left, my mind’s eye opened up to a different scene than I had previously imagined. I emailed Riley to share my idea:

In a nutshell: Danny’s formal lessons are put on hold, but you get to play [your cello] for fun, perhaps taking a few lessons, and just simply playing every once in a while for yourself. If Danny wants to play too, then he can play. So in truth you’re practicing with him, but in a much less stressful format. Just for fun. And Danny could merely observe, or participate, as he wishes.

This idea was inspired by the research of Lucy Green (2001), and was my last attempt to keep Danny’s love of cello alive by suggesting that he learn informally, by simply “jamming” with

his mom. It hit me somehow just how liberating this might be for both of them. I wrote in my journal:

When Riley and I play duets together, there is hardly any need for perfectionism, no need to please. When Riley plays, it's simply just for the love of it. This is what I would hope for both Riley and Danny: Music as joy.

Perhaps, I thought, she could keep playing her cello for fun on a semi-regular basis, both for herself as well as for her son who just *might* be watching. Riley just playing. Just having and modeling fun - but being ready to offer good “cellistic” advice to Danny when asked. Sounded win-win to me! (I suggested this to the family – noting now, in retrospect, that I was still trying to control the situation, still acting as “expert,” even in the moment that I was recognizing a need for more freedom).

When I shared my thoughts with Riley and Eric, they confessed that they had also been considering an alteration in future plans. In fact, we were surprised at how much our independent conclusions matched. They, too, had thought to keep their cellos but to take a rest from weekly lessons. Riley mentioned that Danny had expressed an interest in being able to “practice a while” before starting with another teacher. Eric reported that Danny told him that he was ready for a break from lessons but still wanted to keep “Carolyn.” It appeared that even Danny was in agreement with us: It wasn’t the cello that was the problem; it was the lessons.

I promised to never ask them again about their progress on the instruments.

Life after Lessons

I received only one unsolicited report about Danny and his cello after the family moved away. Riley emailed me soon after they moved, to tell me about a situation in which Danny was playing at home with his cousin and, as Riley reported, “the play hit a snag.” She tells the story:

So, yesterday Brandon was over to play with Danny. They'd been playing all right, but the play shifted somehow and Brandon was insisting on something that Danny didn't want to do. Danny hasn't quite learned how to negotiate with Brandon yet, so he got a bit upset and left the room. A minute later I heard a bump, bump, bump and could tell that Danny was bringing things back down to the basement where Brandon and I were. I went around the corner of the stairs to see if Danny needed help, and discovered that Danny was bringing down his cello (in the case still) and his cello

chair. He set them down on the landing of the stairs (so four stairs higher than where Brandon was sitting on a beanbag on the floor) and announced that he was going to give Brandon a concert.

I helped Danny get out his cello safely (the stairs aren't carpeted, and the landing isn't super big), He sat down on this chair, lined his fingers up beautifully on his bow, and began to free play. After just a little bit, Brandon said "Can you stop? I'm hearing lots of screeching." I told Brandon that we have a rule at our house that "we only talk nice about people's instrument playing, since everyone is just learning." After that he asked if Danny could play quieter, so I guided Danny to play on the C and G string. Danny added some pizzicato (thumb on the side of the finger board) and some quiet spiccato bowing. Brandon had the remote for our remote control car in his hand and they ended up pretending that the remote control let Brandon command Danny to bow fast/ slow or loud/soft.

When Brandon seemed bored with that, I suggested that Danny let Brandon try the cello. Brandon hadn't expressed an interest in playing it, but when offered the chance, he hopped right up and sat down. Brandon plucked a little and bowed some. It seemed a little hard for Danny to let Brandon play Carolyn, and Danny was ready for his turn again pretty quickly, but I think it gave Brandon a bit more understanding of the squeaks, and enough patience to listen to Danny play for a few more minutes. I'd kept my hand on the cello (near the tuning pegs) the whole time, but otherwise, I was impressed at how naturally it all went.

Echoes of perfectionism. From a new place of awareness, I observed this scene as one mixed with Riley's desire to let Danny play freely, yet still with an underlying tone of perfectionism and a need to please the "teacher." In the midst of her description of Danny's free play, she included comments that evidenced her effectiveness as a "Suzuki triangle" parent:

They'd been playing all right.

Danny hasn't quite learned how to negotiate with Brandon yet.

Danny was bringing down his cello (in the case still).

I helped Danny get out his cello safely.

He lined his fingers up beautifully on his bow.

We have a rule at our house that we only talk nice about people's instrument playing.

Were these descriptions just a natural part of Riley's story, or were they inserted for me to view, to endorse somehow? Riley didn't really need my validation. I was already in awe of her mothering abilities, her care for her children, her patience, her tireless hours dedicated to

making sure that Danny and Ellie had everything they would need to be happy, healthy, and prepared for the world. I had a tremendous amount of respect for her. Yet even in her description of a spontaneous free play moment, she still included the “right” answers – *that is, at least what she seemed to think I wanted her to say*. While I hoped that her time with Danny would be more like our cello duets had been - full of free expression and nonjudgmental space - the authoritarian triangle of “TEACHER-teaching-Parent-teaching-child” still resonated even within the new playful structure.

I got a sick feeling as I read her words – the same kind of sick feeling I had whenever I found myself telling my older students that they didn’t need to be so nervous before a performance. You know, that it really didn’t matter. That they should just play from their hearts and not worry about the details – all this after I had demanded unyielding perfection from them in every practice session leading up to that moment. As if they could just turn that off all of a sudden.

Yet I could not truly provide a safe, expressive space for any of my students until I first learned to create one for myself.

Self-determination. From a different view, Riley’s description of Danny’s free play was also a “poster moment” for self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and one I felt I could truly be proud of. Danny brought down the cello and played it out of his own volition (autonomy), setting up his technique and demonstrating skills he had learned (competence), sharing the music he loved with his cousin and his mother (relatedness). Hooray - A great start, and exactly what I had hoped for. So very different than assigning an adult as the authority, calling often developmentally inappropriate shots for him.

But did it continue?

Conclusion

Last summer, four years after I gave Danny his last lesson, Riley called me to see how she might find a new home for two cellos that, frankly, had been sitting in the closet untouched for years now. Danny had moved on to a keen interest in fire trucks. And then dinosaurs. He could tell you any detail you’d ever want to know about any kind of “terrible lizard” that had ever walked the planet.

So, what’s it to me? Should I care? Perhaps it was just a “phase,” just like Eric’s friends suggested. We all go through them, right? We all get passionate about things – and then something happens to either kindle that fire further . . .

...or blow it out.

I can't go back now. If I could, I would do things differently. I would play with Danny. I would play my cello for him and with him, and answer his questions and show him things that *he* was interested in. That *he* asked me about. And I'd care much less about the end result. I'd just enjoy every moment with him, and make music in our own kind of way. It would be less about cello and more about connection.

Songs my students teach me now. Many years have passed since I met Danny and his family. Since then, I have somehow attracted a dozen or so early childhood string students into my studio. I have never sought them out. They just seem to keep coming into my life, as if the Universe continues to twist and bend back on itself to give me my own kind of spiral curriculum (Bruner, 1960), providing me opportunities to observe, listen, learn, and relearn pedagogical secrets from these young sages.

They have taught me almost everything I know about early childhood education. They teach me to play with them (Marsh & Young, 2006; Nachmanovitch, 1990). To get down on the floor with them, as their equal, and engage with them in music making (Duke, 1999; Custodero, 2009). To play my instrument, and invite them to play theirs - if and when and how they want (Andress, 1980; Moorhead, Sandvik, & Pond, 1951). To dance with them (Goodkin, 2004; Moorhead & Pond, 1942). To sing with them (Flohr & Persellin, 2011; Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Moorhead & Pond, 1941). To provide them a variety of music-making options, and let them choose what they'd like to do (Blair, 2009; O'Neill, 2005; Renwick & McPherson, 2002). To teach them correct bow holds and fundamental string technique, but with "flexible purposing" (Dewey, 1938; Hendricks, 2009), within a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), offering more developmentally appropriate activities (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Jordan-Decarbo & Nelson, 2002; Katz, 1987, 1995; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997) that support and encourage their sense of competence (Bandura, 1997; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

We still start and end each lesson with a bow to one another, but now I consider this an opportunity to demonstrate *my* respect, as I say to them in my heart, "I am ready to learn." I no longer get disappointed when they don't want to participate the way I had in mind. I take this as a moment to listen and observe and learn from them. I've learned that there are plenty of ways to participate, plenty of ways to be musical. And there is plenty of time to grow up.

* * *

[When] we see our thoughts and emotions with compassion, we stop struggling against ourselves. We learn to recognize when we're all caught up and to trust that we can let go. Thus the blockages created by our habits and prejudices start falling apart. In this way, the wisdom we were blocking ... becomes available.

-Pema Chödrön (2002, p. 141)

A person with a fine and pure heart will find happiness. The only concern ... should be to bring up ... children as noble human beings. That is sufficient. If this is not [the] greatest hope, in the end the child may take a road contrary to their expectations. Your [child] plays ... very well. We must try to make him splendid in mind and heart also.

-Shinichi Suzuki (1983, p. 15)

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Being There and Becoming-Unfaithful^{1 2}

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Abstract

Invoking the work of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Liselott Mariett Olsson, the author of this short essay puts forth the concept of *becoming-unfaithful* as a way to rethink the relational and ethical complexities of being there with children through research. Re-encountering his own participatory movements while engaged in the drawing performances of a young boy, the author explores the unfaithful occasions in and through which his being *near* there is revealed and his being there, incessantly constructed.

¹ The concept of becoming-unfaithful was initially developed in my (2012) doctoral dissertation *Being there and becoming-unfaithful with children through art: Deleuzoguattarian embodiment, subjectivity and the production of difference*.

² A previous version of this paper appears in a co-authored chapter of the (forthcoming) *Handbook of research methods in early childhood education*.

Being there and Becoming-Unfaithful

[Becoming] is to extract particles between which one establishes the relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness that are closest to what one is becoming, and through which one becomes. This is the sense in which becoming is the process of desire

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/2007, p. 272)

We give birth to unfaithful children. They are not ours, not even from the beginning

(Olsson, 2009, p. 146)

Being There

In her (2006) essay *Being there: Developing understanding through participant observation*, Corrine Glesne introduces the idea of being there in relation to the qualitative processes of participant observation. For Glesne being there has to do with the manner in which the researcher is able to experience, explore, and to some degree achieve “the status of trusted person” (p. 49). But what does it mean to be trusted? Or rather, what does it mean to achieve the “status” of trusted person? More importantly, how does one achieve such a status, if this is in fact something that one achieves at all? I find these questions to be both troubling yet necessary to confront, for trust—as status or otherwise—is not only an integral part of researching the experiences of children, it is an essential and open network that conditions and reconditions the connective engagements that we both pursue and perform through our research *with* children.

It has been my experience as a researcher that trust exists and operates as an indeterminate ethic, an ethic that is, as Levi R. Bryant (2011) notes, a moment of “uncertain” (p. 26) possibility, which is to say that it *is*, as a moment, provisional and incomplete, unstable and multiple. This ethical-processual temporality invites both children and adults to participate differently: to contribute, to consider and contest, and to intervene in the snarled relations that are created both for and by one’s participatory other(s). In other words, it is through the momentary occasions of ethicality—those junctures of uncertainty—that children and adults are not only invited to participate, but also *dared* to create difference through this participation. However, not every child or adult *dares* to enter into, to move, to live, or to think in moments of uncertainty with the inventive conviction that the moment itself spurs. This is not to say that the child or adult is not partaking in a creative act. On the contrary, it might be that the most radical act of creation is the act in which the child or the adult constructs a line of escape. The intensity by which these moments are enacted—be it through coercive and/or convivial methods—produces occasions for children and adults to “opt out as well as into the research process” (Edmond, 2005, p. 136). In other words, it is through the

intensity of a particular moment (i.e., the relations of a moment, the specificity of its given qualities and correspondences), and the purpose with which this *way of being there* is composed, and thus compelled into action that both children and adults are permitted greater participatory latitude.

One does not merely participate in order to acquire the status of trusted person, but rather one participates and increases this participation through the “joyful encounters” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 41) of research. As such, the researcher and the processes of research “must be ready (flexible enough, desiring enough) to reshape their/its practices in response to whatever the latest directive is” (Davies, 2009, p. 4). These directives “express our state at a given moment in time... they are a slice of our duration” (Deleuze, 1997, p. 139), a sliver of our becoming-inquisitive. Further, these directives give rise to a passage, a becoming-affective through which we participate, creatively circumnavigating the complex relations of research: its processes and practices; its qualities, powers, and dramas; its maxims and shadows; its invitations and incitements, and the crescendos and lulls of its many adventures.

However, there are moments when the researcher, for whatever reason, remains steadfast in his or her hesitancy to embrace or enact such flexibility, unwilling to desire joyfully (openly, actively, productively), or perhaps desiring too much in a specific direction or in a particular way (anticipatively, predictably, assumedly). It is in these moments that the researcher exercises a mode of flexibility that moves and desires like a trickster: *saying one thing yet always doing another*. Trickster-desire, as enacted by the researcher, says, “Look at how thoughtful and attentive I am!” “Look at how assured and objective I am being.” Yet, at the very same time trickster-desire searches for confirmation, strategically scouring the participatory terrains for those trace elements that will, of course, remind it of itself. In moments such as these the researcher *is* in fact ready (*flexible enough, desiring enough*), however this readiness actualizes only to reshape and redirect the directive itself, providing it with the *appeal* that it needs to be doubled (duplicated, reinforced, or simply to appear as it is being desired, again). But even the most inflexible and unyielding expressions of desire undergo a process of becoming, a process of the joy-increasing type, a process that undergirds this assumed doubleness with an enduring and tacit flux of alterity.

Research is caught in this flux, fixed in the joyful strains of its *actual* and *as if-ness*, yet all at once becoming something other than it once was. Here and somewhere over there, research is invested and investing in the productive tensions of an always-afflicted journey with others, objects and events. It is through the disarticulating tug and pull of this becoming-other that one’s participatory engagements are put on display, performed, dismantled, reconfigured, and practiced anew. Here, the researcher and the child enter and re-enter into an enduring state of affectivity, an emergent and negotiated space-time through which the researcher and the child

“passage from one state of affection to another” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 49) making sense of, consuming, testing, and producing differently the ethical and political parameters, pitfalls, and provocations that have and continue to condition their respective modes of involvement, and the intellectual matters that they produce together.

For Deleuze and Guattari, whose ethical constructions proliferate in relation to the affective networks of Baruch Spinoza, to joyfully encounter through research is to embody and exercise an ethic of immanence. An ethic of immanence does not simply appeal to transcendence, or to universals (Smith, 2011, p. 123), nor does it utilize practice (artistic, pedagogical, inquisitive, or otherwise) to merely discredit or affirm thought, it utilizes these practices to intensify thought (Foucault, 1977/2009, p. xiv), or rather to intensify the movement-feeling of thought. It is through the indeterminate yet immanent ethics/affects of research that children and adults increase their capacity to act, to think, and desire in the world. To participate joyfully then is to be involved in such a way that one’s modes of being there are practices through which the world is continuously yet joyfully organized, appropriated, constructed, and set into an unsettled motion.

Being there is not—simply put—a matter of obtaining or reaching toward a particular outcome, a technocratic methodological means (procedure) to a systematic and highly coordinated end (product). My sense is that one does not simply engage in the process of being there for the sake of finding, nor does one merely listen in order to hear. Rather, it is through being there that one is always looking and listening as a way of getting lost. Lost, because being there through research is in part a practice of straying afield; to take pleasure in one’s digressions, to leave one’s fixities through the curiosities of an astute inattention, and to harbor a love for what is unexpected and yes, unnerving. Being there with children through research is exactly that, a process of being there *with* children, a process of relations—a process of joyful yet unsettling reciprocity that is undeniably temporal and forever incomplete. Early childhood art educator and researcher, Christine Marmé Thompson (2009) understands this well—writing her way into and through the inquisitive ebbs and flows of being there:

Just as looking and listening are things that research requires and children demand, it is necessary to take the time to linger, to live within the situation, in order to see those things that begin to occur or perhaps are noticed only when given enough time to become evident. (p. 27)

What Thompson confronts here is in part the degree to which participatory observation, in its more normalized manifestations, tends to rely upon, enact, and reinforce a *researcher-participant* relationship that excuses the researcher from becoming invested in any *real* way.

It does this first and foremost through its name, signaling the separation of the researcher from the process of participation itself, and enacting within and through this hierarchical separation an assumptive fantasy of agreeableness and compliance on behalf of the child. I use the word *real* when discussing the investment of the researcher because what the researcher embodies through this particular participatory formulation is a way of being there that in actuality only requires them to be *near* there, to inquire from a distance, even when the proximities that are shared are mutual and cramped.

For me, to be invested in ways that are *real* requires that I continually labor to *live within* the event of young children's experiences, to *linger* in the particularities of a given moment, and to occupy the immediate yet incipient relations of its social, cultural, aesthetic, and political vitality. But living within does not occur effortlessly, nor does it generate with ease; it is an ongoing struggle—a negotiation of negotiations that must continually be reconciled in relation to one's participatory obstinacies. The question is whether or not we are aware of our own timidity when involved in such struggles, and to what degree can we work to dismantle that which we *think* and *believe* we are doing? Can we actively idle within these moments of mutuality—these shared passages—sifting through and disarticulating the provocations that we create and those that are created for us? Can we linger more *affectively*? Furthermore, *how* do we linger (or not) in these distinctive yet non-particular materializations, and for how long?

It is when we as researchers live and linger within the event of children's experiences that our inquiry can then unsettle the many closures and consistencies that it is and has become accustomed to producing, those that it relies upon to move, and that it too often longs to create. It is also in our lingering that our inquiry questions itself, breaking down and then breaking through the wrinkles of its anticipations. As such, inquiry no longer proceeds—at least exclusively—through the affirmative relations of here, there, this or that, but is instead held captive within a process that is always “coming and going” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 25), opening, unfolding, and differentiating (i.e., intensifying)—even when it appears to be sputtering in place. Here, children's experiences collide with the event of research, offsetting our participatory rhythms, disassembling our assumptions, and falling away in to new territories of invention and investigation (or so we hope). These nuances demand of us—as participants—to enter, explore, and experiment with research differently, to stumble awkwardly through our beliefs and the *indecisions* that we make about what matters. After all, research is always a:

process of making choices, including the often difficult choice of what to document among the many events occurring at every moment in a lively classroom. These choices reveal our values, what we deem important to notice about children, even when (and perhaps especially when) we fail to notice the selective nature of our

attention. If we are attentive enough, these choices may also reveal the insistences of children themselves, the things that they call to our attention over and over, the things that they do not want us to miss, the things that are punctuated. (Thompson, 2009, p. 33)

Recently I have been lingering in my own choice-making processes; confronting my own beliefs, decisions and desires, and the degree to which I have failed to notice the selective nature of my own attentions. I continue to wonder if I can ever really be curious enough to get out of my own way? In other words, I continue to contemplate whether or not I can be curious in such a way that I not only aspire to affirm the merit of my own suspicions, but that I am able to redirect the inquisitive madness of my own desire, turning it—with a revolutionary force—back on itself? Can my own confirmatory yearnings be derailed, or at least exercised in such a way that what *is* confirmed is curiosity itself? My lingering and living within these matters has led me to think about research not simply as a process of being there, but rather being there as a process of becoming-unfaithful. It is with this in mind that I invite you to linger with me, to joyfully yet unfaithfully encounter a moment that has already passed, but that is once again open to passage and thus, inquisitive and creative transformation.

Being *near* There

My interest in Carter's drawing practice was initially centered on his profound use of verbalization as a socio-visual-cultural material, and the dynamism with which he used this material to negotiate and rearrange the complex worlds that he moved through and those that he aspired to create. I had been working closely with Carter for the better part of the fall semester, talking about his art making processes, discussing at length the characters and events that he made, and laboring to be mindful of the intensive theories that connected these elements to the imaginative settings that he had already developed and those which he continued to fashion. Usually our conversations occurred in the preschool classroom at Penn State's Saturday Art School, but there were often instances when our work together demanded additional frequencies and spaces of collaboration and inquiry, an affordance that Saturday School could provide only on a limited basis. I tell you this only to bring you into a relation of familiarity with the work that occurred between us, and to better situate you within the contextual realms that our collaborative ventures (typically) emerged from. Further, I tell you this in order to tell you something else, a short story—a story about *being near there*.

Driving along on a cold and dreary December afternoon, my eyes squinted through the intermittent swipes of the windshield wiper, its machinic armatures sweeping the icy rain out of view. A few weeks prior Carter and I had agreed that we would get together to work through series of drawings, a project that had occupied much of our time in the months before, and that still required our attentions today. I must admit however that when I pulled into the

driveway of Carter's house on this particular evening, I had a very specific idea of what I wanted to accomplish. I was hoping to draw *with* Carter, or rather to create what Brent and Marjorie Wilson (2009) call a "graphic dialogue", a practice of drawing that enacts and is enacted through the conversational yet contentious logic, "You draw, then I draw (p. 149).

My motivation for doing so was in actuality an attempt to elicit what I understood and hoped to be an ongoing graphic narrative—a mutual telling of a story through the practices and performativity of drawing. In preparation for this endeavor I had selected materials that I thought would be helpful in achieving this goal. I had in tow a large scroll of drawing paper, as well as a variety of drawing implements that Carter had expressed an interest in, but also other materials that he had used in his previous excursions—graphic and otherwise. As my pace quickened in pursuit of the porch of the large brick house, Carter appeared hazily through the frost of the front door. After swinging the door open and removing my shoes we quickly made our way through the foyer, crossing through the family room and eventually settling into the kitchen, a space—that for one reason or another—had come to function as our drawing laboratory. Amidst the rhythms of our collaborative stride, Carter queried, "What is that big roll of paper for?" "Oh this, it is for a *big story*." Releasing the contents of our travels on the surface of the kitchen table, we then began to position our materials in ways that were both accessible yet amenable to the work that we assumed—respectively, of course—would occur in the moments that followed. When our gear had been sufficiently placed, the only other legitimate matter that remained was to ensure that we had each consumed a substantial allotment of apple juice; something that our experiences had taught us was a necessity for drawing events such as these.

Sipping away, I grew somewhat frantic as we settled into our seats, each of us preparing—in many ways—for what promised to be an intensive encounter. As I sat there with my camera in one hand, a drink box in the other, I scurried to think about how to best propose the idea of a graphic dialogue. But, it was in this moment that Carter began talking, carefully debriefing me on the many probes that he had constructed in my absence. After being informed of what appeared to be an entire civilization of probe creatures, I became increasingly curious as to where these creatures lived, or rather, interested in what worlds they had come to occupy. But despite my interest in the misadventures of Carters' probe creatures and the passionate play of their planetary conquests, I found myself wondering if this newly founded probe-world could enter into and inhabit the jurisdictions of a different universe: *the "story" that I so desperately desired to make "with" Carter.*

Sitting next to Carter, I asked, "Where do these probes live? Where are they? Where can we find them?" While listening to and considering my questions, Carter scrolled slowly through the pages of his sketchbook, flipping with but a subtle flick of his finger from one leaflet to

another. He did not immediately respond to my questions—something that he is typically quick to do—but instead he seemed to be taking his time, patiently weighing the question of how to carry on. After a few moments of silence had passed us by, Carter says (while still looking at his sketchbook), “Umm well... They’re just kind of like, *story probes*.” With the affordances of time, I have come to discover and appreciate the profound hesitance of Carter’s tone when adding *story* to what I can only assume was intended to only be *probes*. It was as if Carter knew that my questions were a front, constructing the image of interest yet ultimately working to goad and guide him toward the objective of *story*. Had my earlier admission—though brief—revealed my plans? Were my inquisitive desires made clear, revealing to Carter the subtle yet forceful expectations that accompanied my body on this day? Almost immediately following his response, Carter turned his head towards me with a punctuating look, a look—I might add—that not so subtly affirmed the delimiting status of my questions, or at the very least how unappreciative he was of the implied tone and directives that these questions carried with them.



Figure 1. Carter reacting to the delimiting status of my query.

**View the video:* <http://www.ijea.org/v14si1/v14si1-5.mov>

Carter had become accustomed to a different kind of questioning, a mode of inquiry that beset his theories (graphic and otherwise), transfixed the functional prowess of his creatures, and that often threatened to alter the integrity of his worldly constellations. He had become accustomed to the type of questions that in turn offered me—as a researcher, pedagogue, and interested adult—a similar smattering of unsettlements. Moreover, he had become accustomed

to the type of questions that permitted him the occasion to beset and de-mobilize my theories about his work, our work, and what mattered. But the investigatory differences of my most recent inquisitive maneuver did not evade Carter's sensibilities, and he relayed this awareness with every movement and tic of his body. Everything that he did in this brief moment declared his dissatisfaction with the tactics that I was using. Unfortunately, everything that I did reaffirmed the distant nearness of my being there, thus emboldening his many discontents. Everything that I did in this brief moment declared my own desire to see his work in ways particular to my own. Carter was perceptive to this underlying force, knowing full well that these questions contained an undisclosed intent—an unidentified curriculum—that speaks, acts, listens, and understands *with* him, but selectively.

Ignoring the obvious, I continue to press Carter for information about the story probes, steadfast in my fixation with the grand elements of *story*. "Story probes," I say. "What do you mean by that?" Turning away from me in frustration, Carter stares straight ahead, thumbing once again through the pages of his sketchbook. There is clearly a tension playing out between us, a relational tautness that in this particular moment I am somehow unaware of, or determined to un-sense. Eventually, Carter asserts, "It's like a story... That is going on with the drawings." Carter's explanation of the story as that which occurs in and through drawing piques my curiosity. Subsequently, this incitement also forms a resonance with my own inquisitive and theoretical desire to create a graphic dialogue. Beginning to elaborate once again, Carter continues, but unfortunately my mounting excitement for the story-probe connection is far too great to temper. After abruptly cutting Carter off, something that has unfortunately become an all-too-familiar pattern on this day, I ask, "Could we make our own story?"

As my question wafts about, swirling through the air that surrounds the kitchen table, Carter leans back even further in his chair, his head tilting downward and chin tucked tightly against his chest.



Figure 2. Carter contemplating his next move.

His fingers wander curiously across the pages of his sketchbook, gliding over its surface and the many graphic elements that adorn them. With a subdued yet posed confidence he murmurs a low key, “Yeah.” However, his voice quickens and the tone with which he speaks elevates rapidly. “That’s pretty much what I am doing,” he asserts, renewing his once fledgling sense of purpose and injecting into the conversation a new dimension of agency. Somehow I managed to avoid the explanation that he had just provided, an explanation that undoubtedly warrants an extended conversation yet fails to be granted such a courtesy. Instead, I interject once more, slicing through his every word with an evasive and self-gratifying scalpel. “Right,” I say. It is a response that is blatantly tinged by an unspoken yet unavoidable, ‘But’ and then immediately redirected as yet another dismissive provocation. “...[*But*]... I am wondering if we might make a bigger story?”

Flipping his sketchbook to a new page, Carter runs his finger over the smooth plane of the cream colored paper, gently rubbing the graphic configurations now composing his most recent probe creature. Biding his time, Carter continues to journey through the contents of his sketchbook. “Well,” Carter says indignantly, cutting through the resistive silence between us. Without hesitation I cinch his attempt to offer elaboration, quickly offering a repetitive retort, “Yes... But I am wondering if we might make a bigger story... And taking some of the probes that you have here?” Carter has had enough; he immediately sits up and cuts me off, his shoulders squared and his eyes now carefully fixed on mine. “I’m expanding... Well, by

drawing all of these probes,” he says, “I’m expanding my story... Because all of these probes mean words in the story.”



Figure 3. Carter confidently articulating his position

Being There & Becoming-Unfaithful

I have come to realize that being there is in part a process of becoming-unfaithful to oneself, or as Michel Foucault (1985) suggested, a matter of getting free of oneself (p. 8). Even in my most sincere attempts to consider the intricacies of Carter’s graphic worlds, my own being there was beleaguered by preoccupations and the inattentions that both led and followed. I moved everything into the anticipatory space that I desired to occupy, using questions as tools to construct these preconceived fantasies. I theoretically and conceptually reoriented Carter’s explanations, selectively fished for words, and heedfully wrestled his thoughts into an organizational embrace with my own. I ignored his many disappointments; chalking them up as instances of pause and reflection, as thoughtful and carefully engaged reactions to what I considered to be compelling, or at the very least provocative lines of inquiry. I listened prudently, scanning Carter’s many utterances—verbal or otherwise—for the elements that most succinctly corresponded with my own. I observed in order to conclude that my listening practices were on point; I listened to ensure that my observations were accurate, insofar as I had already anticipated them to be, of course. I lingered from a distance, aligned by a mode of curiosity that desires to absorb and instantiate a particular kind of understanding. I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I was unable to get free of myself.

Foucault (1985) says, “There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all” (p. 8). Questioning whether or not we can ever really manage to think and perceive differently requires that we learn to value letting go of “the allegiances and attachments that prevent us from seeing alternatives” (Colebrook; cited by Pearce, 2010, p. 902). I argue that we must always be in a process of becoming-unfaithful to ourselves, struggling to shake loose the many allegiances and attachments that we cling to, and laboring in such a way that our desires scramble and our anticipations lose their memory. We must learn to listen to and linger through a self that is, as Deleuze would say, becoming-imperceptible—a self that brings its every action, theory, and ethical articulation into a field of critical yet creative disequilibrium. As such becoming-unfaithful requires, as Gerald Raunig (2010) suggests, that we learn to “flee” (p. 43). In its everyday hetero-normative applications fleeing constitutes a hallmark for cowardly behavior, a form of betrayal, a truly escapist maneuver. But I argue—like Raunig—that fleeing and becoming-unfaithful must be understood instead as a creative act, as an inventive and liberating mode of engagement. Becoming-unfaithful must be “imagined and actualized as a tendency of disappearance, as a movement that constantly has to be instituted, which again and again starts anew and thwarts” (p. 46) the prevailing forms, languages and practices that typify our ways of being there with children through research.

Being there and becoming-unfaithful with children through research is a wildly inconsistent yet indispensable pursuit. I have always tried to be aware of my own tendency to privilege one thing over another, to listen to this and evade that, and to be mindful of the degree to which my own interests prevail when matters of co-exploration are on the move. I have always prided myself on being mindful of these particular issues and whether or not I can effectively recognize their presence in the work that I share with others. I tell you this because I spent the better part of two years believing that my inquiry not only embodied this notion of being there, but that the participatory relationship that existed between Carter and myself was conditioned by the very elements that articulate these processes. It was not until the fall of 2011 that I discovered how truly inconsistent and misguided my (understandings of these) engagements with Carter had become. I was a master of *being near there: saying one thing and doing another*. And, to some extent I always will be.

When Liselott Mariett Olsson (2009) expressed that we give birth to unfaithful children, that they are never really ours, not even from the beginning, she was/is attesting to the tenacity by which children flee, and the zest by which they connect and reconnect themselves to others, objects and events. Although this treatment of unfaithfulness seems to be credited most directly to the ontological movements of the child, the adult should not be permitted to escape Olsson’s provocation either, at least not with such ease. In many ways, to understand and

value the child as one who is unfaithful (i.e., mobilized, multiple, and efficacious) the adult must be continually implicated in these unfaithful becomings as well, fleeing in and through his or her most immediate thoughts and actions, and especially those encounters that s/he shares with the child. This is especially true of the researcher, whose investment and involvedness in the lives of young people is not only substantial and laborious, but also unavoidably subjective and relational. As such, we might consider the following: *research is never really ours, not even from the beginning*. It took me the better part of three years to come to terms with this reality, an actualization that continues to be pivotal in the inquisitive constructions that I am privileged to take up with young people.

Becoming-Unfaithful

Exhausted, I sat at the desk in our apartment, the subtle glow of a lamp dawdling just beyond the edge of my computer. It was cold and had just started to snow again, a sight that immediately took me back to the bus I had been a passenger on earlier in the day. I had selected a window seat towards the back where I watched lovingly as the snow fell softly upon the edges and lines of life as it moved just beyond the glass. I peered into the outside, wishing that my words would emerge like the snow: graceful, swift, and transformative. Typing away, the methodological world that I had once imagined and so tediously worked to construct, word-by-word, started to materialize. My fingers scampered from key to key; I was nearly there. But something happened on this evening and in this particular moment that not only changed the trajectory of the chapter, it injected into my dissertation and the work that I continue to carry out, an unexpected and unfaithful turn.

I have a tendency when writing to *command +S* (i.e., save my progress) with each and every sentence or fragment that I conjure up. It is a habit that comes from a place of concern but when neglected or inattentively enacted, this habit holds the potential to yield the most unfortunate of circumstances. En route to save my progress I somehow managed to (1) *command +A* (i.e., select all) and (2) delete. I had deleted the chapter, but what is worse is that I carried on, unaware of the negating action that I had just precipitated. And, in this continued state of ambivalence I confirmed my previous maneuvers by immediately punching the keys, *command + S* (i.e., save).

My well-intended yet unavoidable misstep had now been locked in. I had lost it all, and every attempt at recovery was quickly hallowed. I tried everything. Believe me, I tried everything. Having come to terms with the loss of the chapter, I returned once again to my desk. I sat there for a moment, completely still, pondering what to do next. Somewhere in the chaos of working to will my chapter back into existence, having a panic attack, calling friends, and throwing a major tantrum, I had opened a folder containing photographs and video documentations (data) that I had collected during the fall of 2009. I was about three-quarters

of the way through a rather long piece of video documentation when I re-encountered an experience, the very experience that was attended to in this paper. I sat there leaning uncomfortably against the edge of the desk, my eyes now intently focused on the screen before me. I sat there truly horrified and utterly embarrassed as my own *being near there* played out in dramatic fashion. I sat there learning a rather painful lesson about the processes of becoming-unfaithful, and the degree to which these unfaithful encounters must remain indispensable to the work that I—and perhaps all of us—carry out with young people.

I share this with you because what I realized in this moment of self-reckoning terror is that to flee one must have something to flee from. For me, it was necessary to not only flee from myself, but to flee from my relations to methodology. The negating actions that I took (i.e., deleting and then saving my deletions) created a line of possibility—an occasion—for me to become unfaithful to the methodological assumptions that I had and the distinct privileges that I continued to give them through writing. The exhaustion that I was feeling gave way to inattention, which in this case provided occasions to unfaithfully passage (again and again) through an event that once was quite certain. It was in this moment and through these renewed encounters that Carter revealed through his own practice of *being there*, how I was caught up in the narcissistic and trickster-like striations of being *near there*. You see, being there and becoming-unfaithful requires that we live within and linger in the complex and ethical moments that we share with young people. Sometimes we must linger for years.³

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³ Dear Carter, I am mindful of the many “silences that will be returned to you, silences created by my focus on one thing you say and not another... I am aware of the things that might be left out” (Gale & Wyatt, 2010, p. 796). Thank you for putting them/me back on the map. Sincerely, Mr. Chris

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Pennsylvania State University, USA

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New Global Art Connection: Paying Tribute to the Wave-Makers (1910-2010)

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Abstract

This paper highlights *Wave-Makers (1910–2010)*, a collaborative timeline redesign project, which involves interactive and advanced web-based technology to connect and complement arts curricula at two higher education institutions, one located in China and another in the United States. Through in-depth research, video-conferencing, artistic interpretations, and exhibits at both locations, students from the two universities gained appreciation and respect for 20 individuals who made a difference in their respective cultures and helped shape contemporary art worlds. Juxtaposing visuals with students' personal observations through digital photcollage, this paper shows how and why the wave-makers became inspirational models: *Unforgettable Life Stories and Superb Dedication*—Pan Yuliang and Margaret Bourke-White; *Visionary Commitment and Exquisite Sensitivities*—Alvin Ailey and Guan Pinghu; *Admirable Integrity and Solid Convictions*—Xu Shichang and Norman Rockwell; and *Revolutionary Foresight and Groundbreaking Endeavors*—Jackson Pollock and Zhang Daqian. Instructional guidelines for implementing this global art project are also discussed.

**New Global Art Connection:
Paying Tribute to the Wave-Makers (1910–2010)**

History typically focuses attention on individuals and cultural groups who have seized center stage politically. Strategies used by the dominant power to negate the periphery may include controlling the dissemination of historical information in formal and public history curriculum and policing interpretations of the classic literature (Wertsch & Polman, 2001). An urgent and concrete need exists in intercultural communication to redirect attention to variations in local cultures instead of perpetuating nationalism and an overarching ideal of each country (Holliday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2010).



Figure 1. Wave-Makers Poster

The first section of this paper recaps the components of a global art education project, featuring a number of Chinese and American artistic revolutionaries (1910–2010), dubbed

wave-makers. In this project, which took place in spring 2010,¹ interactive and advanced web-based technology was used to connect and complement arts curricula at two higher education institutions, one located in China and the other in the United States. Through in-depth research, video-conferencing, artistic interpretations, and exhibition, students from both universities gained appreciation and respect for a pool of individuals in their respective cultures who contributed to and made a difference in what came to be their contemporary art worlds, the respective institutions for art (Danto, 1981). The following section describes the exhibition and students' reasons for selecting their wave-makers as well as five themes associated with these inspirational models. To conclude, the final section offers reflective comments regarding the planning and organization of this global educational project.

Why Honor Art Revolutionaries?

The last century prior to the new millennium witnessed a surge of global immigration, impacting international education policy, practice, and research, and hence conveys an urgency to cultivate global citizenship in this new era (Lewin, 2011). Predicted a decade ago (Kellogg, 2002), massive shifts in populations across international borders resulted from (a) the weakening of nation states and the proliferation of nongovernmental organizations; (b) an alarming surge of world trade, human resources, and capital flow; and (c) the aggregate forces of democratization and privatization across the globe. In response to such chaos and radical changes everywhere, art educators all over the world relied once again on the power of art to forge greater connections globally (Delacruz, Arnold, Kuo, & Parson, 2009).

This global education pilot project² was inspired by a personal ambition to problematize change, continuity, transition, and historical trajectories in order to project novel ways of discussing the contributions of as many 20th-century cultural wave-makers as possible and to pose the following research question: How can the concept of revolution provide the contextual and conceptual background to frame and discuss the contributions of individuals who had made significant differences in the arts disciplines?

¹ The year 2010 marked the centennial anniversaries of both my university and the culmination of the struggle to overthrow the imperial rule of dynasties in China—the triumph of the Xinhai Revolution in 1911.

² This project is to be continued in spring 2013 as it was recently awarded a research scholarship from the Baker–Nord Center for the Humanities sponsored by Case Western Reserve University.

Revolution is a comparatively new entry in the lexicon of the Han Chinese with little precedence and few references in canonical literature before the 20th century. The first of two characters constituting the word *revolution* in Han, *ge* means to slaughter; and the second character *ming* denotes life. The word choice was meant to be charged with a combative undertone when translated from Japanese by Dr. Sun Yat-sen in an era prior to the greatest social political upheavals in the country's national history. The remarkable Xinhai Revolution in 1911 marked the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, and a 4,000-year-old monarchy suddenly transformed into the first republican state in Asia. The 20th century was a period of dynamic change in Chinese history. Another ideological revolution, the May Fourth Movement in 1919 significantly shook the fundamental outlook of Chinese intellectuals (Chan & Xia, 2009), who by then had fully embraced the spirit of change; however, the notorious cultural revolution (1968–1977), which began as political turmoil, ushered in a dark period of Chinese society, when numerous outstanding cultural workers and artists were tormented and perished, their works destroyed and forever gone.

The contributions of art revolutionaries, in this project called wave-makers, have been invaluable. They were the predecessors in the making of contemporary art history, contributing to the formation of today's *artworld* (Danto, 1981) and the emergence of 21st-century Chinese art (Lu, 2010; Saatchi, 2008; Vine, 2008). Although the modern was at one time equated with the avant-garde, following the inception of theorizing by Burger (1974/1984), the definition of avant-garde was obscured and its status as a particular movement in the art history during the 1910s and 1920s was contested (Murphy, 1998). At times,

Avant-gardism [was] synonymous with the most adventurous manifestations of modern art, ranging from the distorted but still decipherable images of Cubism . . . to entirely abstract shapes . . . , from a mustachioed 'Mona Lisa' . . . to a pickled shark. . . (Wood, 1999, p. 7)

However, other sources strongly rejected its geographical confinement to Europe in the early 20th century and included Abstract Expressionism, the New York School and what occurred in the changing art world after 1945 as a continuation of its pluralistic spirit (Sandler, 2006). Since its definition was illuminated in such bright positive light, international art communities (Giannachi, 2002; Mena Chicuri, 2007; Peppis, 2000; Rowell, 2002) competed to attach the term to their local art movements. An intimate connection with the avant-garde sparked progress and forward thinking, analogous to crossing boundaries or pushing perimeters into new territory (Murphy, 1998; Sandler, 2006; Wood, 1999). Interdisciplinary (architecture, dance, literature, photography, theatre, film) dialogue across international borders was highly sought by members of several well-known avant-garde art

movements, such as Dada, Futurism, Surrealism, and Pop Art (Scheunemann, 2005). These avant-garde artists were very idealistic, dedicated to helping people gain new points of view through their art and performances. Furthermore, they hoped their work could also offer a few strategies of being (Fineberg, 1995) to counter those used by all supreme political power structures to negate the periphery through control of the mass media and to restrict interpretations and discourse.

“Wave-Makers” was the theme of this global art education project, which aimed to experiment with the integration of advanced web technology to forge tighter connections between art education programs in two institutions across national borders. In addition, I speculate that advanced media will one day become a powerful means of disseminating historical information and even replace formal history curriculum. I offer as evidence the popularity of TV serials that currently provide alternative interpretations of what is available in formative education in many Asian countries. An eventual goal of mine is, in fact, to formulate a conceptual framework to buttress a proposal for a series of multimedia productions that can be used as teaching supplements intended to reach young parents in the Chinese Diaspora, who will not hesitate to invest in the edutainment of their offspring.

Who Are the Wave-Makers?

Participants from both locations separately reflected on their own education and conducted several group brainstorming sessions to compile a list of extraordinary artists who worked during the past 100 years. Rigorous research was conducted on *how* these wave-makers made a difference in the arts disciplines from 1910 to 2010. The wave-maker could have engaged in any of the arts disciplines, for instance, the visual arts, music, dance, theater, film, photography, design (graphic, fashion, environment), or architecture. Even genres outside the fine arts, such as folk art, avant-garde, applied, and functional art, were considered.

Student participants focused on the contributions of these wave-makers, for example, creating revolutionary changes in style, form, training, and educational methods. Some research emphasized their innovative use of materials and tools; others dwelled on how they brought about paradigm shifts in the content of the arts or produced a reconceptualization of the particular discipline and its pedagogy. A few traced the wave-makers’ contributions to the elevation of interdisciplinary engagement and development. Student participants then analyzed how historical, cultural, social, and political factors significantly influenced the recognition, achievements, or acknowledgment of these wave-makers.

A final synthesis of the way the issues of time, place, and context impacted the wave-makers’ contributions in a century redirected their inquiry back to their personal learning. Student participants from both universities created visual interpretations of the selected wave-maker’s

profile and contributions. To fully exploit the communicative power of numerous personal and cultural symbols used in each visual work, participants composed an artist statement to explain their intention and methodology by answering the following questions.

1. To what degree does this work exhibit creative or original thinking and process? Describe.
2. Is the idea I wanted to show easy to see or understand, and am I satisfied with this work? Explain.
3. How does this work reflect my environment and my culture, and where is the evidence reflected in this work? Expand.

Research findings were displayed adjacent to each visual interpretation and artist statement at an exhibition to inform and educate the public about the contributions of the wave-maker. Printouts of students' PowerPoint slides provided a contextual introduction to each wave-maker and her or his work. This format also improved time management during setup and helped maintain a certain level of cohesiveness in presentation. A well-organized exhibition has the potential to rectify history by bringing forward substantial information directly to the public, thus enhancing civic engagement and promoting cultural dialogue (Zhao & Wu, 2010). Juxtaposing visuals with research and stories in eight digital photocollages, the next section is a montage incorporating five themes as reasons to discuss the contributions of 10 wave-makers.

How Did They Make Waves?

Unforgettable Life Stories and Superb Dedication

Life has always been difficult for women in the professional world outside the domestic arena. The 20th-century art world with all its gatekeepers in various realms and at diverse levels was no exception, so much so that Nochlin (1988) concluded that few great women artists have emerged in history because of overwhelming institutional constraints and contextual inhibitions that prohibited the equal participation of females in this discipline. Regardless, courageous women fought against all odds to make their artistic expression visible and their statements heard.



Figure 2. A Portrait of Pan Yuliang by Wang Xue and Tan Mengmeng

An orphan sold to a brothel as a child, Pan Yuliang (1895–1977) became the first female artist from Asia to be admitted to the Rome National Art Academy in Italy in 1925. After undergoing a decade of rigorous academia-style training in Europe, she specialized in oil painting. Although she was invited to teach art in Shanghai for a few years, she exiled herself to France because of tremendous pressure resulting from rumors surrounding her early life.

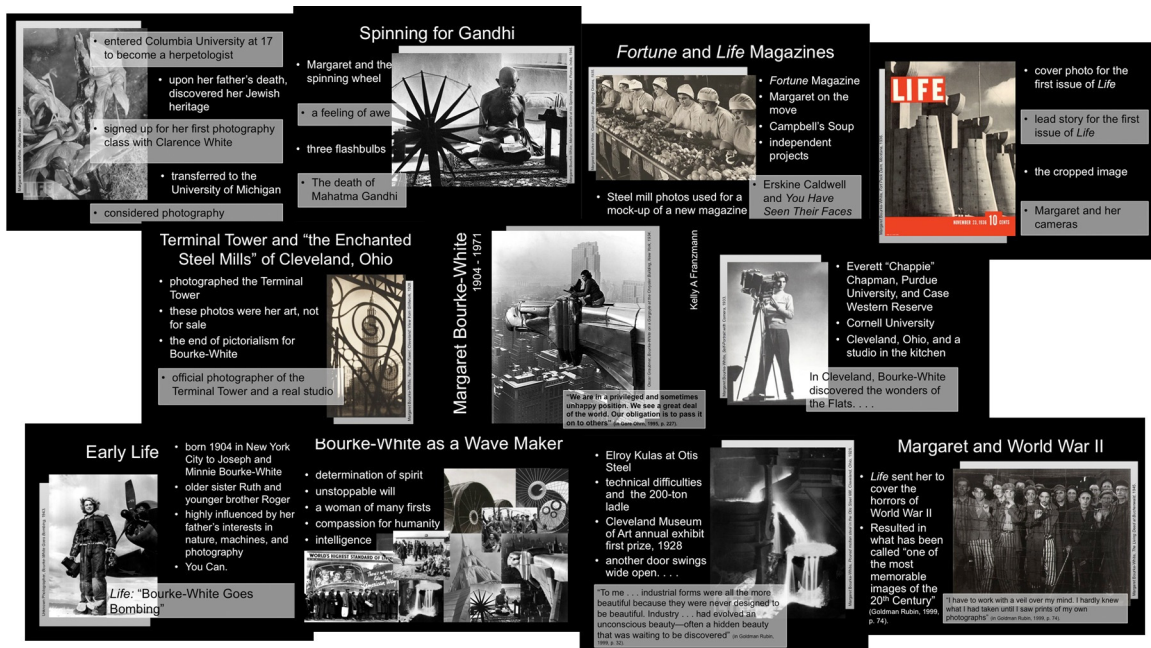


Figure 3. A Portrait of Margaret Bourke-White by Kelly

Strongly encouraged by her father, photographer Margaret Bourke-White (1904–1971) pushed numerous boundaries with her work, covering factory workers in the South during the 1930s and the harsh reality of Jewish concentration camps during World War II for *Life* magazine. Her ambition was to strive to create a remarkable presence in photojournalism, a profession dominated by males because of the danger and hardship in the field.

Familiarity with her hometown fostered a special bond for many of my students, one of whom stated:

I had never heard of Bourke-White, and the fact that she was so heavily connected to Cleveland and such huge events in history was impressive. It is always such a nice feeling to hear that famous artists who have had such an influence on a national level came from areas that I am familiar with. The close-to-home aspect is humbling and encouraging to a future artist and art teacher.

Visionary Commitment and Exquisite Sensitivities

The development of all disciplines, especially the arts, mandates a large enough pool of individuals who have cultivated the refined sensibilities, skills, and knowledge necessary to steer practitioners of those disciplines in the direction of a collective transformed vision. Thus, the wavemakers who contributed their time and energy in the training and education of junior members and the grooming and guidance of successors are admirable.



Figure 4. A Portrait of Alvin Ailey by Kara

Alvin Ailey (1931–1989), the African American choreographer who incorporated multicultural elements in his work was preceded by numerous wave-makers who were part of an earlier tradition of making waves. He was particularly insightful in his use of dancers of color, collaborating to present a visual contrast onstage to achieve a new sense of harmony. No doubt he was standing on the shoulders of great forerunners, including Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus, who sought to unify and embrace the spirit of several traditions and to repair separations. Ailey’s personal vision for the discipline proved long-lasting as his dance troupe continues to perform his will and vision today.



Figure 5. A Portrait of Guan Pinghu by Chen Yubin and Zhang Zhe

The master of an ancient Chinese musical instrument, the *Guqin*, Guan Pinghu's (1897–1967) performance was so exquisite that his version of *Liu Shui* (*Flowing Water*) was launched by NASA into space with the Voyager spacecraft in 1977 on the *Voyager Golden Record*. His greatest contribution to Chinese music history, however, was his overhaul of theory and his composition of numerous exercise pieces of progressive degrees of difficulty to allow students of this classical instrument to practice their finger work. Equivalent to Chopin's *Études*, Guan's work provided smooth transitional stages from the acquisition of basic technique to onstage performance. His popular musical scores improved the level of music appreciation among members of the general public beyond a small handful of aristocratic music lovers.

Solid Convictions and Admirable Integrity

Power has the potential to corrupt the mind and soul, but mindfulness of how great power is accompanied by great responsibilities is a good check. Many of the wavemakers had the courage to surpass designated roles and explore arenas outside their own disciplines. Some created impact in the sociopolitical realm of civilizations at a time when participatory acts were unscripted for the artist's role they had to play.

An atypical multitalented character, Xu Shichang (1855–1939) was a painter, a calligrapher, and a poet, who also happened to be the President of the Republic of China (Beijing government) from 1918 to 1922. In the decade directly after the overthrow of the Qing dynasty when the country was still in the midst of unrest and turmoil, he stepped forward and fulfilled his sociopolitical role and mission. Upon retiring from office, he revised several literary and aesthetic theories and left a legacy in publications. As President, his greatest contribution to the arts, however, was a policy of “intellectual revitalization,” which permitted a more liberal atmosphere that indirectly supported the cultural involvement of Chinese youth during and after the May Fourth Movement in 1919 (Chan & Xia, 2009).



Figure 6. A Portrait of Xu Shichang by Miao Lizhen and Shao Hui

A conviction in the virtue of democracy grounded *Saturday Evening Post* illustrator Norman Rockwell (1894–1978), who humbly denied himself the title of artist. His more than 200 realistic posters typically portrayed the suburban lifestyle of middle-class White Americans prior to and after World War II, yet his strong belief in diversity and democracy became most pervasive in his later freelance work. A graphic depiction of the *Freedom of Speech* prompted a different interpretation in conventional times and inspired student teachers in my class.



Figure 7. A Portrait of Norman Rockwell by Katie

Revolutionary Foresight and Groundbreaking Endeavors

Advocacy for change is likely whimsical and short-lived when sustaining dynamics is difficult confronting greater forces affecting life and death. Certain dispositional traits necessitate a fighting spirit to push for change regardless of circumstances, and this grit also gave many wavemakers a discreet sense of direction and purpose in their own difficult lives—to face illness, addiction, and aging fearlessly.

Jackson Pollock (1912–1956) is a well-known name, and the image of this artist dripping and splashing paint onto large canvases on the ground has become iconic. His transformation of bodily engagement into action painting reveals a philosophy borrowed from the Native American connection with earth energies. Pollock’s forging ahead in the representation of pictorial space has definitely multiplied the possibilities of artists after him to surpass what’s obvious and readily perceivable by the eyes to reach into the realm of abstraction, both in form and the inner human consciousness.

For preservice art teachers, the therapeutic involvement in the act of mimicking his style proved equally significant as the study of the literal meanings of his art. One of them stated:

Recently I was in New York City and saw some of his work up close, and this made me realize how much paint Pollock really used on each canvas. I wanted to create a

very layered drip and paint build up that could only be seen as the viewer came closer to the work. . . . I have used just black, white, and grays, which Pollock primarily used when he was at his worst—addicted to alcohol and very depressed. I can relate to this: I have experienced some hard times, and my paintings reflect depression most of the time.

Early Works

- Male and Female, 1942
- Pollock in New York at this time
- Not easily recognizable as Pollock because it is pre-drip work
- This work demonstrates line and color as well as movement
 - Strong verticals
 - Vibrant colors
 - Interesting visual textures
- Influence of surrealism apparent in fragmented shapes and numbers.

Biography

- Born in 1912 in Cody, Wyoming, as Paul Jackson Pollock
- Attended high school in Los Angeles but dropped out in 1930 and discovered alcohol
- Left for New York to attend classes taught by Thomas Hart Benton at the Art Students' League
- In 1935 went into the easel painting division of the Federal Art Project, which provided him with financial stability

Pollock and Krasner

- abandoned rural systems.
- closed her studio.
- ed Pollock into not affording the had paid.
- ween 1948 t this time free and calm
- c resumed
- d depression t 10, 1956, accident.

Mid Career Work

- Pollock and Krasner
- In November 1943 P in a one-man show
- In reaction to this Greenburg proclai greatest painter of
- Shortly thereafter Pi provided Pollock wit stipend.

Contributions

- Early works: Pollock grew up under the influence of the impressionist, surrealist, and cubist movements
- Mid-career paintings: innovator of the abstract expressionist movement
- Late career: Pollock's drip technique
- Achieved by laying canvas on the floor and using his brushes like sticks
- Drip paintings were larger and offered easier movement.

Late Works

- Porti 4' 10" Inaug The 4' The 1

Jackson Pollock (1912-1956)

Sharon Sabo ssabo1@kent.edu
Colleen Hawkins chawki11@kent.edu

- 8 x 15
- Commissioned by Guggenheim
- Sense of structure still present
- Important elements: balance, repetition, and movement
- In comparison to the other early work shown, the lines and shape here is much larger.

Figure 8. A Portrait of Jackson Pollock by Sharon and Colleen

Adopting his name during a brief involvement with monkhood in his youth, Zhang Daqian (1899–1983) had reached a supreme height of cultivated sensibility in traditional Chinese painting style, but the accomplishment did not deter him from challenging this convention at age 60. He attempted to break ground in the classical depiction of the water lilies by splashing ink and wash to capture another glimpse of nature. To complement the nonfigurative representation and balance the conventional layout, he depicted hyperdetailed insects and buds surrounding the flowers to give each composition a unique aura. The subtleties were successfully articulated by a student who reflected:

I deeply appreciated the charm of the craft in the process of tracing the artist's style: Vigorous, smooth, accurate colors and concise with strong artistic appeal. The spiritual core is "pen and ink" while external subject categories of flowers, birds,

figures, and landscape are expressions of [abstract] concepts and ideas artistically. There is a kind of philosophy thinking developing from art that is *the essence* of art.



Figure 9. A Portrait of Zhang Daqian by Zhao Xuehong, Zhang Chi, and Teng Ge

Inter- and Transdisciplinary

Modernization was a central theme of many artists' work in the past 100 years as they struggled to discover exactly what it meant in their identity and in their arts. One characteristic is no doubt the core of professionalism (i.e., specialization). The profiles of many wavemakers indicate that they had to toil in isolation for years until they became outstanding on their own terms, yet the nature of certain disciplines, such as theatre production and filmmaking, necessitates collaboration among multiple creators and a group of professionals to cocapture the immediacy and hence transformed cinematography to landmark status in the 20th century.

By contrast the crossing, pushing, and erasing of boundaries in the works of many wavemakers were obvious as they struggled to conserve conventions yet desired to integrate further with other disciplines to accomplish their visionary statement.

When's the Next Tidal Wave?

Gravitating toward uniqueness is typical in new artistic creation and cultural expression; doing so may incidentally overemphasize contradictory outcomes stemming from differences instead of allowing a liberal platform to accommodate and embrace diversity. Sharing similarities can create an opportunity to bond and open up a space for interconnectedness, the ultimate goal of global education. In this project, participating students, faculty members, and administrators from both universities attended a prearranged videoconference featuring research on several wave-makers. All PowerPoint slides were sent as attachments via email to all the participants in the project prior to the videoconference so that everyone had the opportunity to preview the contents. As novel educational technology, the face-to-face feature of videoconferencing has considerable potential to bridge vast distances between educational settings for all levels (Cole, Ray, & Zanetis 2004; O'Brien & Alfano, 2009).

Successful cultural exchange in this synchronized virtual space requires detailed planning and the use of a substantial number of pedagogical strategies (Kan, 2011), but a heightened sense of critical reflection among its participants is also necessary. One student shared the following with me:

I realized there are constraints when sharing information internationally, . . . and I realize that subjecting students [of another country] to artists or artworks that may go against the country's idea of nationalism [or standard of censorship] could pose quite a risk for the students we were conferencing with.

To promote varied ways of perceiving history, the next step is a timeline reconstruction to merge coexisting art worlds. Timeline software (similar to Google[®] timeline) is currently in development at my university to celebrate its centennial anniversary; it allows easy comparison and contrast of events and individual endeavors in the past 100 years. Further goals of this global art project involve open invitations to as many partners across international borders as possible to participate in cocreating this new timeline for the arts.

In conclusion, this global education project provided an opportunity for participating students in both universities to (a) establish closer ties with learners in a globalized educational milieu that has shrunk because of the advancement of distance interactive technology in our time, (b) connect more intimately with peers from another culture through the life stories of extraordinary individuals in both communities, and (c) collaborate in forming a new learning community with a shared commitment and sooner or later, develop a common sense of urgency to coconstruct a merged timeline for the future.



Figure 10. Wave-Makers Exhibition

What Ebb and Flow to Watch

Several issues emerging from this global education curriculum have further implications in the field of arts education. Adopting a specific theme to study art, such as in this joint

venture, no doubt allows preservice art teachers to acquire the 21st-century life skills necessary to participate in a global community, including intercultural competence, communication, and negotiation skills. However, the fragmentation of historical study and the emphasis on positive impact permitted the students to engage in only an examination of the wave-makers' profiles and careers that was less than critical. Deconstruction of the social impact of the wavemaker's work was missing, and the lack of sophisticated critical thought by the students resulted in the romanticizing of the wave-makers.

Next, numerous wave-makers were left unmentioned during the brainstorming sessions and did not seem even to have a place in the common background of my preservice art teachers despite my careful intervention. I thus wondered what should constitute the basis of cultural literacy in the global village and what ought to be included in the scope of coverage necessary for the citizens of tomorrow: How do educators maintain a balance between informed curriculum decisions leading to the expansion of the boundaries of cultural literacy and minimize arbitrary representations?

In addition, as a college course instructor in art education, I was reluctant to support the inclusion of entertainment industry celebrities while privately indulging in their "art" for relaxation and pleasure, many of whom appeared in *55 Stars, Heroes and Icons America Loved* (Editors, 2010). The dilemma initially appears to be how to avoid silencing those behind the screen when students focus on those in the limelight. Further probing uncovered an inherent problem—diluting the contributions of those who had invested authentic effort, unfortunately without glamorous media coverage.

Where to Drop Anchor

This short conclusion sketches the potential of such curriculum in K12 settings. Practicing authentic multiculturalism in K12 classrooms becomes problematic because of the extra attention to outsider versus insider perspectives (Adejumo, 2002). Art teachers can anticipate a daunting task as they confront a complex world with numerous timelines of multiple coexisting cultures and the pressure to cover them all. Quality instruction time may be compromised to show fairness of coverage as equal attention sometimes means a wider breadth of coverage, resulting in the sacrificial loss of depth in most cases (Leithwood, McAdie, Bascia, & Rodrigue, 2006).

This curriculum approach empowers preservice art teachers by inviting their active participation in resisting hegemonic knowledge construction. They learned how to arrive at a persuasive conclusion about the past by mapping out messy information to locate evidence and satisfy their curiosity. The grand narrative of art history with which they are familiar is often based on canonical aesthetics and centered on institutional art as curriculum foundation

and instructional foci. Furthermore, the linear representation of time framed by positivism often creates the impression of historical events as status quo, where creative interpretations and discoveries are rejected. As a result of long exposure to this overarching paradigm, they may have forgotten that history has a noble goal of expanding and enriching the mind with stories of people from all walks of life—from peasants to aristocrats regardless of Eastern or Western designation and from the entirety of human civilization.

This kind of exercise will equally benefit students in K12 setting as they scrutinize the profiles of those who made waves and uncover ramifications of what had happened to construct plausible explanations on their own. Through the redress of historically and culturally designated role models, learners of all ages can further affirm their personal contribution in making history meaningful and rejoice in their personal power to inject vitality into history, the humanities, and the arts.

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Methodology in the Afterglow

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Abstract

My dissertation study seeks to understand how artist-teacher renewal may be nurtured through aesthetic experiential play in a Masters of Art Education degree program, and beyond, as my former students/participants and myself experience finding ourselves in its afterglow. *Aesthetic experiential play* could be described as a playful, curious, questioning, artful engagement with the world; an engagement that sparks an *aesthetic swell*, which moves us in surprising, unanticipated ways from play to its *afterglow*. In this sense, *afterglow* may be the unfolding answer to an open question, and the open question may be a place to play (Schwandt, 2007). Barone and Eisner (2012) posed such an open question, asking: How may we employ “the arts methodologically to reveal what the arts make possible in various situations?” (p. xii). This paper engages with their provocative question by exploring the spaces between my research interest and the methodology constructed to pursue it. Further, I consider the expansion that blooms out of the multiplicity of engagement that arts based research inspires and commands- an expansion that illuminates my research process as *an unfolding methodology in the afterglow*.

Beginning

Playing around with a camera in the sun and in the low red glow of a high school darkroom at the age of 17 set me free. Free to imagine myself becoming so many things. For a long time now, I have wanted to bestow this gift upon others. And I have been a dutiful and inspired teacher. And I would be lying if I said that I didn't sometimes miss that awakened place of art making, especially when I am too exhausted from teaching to make any work of my own. This longing has led me back once more to join a circle of learners- to ask new questions, to seek different answers, to understand more deeply the work of the artist-teacher¹. As Vagle (2011a) stated, "(t)he continuous work we do on ourselves is a gift to those we teach" (p. 424).

For seven years, I worked as a K-12 art educator before leaving to become a teacher educator. It was bittersweet to leave, for I had come to see the art classroom as a space where time can be lost and attention to the present can be found through play and exploration. Busy things could be slowed down: by the sweeping motion of a paintbrush where blue meets green and becomes ocean; where the fusion of two pieces of clay between fingertips becomes vessel. Years later, as I now commit to my dissertation research, the intersection of play and aesthetic experience is my beginning.

Overview

My dissertation study seeks to understand how artist-teacher renewal may be nurtured through aesthetic experiential play in a Masters of Art Education degree program, and beyond. Barone and Eisner (2012) posed the question: How may we employ "the arts methodologically to reveal what the arts make possible in various situations?" (p. xii). In this paper, I will engage with their provocative question by exploring the spaces between my research interest and the methodology constructed to pursue it. Further, I will consider the expansion that blooms out of the multiplicity of engagement that arts based research inspires and commands (see Barone and Eisner, 2012; Bresler, 2006; Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Rolling, 2010; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008; Sullivan, 2005).

The design of this study is qualitatively constructed with three overlapping layers, each intended to explore aesthetic experiential play in the professional development of artist-

¹ According to Hausman (1967), the artist-teacher is one who balances "the teacher as an artist and the artist as a teacher" (p. 17).

teachers from different vantage points. To begin this paper, I will discuss my theoretical framework and research questions in the context of the first layer of this inquiry—the pilot study. Then, I will consider how these inquiries and ideas inform my methodological commitments—commitments that draw ardently from autobiographical, hermeneutic, phenomenological and post-structural conversations. Concluding with where this intersection leaves me standing in “an always open world” (Greene, 1988, p. xi) of inquiry, where I release my open questions into *an unfolding methodology in the afterglow*.

Braiding, Tracing, Situating

In this paper and in my dissertation study, I will draw upon the philosophies of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975/2004, 1986), John Dewey (1916, 1934, 1938), and Maxine Greene (1978, 1988, 1995, 2001); interweaving their theories of play and aesthetic experience as potentially educative, transformative, and generative (see Gallagher, 1992; Henry, 2010; Shusterman & Tomlin, 2008; Vilhauer, 2010; White, 2009). While Gadamer, Dewey and Greene share this commonality; each brings a distinct and powerful thread to bear. As such, my theoretical framework braids Dewey’s (1916, 1934) theories of play as artful, active, imaginative and educative, Gadamer’s (1975/2004, 1986) theories of play as an ontological engagement and freedom, and Maxine Greene’s (1978, 1988, 1995, 2001) theories of transformation within the lived landscape of individuals through artistic-aesthetic experience.

I will first explain how the terms *aesthetic experiential play*, *aesthetic swell*, and *in afterglow* have developed in my work. As Greene (2001) expressed: “Meaning refers to connections made in experience as well as to the definition of certain terms” (p. 67). Post-structurally, this becomes “a question of method: *the tracings should always be put back on the map*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987, p. 13, emphasis in original). And so, throughout the paper, I will provide tangible examples of places where these lived experiences encounter and entwine with “the eternal return” of scholarship that informs my evolving understandings (Hafeli, 2009, p. 369). These experiences are drawn from the first layer of my inquiry, the pilot study, which was conducted during a course I designed and taught as part of a Master’s of Art Education degree program. Nine artist-teachers and myself spent a semester engaging playfully in a variety of aesthetic experiences including: keeping visual verbal journals, reading novels and philosophy, exploring materials and processes of art, and visiting art museums. In-between our 5 monthly meetings, my students and I exchanged letters reflecting on our experiences prompted by open questions.

Situating Aesthetic Experiential Play (AEP²)

The first term I will trace is *aesthetic experiential play* (which I refer to henceforth as AEP), working to articulate my understanding of AEP as an ontological commitment situated in the in-between and beyond. The suffix *al* at its most basic root means *beyond*. This suffix also connotes relating, action, and process (The American Heritage College Dictionary, 2002). Aesthetic experience and play are always, already in a relationship of connection; Further, in their belonging to one another in a reciprocal and generative engagement, these terms create an *in-between* (Gadamer, 1975/2004). I see this liminal space as holding threads of intentionality (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2005; Vagle, 2010, 2011b) in a productive, sustained tension; which in turn, keeps us forever on the way, going beyond, becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987; Greene, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2001).

I am positioning AEP as an ontological engagement by situating it in hermeneutic, phenomenological and pragmatic traditions (Dewey, 1916, 1934, 1938; Greene, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2001; Gadamer, 1975/2004, 1986; Latta, 2001; Schwandt, 2004). In this sense, I see it as a living commitment; something to be chosen as a way to engage rather than simply exist, pass the days, get through until the 3 o'clock school bell. And, by expanding these traditions into post-structural conversations, I also position AEP as liminally and unpredictably unfolding in disruptive and generative ways (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987; Lyotard, 1979/1984; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008; St. Pierre, 1997; Vagle, 2010, 2011b). This alchemy of traditions and conversations enables me to express AEP as a renewing, restorative engagement that seeks to heal the splitting wound of Cartesian binaries and its splintering implications for teaching and learning.

Commitments and qualities of AEP: Playful, aesthetic, curious.

Art, aesthetics, aesthetic experience and play are terms that often become interwoven in powerful and evocative ways. Placemarkers of our humanity, the lineage of their connectedness is well beyond the scope of this paper (see Bruner, 1996; Dissanayake, 1974, 1992; Efland, 2002; Eisner, 2002; Gilmour, 1986; Gude, 2010; Hetland, Winner, Veneema, & Sheridan, 2007; Huizinga, 1955; Kant, 1790/1952; Latta, 2001; Nachmanovitch, 1990; Piaget, 1951/1962; Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, 1999; Schiller, 1795; Szekely, 1991; Vgotsky, 1978; Winnicott, 1982). Instead, I will choose to focus on AEP as an ontological commitment with playful, aesthetic, curious qualities.

² *Aesthetic Experiential Play* will appear in the abbreviated form of AEP from this point forward.

These three dynamic qualities perform endless entanglements and permutations, as they are lived, experienced, and undergone- bleeding and blossoming into my conceptions of *aesthetic swell* and *in afterglow*. Therefore, it becomes difficult (and potentially dangerous) to parse out these qualities as distinct or operating in isolation, to do that would flatten and arrest any potential offerings. Rather than pinning them down to the page, I will attempt to trace these qualities with fluidity, embracing their overlapping nature as “a gnarliness that gives radical punch” (Vagle, 2011b, p. 3).

Aesthetic experience “educates us about our world and existence in it” (Vilhauer, 2010, p. 11). Like play and art, it tenders generous potential to provoke, stimulate and inspire (Greene, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2001; Dewey, 1934; Gadamer, 1975/2004, 1986). Artist-teachers have the opportunity to work with art and aesthetics in playful, experiential ways every day in their classrooms, and therefore are beautifully poised to experience these connections. As Gallagher (1992) stated: “play opens the world to question” (p. 162). While I see AEP as an engagement, a way of being-in-the-world (Gadamer, 1975/2004, 1986; Vilhauer, 2010), I also see it as inevitably bound to curiosity, wonder, and opening worlds with the questions we ask (Greene, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2001).

Beyond great expectations.

Costantino (2010) reawakened a conversation about wonder in relationship to aesthetic education in the contemporary art classroom. Her work inspired me to ask: What would a curious, wondering engagement bring to bear in the lives of artist-teachers? Baldacchino (2009) offered a possible answer, drawing from Greene’s (1973) writings on teachers as strangers looking “inquiring and wonderingly” on their everyday worlds in order to move beyond (as cited in Baldacchino, 2009, p. 146). In this excerpt from her course meta-reflection, my student and participant, Virginia, looked in such a way at her experience during the pilot study, touching on many of the commitments and qualities of AEP I have been attempting to trace theoretically:

My visual verbal journal is filled from cover to cover, as I’ve created in a way like never before – habitually, playfully, deeply. For the first time in my life I feel freely bound to my creativity in a loving embrace. Free to explore whatever comes to mind. Free to experiment. Free of obligation and expectation. Free to swim safely on the surface or dive deep into personal waters. Free to choose. Free to discover me as an artist... as a teacher... as me. This was a beginning for me and as Maxine Greene writes, beginnings have so much to do with freedom.

I am in awe of how liberating the act of creatively playing has been. It opens you up to the endless possibility of the world of ideas and materials around and within you.

For me, it became a flow of action and reaction to the world around and within me – past, present, and future, each informing the other. Words and pictures danced gracefully across many pages as I faced your proposed question of *what are my great expectations?* Reading the novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, intertwined with my new creative experiences, I’ve come to realize that so often our expectations are skewed by our circumstances, experiences, and allowed misleadings, but most often by our limited perspective. When we challenge ourselves to live wide-awake and open to possibility, it is then that we allow ourselves to live beyond expectation. Therefore, my great expectation is to live *beyond expectation*. Beyond the expectations of artist training, beyond the expectations of institutional education, beyond the expectations of everyday life, beyond my own limited expectations. (all emphases in original)

Virginia’s words resonate with Gadamer’s (1986) view of play as holding a sacred seriousness and freedom:

Insistence on the opposition between life and art is tied to the experience of an alienated world... play is capable of penetrating all the dimensions of our social life, through all classes, races, and levels of cultural attainment. For these our forms of play are forms of our freedom. (p. 130)

Moreover, she used phrases like “free to choose” and “when we challenge ourselves.” These phrases point to the ontological engagement and commitment of AEP as a living expression of freedom. Virginia turned herself over to living out AEP as a commitment: “habitually, playfully, deeply.”

Additionally, her reflection blurred the same boundaries and binaries between art, play and aesthetic experience that I have been exploring. She did not separate “creatively playing” from discovering herself as an artist or feeling awakened by aesthetic experiences. Nor, did she separate the act of reading novels from the act of creating, playing, exploring, nor from her reading philosophy for her thesis project. She spoke of them in fluid connection, building towards a reflective commitment to “live beyond expectation” in a “world around and within” her, rather than an alienated world.

Moreover, Virginia used language like “flow of action and reaction” and “freely bound... in a loving embrace” to express the movement of AEP towards a space beyond. These phrases resonate with my vision of AEP as holding productive, generative, restorative tension that moves us towards becoming. Perhaps what is most profound for me though, is the awareness Virginia revealed of a liminal space situated between her “own limited expectations” and her

commitments to moving beyond them. As Gallagher (1992) explained: “An essential aspect of all educational experience, including play, involves venturing into the unknown, going beyond ourselves and experiencing the unfamiliar” (p. 49-50). When we play, we move to “unaccustomed earth” (Lahiri, 2008).

All of this helps sustain my desire to more fully understand and articulate how AEP is lived, experienced and known in the lives of artist-teachers, like Virginia. And so, these tracings and experiences reveal how I am coming to understand AEP as a playful, aesthetic, curious engagement with the world: an engagement that potentially sparks an *aesthetic swell*.

Situating Aesthetic Swell

What happens when we choose to live, engage, dwell in these playful, aesthetic, curious ways? My hope is twofold: that we may embrace the surprising, unanticipated outcomes of experience and that we may break open binaries, the either/ors created by educational systems (Baldacchino, 2009; Britzman, 2003; Dewey, 1934, 1938; Greene, 1978, 1988, 1995, 2001). I might have said *current* educational systems, but then Dewey (1938) observed: “Mankind likes to think in terms of extreme opposites. It is given to formulating its beliefs in terms of Either/Ors, between which it recognizes no intermediate possibilities” (p. 17); going on to say that such situations “compel us to compromise” (p. 17). And while I would change his language to make space for humankind, I believe his observation holds.

More recently, Palmer (2011) echoed this sentiment, when he said: “we must teach our hearts a new way to understand the tension we feel when we are torn between two poles” (p. 85). This gives me pause to consider what this new understanding might be. Perhaps, something like Virginia’s understanding of being “freely bound... in a loving embrace” between competing forces.

Lineage of resistance.

Earlier, I asserted that because aesthetic experience and play are always, already in a relationship of connection, a reciprocal, generative, restorative engagement is created: an engagement that holds threads of intentionality in a productive, sustained tension necessary for reaching, going beyond (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2005; Vagle, 2010, 2011b). When Gadamer (1975/2004, 1986) freed play from the subject/object binary, he put this engagement on the move: Play became a process. When the play was no longer bounded to the player, it was free to engage more fluidly; as in “the play of light” or “the play of waves” (Gadamer, 1975/2004, p. 104). And so, play became an ontological movement towards freedom; a generative process that “renews itself in constant repetition” (p. 104). The process of play became *bildung*,

becoming, transformation; a way of being-in-the-world (Gadamer, 1975/2004, 1986; Gallagher, 1992; Vilhauer, 2010).

I find parallels here to Dewey (1934), who stated: “Experiencing like breathing is a rhythm of intakings and outgivings” (p. 58). The play of breath repeats and renews. If we attend to productive, sustained tension created by the rhythm of our breath, to the flow rather than the inhale-exhale binary, we may deepen our engagement. If we breathe freely; our breath becomes generative and restorative. In the same way, we may see the *either/or* as an opportunity to move fluidly, rather than choosing sides. The *and/both* move cuts free what anchors our becoming. Imagine; artist-teachers who feel free to move fluidly between both those big things.

Greene (1978, 1988) continued this lineage of resistance against binaries with her position that when educators practice attending, noticing and reflecting upon aesthetic experience *either/ors* disappear and those we teach may rebel. One may ask, what is there to rebel against? How about the binaries that stifle us and choke us out of the field- asking us to choose teacher or artist, beginner or expert, practical or visionary? How about the fact that “(h)alf of all people who begin their careers thinking they will love being a teacher decide that they just can’t do it. Half. (Reynolds, 2011, p. 3, emphasis in original)? AEP seeks fluidity, rather than unsatisfying compromises.

Inspired by Gadamer, Dewey, and Greene I have begun to envision an *aesthetic swell*- a wave-like movement that unmoors us and sets us adrift towards unanticipated, surprising possibilities. But, what stirs us to begin? Our relationship to the world is dialogical and curious and full of wonder (Freeman, 2008; Gadamer, 1975/2004; Greene, 2001; Grondin, 1994). Gadamer (1975/2004) bared the heart of this relationship when he said open questions come from a desire to be led somewhere new in our quest for understanding. The question we ask is our first move. Therefore, we could say an open question acts as friction, it is the ripple of wind that releases a wave to swell and to crest.

We open surprising, unanticipated worlds as we embrace our curious and wondering qualities- when we become what Greene (2001) called

a philosopher-person---someone whose life is absorbed in teaching, trying to move others to wide-awakeness and reflectiveness, to learning to learn on their own initiatives; someone who has spent and continues to spend time trying to confront the questions that arise. (p. 50-51)

And now, I wonder where an aesthetic swell might take Malik, one of my students and participants, as he becomes such a person.

The birthday pages.

Modern, terracotta tiles laid cool and smooth against the backs of our legs and ankles as we sat, a cluster of bodies holding pencils and hardbound journals, on the balcony of the contemporary art museum. Our presence complemented by the long shadows of two bronze sculptures and the slightest brush of Saturday morning traffic below. I had made my first pedagogical move of the day. The balcony was accessed from a small gallery that, at the time, housed pages of a birthday book made for art dynast, Hans Bechtler. The works, intended as presents, were quite small and made on paper with materials common to any artist or public school art classroom: crayons, watercolor, cut paper collage. They shared a spontaneous and improvisatory quality that I thought resonated with our course focus: aesthetic experiential play in art making and art teaching. As my students discussed the birthday pages, I tended loosely to the circle, holding only as tightly as needed to keep the conversation flowing and pushing, like blood into the heart of this body of learners.

The discussion turned itself over to a connection between the loose, spontaneous feeling of these works and our shared practice of visual verbal journaling³. This journaling was another of my pedagogical moves, a move towards crafting a space for AEP to be played out on a daily basis. After a long silence, Malik spoke up. He expressed sadness, regret even. He spoke about feeling left out. He confessed that he was uncomfortable with journaling, with a practice that was (maybe) art and (definitely) not Art. As an artist-teacher in a public, urban high school, his days were busy; his time was precious, and playing, exploring openly didn't feel much like a priority. He proclaimed his perfectionism was getting in the way. Judy had already confessed to ripping pages from her journal, because they were ugly. And, now she explained her efforts to stop tearing pages from her book, as a result of some of the letters she and I had exchanged. In hearing others speak intensely, cathartically about their relationships with their visual verbal journals (our VVJ's, as we affectionately called them), had left Malik feeling as if he was missing out.

Greene (1988) helped me understand this even more deeply: "With situations opening, students may become empowered to engage in some sort of *praxis*, engaged enough to name the obstacle in the way of their shared becoming" (p. 133). Malik had named the obstacle

³ I offer my sincere gratitude to Tracie Costantino for expanding my pedagogical vision of journaling into the visual *and* verbal.

when he asked the questions: What am I missing out on here due to my attachments to finished products, to perfection? He became a philosopher-person; he released an aesthetic swell.

Anne took care of the cohort. You know her type of kindness, the kind that coordinates flowers, onesies, and cakes for all the special occasions. And so, I was not surprised when she took action. Her plan involved someone from our class sending Malik a text message with a prompt to play out in his VVJ every day until our next class meeting. She passed around a sign-up sheet; a friendly sort of contract, I suppose. And so, Malik played in his VVJ. He played in pursuit of these questions and constraints until he broke through. As Caputo (1988) wrote:

There are certain breaking points, let us say, in the habits and practices, the works and days, of our mundane existence... where the whole trembles and the play irrupts. Then we know we are in trouble. The abyss, the play, the uncanny- in short, all hell- breaks loose, and the card castles of everydayness come tumbling down. Something breaks through because the constraints we impose on things break down. (p. 269-270)

Malik challenged his assumptions of what artists do, produce, achieve, and began asking questions about how artists live. How is it to be artful, active, playful, curious, and wondering as we move in and through the world? For his final project, he wrote a reflective list of ways he was standing in his own way. Malik chose key ideas and words from the list and stitched them onto fabric bricks. Inspired by the brick wall metaphor in his chosen novel, *The Women of Brewster Place* by Gloria Naylor (1982), he built a structure to hold the bricks and then knocked each free, as he read aloud to us from his journal. He literally broke through; allowing everything to collapse, be torn down, in order to start anew.

Malik's experience reflects the type of aesthetic swell I am theorizing in my work. It is a movement, a reaching, a breaking away (Greene, 2001). It is finding a bit more fluidity in our way of being in the world. Where could an aesthetic swell take us if we let go? Dewey (1934) offered:

Like the ocean in a storm, there is a series of waves; suggestions reaching out and being broken in a clash, or being carried onwards by a cooperative wave. If a conclusion is reached, it is that of a movement of anticipation and cumulation, one that finally comes to completion. A "conclusion" is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement. (p. 39)

Each swell moves us to the next breaking point, if we let go and turn ourselves over to the unfolding; every ending carries us to new beginnings (Gadamer, 1974/2004). And so, perhaps an aesthetic swell moves us in surprising, unanticipated ways from AEP to *finding ourselves in afterglow*.

Situating Afterglow

What would it take for you “to live with all your burners lit” (Richards, 1996, p. 32)? For me, it involves being in an expressive commitment with the many, many ways I work the world—as a papermaker, book artist, writer, journal keeper, teacher, scholar, and lover of philosophy, poetry, and literature. Poet Laureate Billy Collins (2001) wrote: “I see us reading ourselves away from ourselves, straining in circles of light to find more light” (p. 12). As we choose to engage in AEP, as we unmoor ourselves and move with an aesthetic swell, we may experience this struggle to seek more undiscovered light within ourselves; we may experience the Deweyan storm. Or perhaps, we might experience something like Rene Magritte’s painting, *The Empire of Light (1953-4)*. In this work, the streetlamp is not all that illuminates. It is day *and* it is night. There is a glow emanating from somewhere beyond; from a place we cannot see or name or ever hold between our humble, human hands.

Throwing light.

Afterglow is a word that holds two ideas in tension. The first idea, is the *after*; the meaning made after experience (Dewey, 1934; Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, 1999). The second is the *glow*. Together, these concepts create an illuminated space that unfolds with our commitments to openness and inquiry allowing us to continue “throwing light” upon our understandings of self and world (Gadamer, 1975/2004, p. 301).

After.

Dewey (1916) emphasized that what makes play educative is the meaning that is made afterward through the experience. Later, he stated that as we play, our “experience matures” and “purpose becomes a thread” that allows us to make meaning from our playful actions (Dewey, 1934, p. 290). I see AEP as engaging threads of purpose connecting artist-teachers to their creative and teaching practices. Where reflective practice (Schön, 1987) might indeed illuminate these threads; afterglow may instead play them in a productive tension. We could make a move here towards hermeneutic circularity to help us to see the practice of reflecting in a new light. To see reflection as the ongoing tracing of a circle- cycling towards “reflexive enlightenment” rather than “perfect enlightenment” (Gadamer, 1975/2004, p. 559). For we are never finished, and reflection will never yield perfection, only more light. Think of Malik, who allowed his reflections to swell and burst forth (Sartre, 1939/2002); who tore down and started anew.

And yes, threads of purpose or intentionality may not be so neat and tidy in this postmodern world (see Slattery, 2006; Vagle, 2010, 2011b); as we Race to the Top (RTTT) across the weakened, anesthetized terrain of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Yet, we can learn, as artists do, to speak through the many languages of thread (Camhi, 2011). We can learn to stitch, wrap, braid, and weave our sense of purpose as the years pass and everything swerves and shifts around us. We can ask: What tugs at these purposeful threads in teachers' lives? How might AEP help us mend them when they snap, or make our threads more elastic and flexible in the first place?

Glow.

I share Greene's (2001) concern for educational systems that ignore the simple premise that "we cannot *learn* anyone" (p. 136; see Duckworth, 1987; Eisner, 2002). I believe this holds in classrooms, as well as in professional development for teachers. Vilhaeur (2010) explained from a Gadamerian perspective that

a human being will not, and cannot, simply change his old conceptions by being handed new ones- or by being handed a set of new premises and conclusions- as if some kind of instantaneous conversion were possible. Instead, learning happens through a slow and thorough process of engagement with new meaning, in which the prejudices with which we begin slowly come to light, and are revised until we reach a transformed sense of things. (p. xv)

I find this idea of slowly learning to be critical for both artist-teachers and their students. If AEP pursues renewal and transformation, it must allow for learning to steep: slowly, patiently, openly.

My understanding of *afterglow* is, perhaps, the most tenuous of the three concepts I am situating. At this point, I tentatively understand finding oneself in afterglow as playing a sustained chord of tension that productively balances a commitment to reflective practice with disruptive generativity. It begins with an open question. It is a space we choose to occupy as playful, aesthetic, curious teachers who long to throw a bit more light on our life-worlds.

Opening to Questions

Thus far, I have braided, traced and situated my emerging understandings of the conceptual aspects of this study with experiences from my pilot study. To sum up, perhaps *aesthetic experiential play* could be described as a playful, curious, questioning, artful engagement with the world. Perhaps this engagement sparks *aesthetic swell*, which moves us in surprising,

unanticipated ways from play to its *afterglow*. Perhaps *afterglow* is the unfolding answer to an open question. And perhaps, the open question is a place to play (Schwandt, 2007).

And so, I ask:

- What is the potential of aesthetic experiential play to spark an aesthetic swell, moving us towards a space of possibility or afterglow?
- And, what might this afterglow illuminate for the holistic growth and renewal of artist-teachers? What change could it inspire? How far, how long- could it shimmer?

An Unfolding Methodology in the Afterglow

My dissertation study seeks to understand more deeply what it means to *find oneself in the afterglow of AEP* through engaging with open questions with my participants for the 12 months that follow the pilot study, which leads me to discuss the second and third layers of this inquiry.

Our research questions influence our methods and methodologies, as does the place we position ourselves within our work. Interpretative phenomenologist, van Manen (1990), went deeper with Gadamer's concept of the open question by placing it at "the heart of our existence" so that we live the question; we become the question we are asking (p. 43). At the heart of my existence is the multiplicity of engagement I experience as an artist, a teacher, and a scholar. I *become* the question through what Schwandt (2004) considered a "poetics of inquiry" rather than a "methodology of research" (p. 31). And so, my study draws upon an expansive, entangled view of arts-based, practice-based research (see Barone and Eisner, 2012; Bresler, 2006; Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund, 2008; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; Rolling, 2010; Scheurich, 1997; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008; St. Pierre, 1997; Sullivan, 2005); a "living practice" as Carson and Sumara (1997) envisioned (p. xiii).

My methods of data collection include: reflective writing, journals, artwork, observations, interviews, postcards and letters. My participants and myself actively construct these methods as we live through this process of inquiry (see Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; St. Pierre, 1997), and as we attempt to engage with these open questions within our "lifeworlds" (Dahlberg, Dahlberg & Nystrom, 2008; van Manen, 1990).

The second layer of this study involves engaging with aesthetic experiential play within my own art practice. As a papermaker and book artist, I decided to stretch myself into a new, yet complementary, discipline. Therefore, I have become a letterpress apprentice, hopeful that I can use my new skills to present my dissertation findings. Perhaps even creating large

broadside posters amplifying the voices of teachers too long dampened. Broadside posters that aim to do what Anne Waldman asks of her poems, to “dwell in the interstices of imagination and action” (<http://www.poetspath.com/waldman.html>). Who knows? Anything is possible when we choose to begin anew (Greene, 1994).

The third layer of my dissertation study will explore the afterglow of aesthetic experiential play for one year from the time my pilot study ended. It was in the letterpress studio that I began to envision this final layer. Moreover, it was by being with my art making, being with my students, being with theory—all at once—that allowed for methodological possibilities to blossom and expand. It is here that I began to see and to live within the multiplicity that arts based research inspires and commands; Where I began to see how I might integrate these layers of inquiry through my emerging letterpress practice.

And so, I created letterpress stationary sets with 12 letters and 12 envelopes for each participant. These papers were blind debossed with the words of William James - “we learn to skate in summer after having commenced in winter” (Dewey, 1934, p. 24). Blind debossing is a process of making an impression into paper without ink. Imagine the way your feet sink slightly into damp sand as you walk the shoreline, leaving behind a delicate, but crisp impression.

Each month since our course ended, I have mailed a postcard to my former students/participants, encouraging them to write to me on the stationary sets they received. The front of the postcards feature a new letterpress process or technique I have learned, and on the back I write an open, reflective question that my former students can attend to in their response with words, drawings, collage, and so on. These open questions come from the analysis of my pilot study.

When I envisioned this layer, I was fairly unsure whether I could actually complete such a project with my fledgling letterpress skills. And, I sensed an even deeper risk—I had only faith that my former students might engage in these continued letters back and forth with me, long after any pedagogical authority I might have once held disappeared, as grades were finalized and they walked tall in their graduation regalia. I held only hope that my open questions on the backs of these postcards might provoke continued aesthetic swells in the lives of these nine artist-teachers—however tiny, however timid. I held only hope in the words of Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund (2008) who offered:

Thus arts-based research might aspire to engaging social change. However, the methods of change are different from traditional research, which applies change top-

down through the intellectual authority of the researcher. Arts-based research seeks change from the bottom-up through grassroots circles of conversation. (p. 236).

Yes, I envisioned these letters as just that. 108 postcards mailed, 108 potential letters to be received, many grassroots circles of conversations waiting to be had.

I will be honest that my hands quivered as I handed those bundles of letters wrapped in twine and envelopes adorned with stamps to each of my students. Yet, I let the packages pass from my hands to theirs, knowing it was time to let go. I let the open question slip away, because I know that we learn through what we lose (Gadamer, 1975/2004). With the loss of stubborn misconceptions, by loosening our hold on deep-rooted ideas, we become open to the generous offerings of dialogue, to what we learn by listening to others. In other words, our losses put us in a dialectical relationship with each other and the world. In thinking differently about the world, we open ourselves to experiencing the world differently. We swell with dialogic possibility. What greater ends could we desire of arts based research?

In that moment, there was nothing much to do. No prints to run, no class days to plan, nothing to do but wait for unfolding answers. Or, more accurately, unfolding letters that will lead me to ask new open questions. So, I breathed deeply and saw myself becoming the woman who eagerly anticipates a new ritual - a low grumble of acknowledgement from the dogs, one, two, then three footsteps on the brick stairs, and then—maybe—the sweet sound of letters dropped in a tin box at half past four each afternoon. A woman poised to risk, to lose, in order to deepen her understanding. A woman left wondering if the afterglow could ever be bright enough to wash out these binaries in its blinding light? Will it be enough to break free?

Postscript

Perhaps, on that last day of class, my hands trembled because I knew that for the next twelve months, the days that passed with no letters would feel, somehow, a little less alive; that in living the open questions, I would find myself slipping in (and out of) afterglow, as the world too slips in and out of days and nights, light and darkness. On those days, I hold on here:

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, that cannot be given to you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer. (Rilke, 2011, p. 35)

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Joining Forces: A Collaborative Study of Curricular Integration

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Abstract

The collaborative action research reported here strives to extend a prior study that dealt with the effects of integrating a general music course of study with the total curriculum of a first grade class. This second study used a similar plan in which a fifth grade teacher and a music teacher worked cooperatively to provide a curriculum that consistently integrated all subjects, including music, in a cohesive instructional plan. As before, the classroom teacher and music teacher planned and taught together through two years, crossing the traditional borders that usually keep music and the general classroom course of study separated. Teacher journaling and classroom videotaping showed improved student behavior and work ethic as the study progressed. Additionally, the collaboration necessary for the planning and teaching of the combined curriculum promoted innovative and energetic instruction and also mitigated the sense of professional isolation common among both elementary and music teachers.

Introduction

Historically, one goal of education has been that students acquire an understanding of the basic, overarching concepts that describe and explain across subject boundaries (Beane, 1995; Eisner, 1991b; Gardner, 1999; Morris, 2003; Simon, 2002). Elliot Eisner (1991b) criticized the tendency of U.S. schools to compartmentalize instead of integrate: "...We organize curriculums to almost ensure that a student who is enrolled in a class in U.S. history and in American literature may never suspect that there might be a relationship between the two" (p. 79).

Throughout the 1990s, much was written on the value of integrating subject matter through interdisciplinary study. For example, the MENC (now NAfME) document outlining national standards for music in the schools (Music Educators National Conference, 1994) asserted that elementary (K-4) students should:

- (a) identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms used in the various arts, and
- (b) identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music". (p. 15-16)

Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen (1997) agreed, writing:

[S]tudents' educational experiences are strengthened when both generalists and specialists attend to the potential of disciplines within the curriculum to connect and cohere. For interdisciplinary understanding to flourish, teachers must share a collective responsibility for and commitment to integrated forms of study. (p. 16)

This paper is a report of a collaborative action research project that integrated the general music curriculum with the total curriculum of a certain fifth grade class of students. One goal of the project was to elicit heightened student interest in class work by making more apparent the connections among the subjects in their fifth grade curriculum. We hoped to demonstrate the unified nature of knowledge while still concentrating on the fundamental concepts of each area of study. A second goal was to encourage collegiality and an exchange of teacher knowledge between the classroom teacher and the music teacher, thus mitigating the perceived isolation common among many elementary teachers.

Background

An earlier study explored ways to integrate elementary music instruction with the general studies of a particular first grade classroom without neglecting the major curricular goals of music (Miller, 1995, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 2003). The methodology of that prior study was an

action research model used to foster collaboration between myself (as music teacher) and the first grade classroom teacher, who was a veteran teacher oriented in the whole language approach. Together, we identified points of similarities between the total curriculum and the music curriculum in order to help our students make cognitive connections among the various subjects. As Fogarty (1992) described it: “The integration is a result of sifting related ideas out of subject matter content. The integration sprouts from within the various disciplines, and teachers make matches among them as commonalities emerge” (p. 56).

At the beginning of the earlier study, the first grade teacher and I wondered if there would be enough truly authentic points of intersection between the music curriculum and the classroom curriculum to construct a substantial course of study. Integration, we agreed, should not be forced for the sake of any study or to support a hypothesis. Experts (Barrett, McCoy, and Veblen, 1997; Willis, 1994, 1995) affirmed that points of intersection should be natural similarities inherent in the curriculum, rather than manufactured, whimsical, or merely topical relationships. The first grade teacher and I also knew that, to be worthwhile, integration of music into the regular classroom should augment and enrich the children's learning in both music and non-music curricula, facilitating acquisition of the major concepts in every subject area. We hoped that our collaboration would spark increased enthusiasm for learning in our class of children.

In the course of this earlier research period I learned much about the process of integrating general music with the total elementary curriculum and, synthesizing all that I read and experienced in my classroom, I developed a model of integration as an assortment of five types of connections: topical, related skills, conceptual ideas, higher order thinking skills, and pedagogical. Briefly, “topical” connections are what people often think of as integration—that is, connections pertaining to topics, such as weather, animals, or holidays. “Related skills” refers to understandings or skill sets that are common to two or more subjects, such as the similarity between antecedent/consequent phrases in music and interrogative/declamatory sentences in language. “Conceptual” integration involves broader understandings among subjects, such as form or line. Integrating through “higher order thinking skills” means that cognitive skills are valued and purposely cultivated in students by both instructors through such common methods as Venn diagrams or cognitive mapping (Hyerle, 1996). Finally, “pedagogical” integration occurs when both teachers believe in the same basic assumptions about their roles as educators and employ many of the same teaching strategies, such as cooperative learning or peer tutoring. Using that five-part model, the first-grade teacher and I found many authentic and interesting ways to integrate music and the first grade classroom curriculum.

At the end of that initial two-year study, there was no statistically significant difference between the amount of conceptual musical knowledge acquired by the integrated class compared to the three control classes of first graders, as judged on the evidence of the quantitative post-testing. However, student comments and body language seen in videotapes of the research class consistently demonstrated higher levels of enthusiasm and attentive behavior than those seen in the three control groups of children. Much of that unmistakable enthusiasm and involvement was a result of connections they perceived and verbalized. A surprising and gratifying outcome resulted from the collaboration necessary for the integration to occur. The classroom teacher benefited by what she learned through observing the children in her class as I taught them, and I grew more skilled as a constructivist educator through close collaboration with that highly skilled teacher. The close affiliation between us also helped to markedly alleviate the inherent loneliness of itinerant music teachers and sequestered classroom teachers (Miller, 1997a; Sindberg and Lipscomb, 2005).

While there are written descriptions of successful schools that model arts integration, there are only a few other research studies that speak to the efficacy of integration, or interdisciplinary curricula. According to Ellis and Fouts (2001):

Experimental research on interdisciplinary curriculum is very difficult to conduct and, therefore, rather rare. The interdisciplinary curriculum is, itself, a large holding company of educational variables that, put together, defy classic research methods that attempt to isolate a single variable to show some degree of cause and effect. ...At this stage, the number of thoughtful empirical studies...remains so small that any kind of meaningful meta-analysis that might point to some generalized findings is precluded. Thus, ...it is impossible to generalize from them to the overall efficacy of the integrated curriculum. (p. 24-25)

Nevertheless, a few examples of school districts that are successfully integrating the arts into the general curriculum can be found, such as Bresler (2011), Feller and Gibbs-Griffith (2007), Levin (2008), Mishook (2006), and Shuck (2005). One exemplary example found in Bresler (2011) describes a program of curricular integration in Martinez High School in Texas. Located in what was reputed to be the poorest economic area in the United States, Martinez served a highly transient student body where 90% of the students were at-risk and where the scores on the state assessment tests at the outset of the research were the lowest in the state. In her research, Bresler found that the curriculum was being re-conceptualized around concepts and themes “in a manner consistent with the thematic integrity of each unit. The integration style in the three arts subjects (music, visual arts, and drama) revolved around the broad themes of class, gender, ethnicity, family, and propaganda” (p. 7). Class work was designed to be of intense interest to the students, and resulted in a heightened sense of

academic ownership by the students, even to the extent that they would self-discipline in order to focus on their studies. Student attendance grew as their enthusiasm increased and, consequently, the school's scores on mandated assessment tests rose dramatically.

In another study, Feller and Gibbs-Griffith (2007) report on the success of their integrated program of drumming, teambuilding and counseling, and community service "to engage students, improve achievement and morale, and teach important life skills" (p. 48). In addition to anecdotal reports of observed improvements in disruptive or negative behavior among the participating students, this study reported a 47% drop in discipline referrals and a 67% drop in school suspensions.

Goals of the Study

My purpose for this second study was to experience a collaborative, integrative program at the fifth grade level with a different teacher in another school. I wondered if fifth graders would exhibit the same excitement and interest when they perceived connections among subjects as the first graders had displayed. I also wanted to find out if the integrative process would again nourish the collegiality that had so enriched and informed teachers in the prior study. The question of academic growth was not addressed in this study, as it had been in the previous setting, because this situation did not present the possibility of control groups for comparison. Instead, the only questions, as stated above, pertained to the effect of a highly integrated curriculum on student interest and behavior and to the effect of collaboration on teacher enrichment.

Setting and Methodology

This second study took place with the only fifth grade classroom in an elementary school of about 120 students. The district administration was slowly phasing out use of this vintage school building by gradually transferring students and teachers to three newer district schools. The experienced fifth grade teacher, Lyn, felt isolated as the only teacher at that grade level still left in the building. This feeling of professional isolation, so frequent among teachers (Eisner, 1991a) and heightened among music specialists (Sindberg and Lipscomb, 2005), made her amenable to a team teaching approach. As the only general music teacher serving several schools, I also felt the separation endemic to arts education professionals. Lyn's fifth grade class was small (18-20 students) and consisted of children primarily from the lower middle class, according to school records. The area feeding into this older school was one neighborhood in a community of about 10,000 in a relatively isolated and rural part of the state.

A reflective, spiral research design fit the nature of the teaching situation because, although we planned the lessons carefully, we responded with flexibility to unforeseeable factors, such as student needs, teacher insights, and school district scheduling. The qualitative nature of the inquiry also suggested that we would interpret what occurred according to our own knowledge of the reality that existed with regard to the specific students, school and community, and make adjustments accordingly.

The research model could also be described as collaborative action research because Lyn and I worked closely together throughout the planning, instruction, and assessment phases of the study. We felt that we matched Rideout and Feldman's (2002) definition of action research as "systematic inquiry by practitioners to improve teaching and learning" (p. 882). Two main themes may describe our action research model: collaboration and the cyclical relationship between reflection and action.

Collaboration was at the heart of our inquiry, for we needed each other in this endeavor. In earlier teaching situations I had sometimes tried to connect music activities with the various classrooms I entered by questioning students and teachers or by observing their classroom to ascertain what they might be currently studying. But that method of integration only results in a superficial sort of topical integration, relegating music to a "handmaiden" status. In this study I desired deeper conceptual, cognitive, and pedagogical connections—and for that it was necessary to work closely with the Lyn in a consistent, interpretive, and democratic collaboration.

In action research, reflection and action alternate in a spiral fashion throughout the course of the inquiry (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). Reflection results in action; action necessitates further reflection and re-evaluation of the direction of the study. In our case, my once-weekly visit to Lyn's school provided the opportunity to put our teaching plan into action, and to review what we had seen in the music lesson. We discussed how the students—as a class and as individuals—had reacted to the lesson, what Lyn had done in my absence to correlate music with the other subjects, and how we felt we should alter the next lesson to accommodate student response.

A crucial part of the research design was my ongoing teaching journal. Throughout the two-year period that comprised this integration inquiry with Lyn, I kept a written record of teaching episodes, student responses, discussions with Lyn, and my own thoughts. This kind of reflexive journal is one of the techniques for establishing trustworthiness recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985): "...the reflexive journal [is] a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about *self* (hence the term 'reflexive) and *method*" (p. 327).

This research also closely mirrored a narrative inquiry model because it was intensely situated and personal—intended primarily as a vehicle for understanding, sharing, and improving our own teaching practice. Reading through my journal later, I realized I had told the “little story” (Bowman, 2006) of our two years of interaction with each other and with our students. In Bowman’s (2006) words, “As accounts of circumstances, meanings, actions, and events that are situationally and temporally-grounded in the here and now of personal experience, little story doesn’t aspire to occupy the same turf as grand theory” (p. 9). Additionally, my space in the center of the instructional picture throughout the research period matched Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) advice that “one of the first things that narrative inquirers do is [to]... position themselves...in the midst” of the research work (p. 100).

In addition to the teaching journals, data included student artifacts, student assessments, teacher observations of student reactions, audiotapes of student compositions, and videotapes of class sessions.

Year One

Having completed the long-term study on integration in the first grade classroom described earlier, I was enthusiastic about finding a collaborator for a new but similar research project with students of a different age level. Since Lyn’s closest colleague, the other fifth grade teacher in the building, had been moved to another school, Lyn missed the support and stimulation of a teaching partner. Our first meeting seemed favorable, but by the time school began we had not been together long enough to have made any definite plans. Nevertheless, we had already begun to imagine:

On Tuesday I had a good first talk with Lyn. Happily, one of her goals for this year was to help the children see that school and the "real world" are really connected. She said that, in good conscience, she couldn't turn down my suggestion [to work together] without compromising her own objective. Some of her fifth graders are already causing quite a bit of trouble in class and around the school, as they did in previous years. We dreamed about a collaborative, integrative unit that would challenge and interest them enough to help straighten out their behavior patterns. (B. Miller journal, Sep. 16, year 1)

With no long-range plans at that point, Lyn and I both felt that our first priority would be to address the behavior problems in her classroom.

We are both worried about the awful attitude of the 5th graders. With only 2 or 3 exceptions, they fall into 2 categories: the cocky, sneering, bored group who dominate

any discussion but tend to discount anything any adult says, and the quiet ones who have given up trying to compete with the first group and do not participate in much of anything. All in all, a bad situation for learning. We decided to sneak up on them, because a frontal attack (Today we are going to...) has, so far, brought either defiance or lethargy.

First, a short plan for immediate use today. I had brought my "Carnival of the Animals" video, as planned, because some of them are studying a story about a trumpeter swan. Here's how it went:

I popped into their room right before lunch on the excuse that I wanted to read the rest of the swan book--"Could I borrow a copy? Oh, by the way, I have a little video clip of a swan." "Really!" said Lyn, acting well, "I'd love to see it. C'mon, class, let's go watch it in the library!" They watched the segment, although some did not attend very well. She led the few who would follow into a discussion of the swans as presented in the book and compared to the film. She worked around into the instruments and whether the cello was a good sound. She wondered why some instruments sound like certain animals to us.

She and I (trying to include the students in the idea) agreed that they would construct a chart predicting what instruments would play the parts of all the animals on the "Carnival of the Animals" film if I would provide a list of them. Then I will show the whole video next week to see how they did. As we talked, several different students wandered off: 3 lined up at the library door as if to say it was time to go; 1 or 2 paired up behind bookshelves to carry on their own conversations. I thought it was shocking. What will interest these kids? And if not interested, what has happened to ordinary polite attention?

Later in the day, during their music class, I was talking about the instruments of the band and orchestra. What would you have to change to turn a band into an orchestra? "Throw them all out and get a rock and roll band!" was the impertinent answer. Trying to make authentic learning and follow constructivist precepts, I answered, "Okay, let's make a rock and roll band. Now what instruments would you keep?" Of course, the person who started it was just being smart and didn't really want to go into it, but I persevered. In the ensuing discussion, they obviously didn't accept that flutes might possibly be in rock and roll bands. Naturally, since they'd never heard of Jethro Tull [and that performing group's consistent use of flute], they seemed to think that I must just be stupid. (B. Miller journal, Sep. 24, year 1)

Lyn wanted her students to use technology in her classroom and also to practice writing research reports. Following the “Carnival of the Animals” project and coordinating with my unit on orchestral instruments, she used a CD-rom program that referenced many orchestral and ethnic instruments from around the world. It included pictures, history, and authentic sounds of all the instruments. This CD-rom, in addition to other references, gave the students enough material to begin their research reports on an instrument of their choice. When we studied Benjamin Britten's "Young People's Guide to the Orchestra" in music class, they were surprisingly engaged. I heard remarks such as, "Here is a picture of the instrument that matches my report!" I wondered if this new attentiveness could be at least partly attributed to the integration and/or the collaboration between Lyn and me.

When Lyn and I met at 7:15 again, she, too, felt that some of the improved attitude may be because the class sees the two of us working together, that they may think that they can no longer put anything over on us because we are communicating with each other.

Or, we wondered, is it the integrative process that is capturing their attention? Is it the meeting of the topic in several disciplines that produces saturation and, thus, finally, interest--despite themselves?

We talked about Joe and Tom. They are 2 boys who are usually discipline problems, but both showed high interest in yesterday's lesson. Tom correctly and independently identified several instruments by sound and was delighted when I complimented him on his good ear. He even reported that compliment to Lyn when she returned to the music room to join us. Joe also attended well and identified several instruments against the flow of common wisdom, including the viola. When the kid next to him laughed about the pronunciation of "viola", he retorted quietly but firmly, "Well, that's what it's called." (B. Miller journal, Oct. 3, year 1)

By November the fifth graders were studying the American Revolution in their social studies class. My journal describes some of the ways I connected with that unit:

In music class, the fifth graders have continued studying the American Revolution unit, matching the social studies curriculum. One day we heard the “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere”—both the trade book (Longfellow/Rand, 1990) and the music (Phillips, 1934). They were hard to interest (as always). The book seemed to hold little interest, although *I* thought its pictures were wonderful. In answer to the question, "If you were the composer who wanted to describe Revere's ride with music, what would you do?", they predicted such expected answers as "use a drum" and "make quick

tempo changes". The part that seemed most interesting to them was the frequent rhythm in the music that seemed to chant, "The British are coming; the British they are coming!"

In the following lesson, we reviewed the Revolutionary songs, "The Riflemen of Bennington" and "Soldier, Soldier", and added "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" and "Chester". I reiterated the basic concepts that (1) people sing about what is important to them at the time, and (2) music can serve to inspire people to patriotism and bravery. At first only Allan and Brad seemed to understand about the "music inspires" issue. Then I said, "Just think about how it makes you feel when the band plays at the basketball games."

Another student: "Yeah, and at the hockey games!"

Tom: "Yeah, Dan brings a radio to the locker room during hockey games and plays it real loud."

Me: "How does it make you feel?"

Tom: "Excited and like I want to play real hard." (B. Miller journal, Dec. 9, year 1)

By midyear, it was time to really look at what had happened, as well as outline the rest of the term, so Lyn and I met outside of school to confer, plan, and express any doubts.

I met with Lyn at my house over Christmas break and asked her how she feels about our project now that we have almost gone half a year. She said that she had been feeling dissatisfied because we were not seeing immediate and dramatic results. I realize some change results from sudden insight, but most change must result from slow evolution and persistent thought.

Still, she agreed that the children seemed a little more engaged, perhaps, and were starting to pick up connections--but she seemed unsure even about this statement. I feel the same way, to some extent. I really don't know how much advantage integration is to the academic side of teaching. We both agreed, however, that the discipline seems better when we are collaborating. The kids seem to realize that we are talking and working as a team. If that is all we gain, isn't that enough?

When I look at the semester's work with Lyn from the standpoint of my categories of integration, I realize that we have used several kinds, such as:

1. topical integration (Revolutionary War; instruments)

2. conceptual integration ("People make up songs and stories about those things which are important in their lives" and "The sound of instruments depends upon their material, size, and shape.")
3. pedagogical integration (cooperative group work and class discussion) (B. Miller journal, Jan. 8, year 1)

The second semester brought interesting math connections. In Lyn's math periods the students were learning about fractions. We used manipulatives called "fraction fringes" as personal reference tools to strengthen tactile and visual input as we worked with fractions in math class and with rhythmic notation in the music period. I was gratified when Lyn told me that this group was doing better than most of her past students on fractions, but neither one of us knew exactly what to credit. Were they better because of the music connection, the fraction fringes, the level of their knowledge upon entering fifth grade, or a natural affinity for math?

Throughout the year, Lyn and I not only planned units and reflected upon results as a team, but also were often in the room together. Rather than using music as a break, as was usually the practice of classroom teachers in my district, Lyn frequently would spend the music period working alongside me. What fun to play off each other's enthusiasm and to see it transmitted to the students! The following journal excerpt conveys the success of such partnering:

This past week Lyn and I modeled the assignment for the day. She composed 1 measure to be used as an ostinato, modeling how to make it easy enough to be able to play it against my part. Then I composed 4 other measures—all different—to play as she performed her ostinato. We modeled using our fraction fringes to help this composing. Then we performed our composition using 2 different found sounds for contrasting sounds. The children jumped right in and worked the problem out with their partners. Joe and a few others had trouble staying on task without bothering others (although not any more than usual), but they managed to all finish composing in time to have a concert of all the pieces within the class period. Some did not actually play what I had seen on their papers, but their papers were correct and their playing was okay, so I let it go.

The pair that really blew me away was Kyle and Tom! Kyle, bright but often lackadaisical, focused on the task and completed the writing with plenty of time to practice. Tom, despite his special education status, seems very aurally centered and has done well in music all year. He was secure in his ostinato and really kept a

remarkably steady beat to accompany Kyle's part. At the end, I asked if I could take them to my room to videotape their performance. * I wondered if they could perform it the same way again, and was pleased to find that they could duplicate it. In fact, when I asked if they could play it twice, Kyle suggested that Tom should not only begin before him as an introduction (which all the groups had done), but should play an interlude before Kyle repeated his part a second time. They performed flawlessly! (B. Miller journal, Mar. 10, year 1)

Vygotskian theory suggests that students' attitude toward learning improves if those people who are important to them agree that the learning is worthwhile (Kozulin, 1990). Except for parents, classroom teachers spend more time with the students than any adult, eventually becoming extremely important to the child's self-image. Therefore, it may be that teachers send a powerful, if nonverbal, message to children when they leave them at the door of the music room and walk away. That action may unintentionally imply that the music (or art) class is not important enough to interest the teacher and therefore, by extension, may not be very important for the student, either. In our case, it might be hard to distinguish whether the students' willingness to strive for success in this and other music lessons was a result of the integrated nature of the subject matter or the interest and willingness modeled by their classroom teacher.

Lyn also gave extra time to music projects during the part of the week I was away at other schools. Her willingness not only to devote the class time, but also to continue work on the music project on her own was unheard of in my professional experience. I believe what made it possible for her to feel comfortable to allot that time was that my music curriculum was also her curriculum.

The unit that most benefited from her willingness and ability to continue work throughout the week was the last project of the year: a unit combining poetry and music composition. Using the first stanza of Christina Rossetti's poem, "Who Has Seen the Wind?", we worked as a class to determine the long and short sounds in the rhythm of the text. Next, we converted the text to traditional rhythmic notation. Finally, we began writing individual melodies for the rhythm, using metallophones and nine electronic keyboards borrowed from the high school's music lab. This unit not only let us review our rhythmic notation, but provided authentic opportunities for mini-lessons on time signatures, writing melodies, finding the tonal center,

* The video of Kyle and Tom performing their rhythmic composition can be viewed by clicking on the following link: <http://www.ijea.org/v14si1/v14si1-9.mp4>.

writing their melodies on staff paper, learning that a set of lyrics may be set to music in multiple ways, and so on. The writing down and recording of their pieces completed the cycle. When they were finished, each child's melody was recorded on an audiotape for him or her to keep. Whether discussing music reading or text reading, the cycle consisted of (a) learning to decode musical notation or text, then (b) encoding their own musical ideas or words so that (c) someone else could decode it in order to perform the original music or written ideas.

This composition unit gave us all a sense of satisfaction at the end of the year, and was approached with serious diligence by all the students—even those who had been such trouble-makers early in the school term. The classroom climate was markedly improved compared to the beginning of the school year.

Last Monday the 5th graders worked some more to get their "Who Has Seen the Wind?" pieces transcribed to staff paper. While Lyn helped them, I began taking them individually to the music room to tape their compositions. They were so interested in hearing their own piece on tape! Even Joe entered the room without his usual bravado and swagger. Mike was nearly beside himself with pride and excitement! They all wanted me to play and sing it onto the tape, but they are all practicing to play it themselves for the class. The melodies they have written are all satisfying in their own ways. Some are easier to sing than others, but all find closure on the tonic and all conform to the words. I am extremely pleased with the amount of ownership and learning that is going on! (B. Miller journal, Apr. 28, year 1)

Year 2

After what felt like a successful, if somewhat serendipitous year, Lyn and I agreed to continue into year two with more comprehensive plans than we began with last fall. During the intervening summer, therefore, we met to design our second year's curriculum. Our goal was to integrate even more components of the fifth grade curriculum as often and as deeply as possible through authentic connections. We began by inspecting her new reading text. The stories in it were divided into sections that seemed interesting and potentially integrative, such as "Worlds of Change" and "Scenes of Wonder." Therefore, we adopted the text's unit names for our instructional segments and built the year's program around those ideas.

Next we added the social studies curriculum to the reading units, breaking with ordinary procedure by progressing from the present time back through history. Lyn had bemoaned the fact that each year her classes failed to reach the most recent historical time periods in the last chapters of the social studies book, so we decided to work backwards. This reverse order reflected our constructivist viewpoint that learning should have meaning and relevance to a student's present life and should progress from known to unknown information.

Then we added the other subjects: music, health, science, visual art, math, and drama. The art teacher was eager to follow the art curriculum we had suggested. Except for music and visual art, Lyn would teach all the subjects.

Finally, we decided upon some overarching components that would permeate our curriculum throughout the school year. These would be poetry, music listening in the context of the regular classroom, student composition in music class, an oversized boy and girl paper doll that would represent the class in authentic dress during each historical time period, and a “hero” theme. We also began initial plans to share a culminating “Heroes Banquet” with the second graders at the end of the school year. At this banquet, the fifth graders would portray heroes through language, art, music, and drama.

With the curriculum devised and an approximate timetable proposed, we began the school year with a new class consisting of much more cooperative students than last year’s class. From that point on, we discovered that a few minutes before classes on the days I attended that school was usually all we needed to proceed with our plan. A quick “Are we on schedule?” when I arrived assured me that I could go ahead with the music lesson as planned. Like the first year, the collaboration seemed to spur me to be inventive, to energize me in class, to focus me on the overall year’s curricular design, and to reflect on successes and failures. However, with our summer planning behind us, we both seemed to feel more in control. Lyn really began to take charge of the total curriculum. She had mentioned once during the first year that she likes the integration, but also likes to control her own class and her own curriculum. As an “itinerant” music teacher, I was happy to have her take charge, as reflected in this journal entry:

I'm really impressed by the way Lyn has orchestrated the 5th grade curriculum so far! We have flowed smoothly from (1) "What makes music music?" and the editing process to (2) instruments of the orchestra to (3) invented instruments to (4) biographies of famous composers. She has produced a progression that has logically evolved from one topic to another in a way that has seemed interesting to the children and immensely satisfying to me.

Each unit has focused on truly authentic connections among subjects in the curriculum:

- (1) making value judgments about prose and music;
- (2) editing text writing and manipulating musical elements to edit music;
- (3) researching and writing about musical instruments in both language arts and music class, then constructing their own instruments;

- (4) investigating scientific properties of sound and connecting the science curriculum with families and sizes of instruments;
- (5) researching and writing about composers and hearing their music.

Lyn has really organized this whole quarter's work and has done a super job! Best of all, the kids seem really engaged! We're meeting today to conference. (B. Miller journal, Nov. 9, year 2)

We chose to use some of the same activities as in year one, but often even the repeated lessons were altered or augmented. For example, we again studied Britten's "Young People's Guide to the Orchestra", but this year the unit included science and language arts components. The students studied the science of sound, built their own musical instruments outside of class, and gave written and oral reports on the process. Everyone enjoyed the final celebration described in my journal:

When the kids finished making and reporting on their own instruments, we designed our own piece modeled after the Britten "Young People's Guide to the Orchestra" that we had studied in detail. First the students placed themselves, with their instruments, into categories: winds, strings, percussion, and pitched percussion (bottles, xylophone). Then each group brainstormed how they wanted to perform during their section. Finally we performed and videotaped a Britten-like performance using, as he did, instruments playing in families, then playing individually down through the families, and then all playing together. Fun! (B. Miller journal, Jan.2, year 2)

Like the first year, one of our major units focused on each student composing an original melody for Rossetti's "Who Has Seen the Wind?" This year, however, we gave more preliminary lessons on note names and other related skills. As before, students were excited about the opportunity to work at electronic keyboards and applied themselves steadily during each session:

The 5th graders worked on their first compositions some more, with most doing the transcribing from letter names into symbolic notation. Tyler, usually a non-starter, sat right down on the floor with me and set to work with enthusiasm!

Matt had wondered in chorus class if the chorus lyrics could be arranged as poems, so Lyn had seized that "teachable moment" to have each child choose any chorus piece and write it down as a poem. When I arrived in her room the next time, we looked at some of them and compared the different ways students had set up the same poem and talked about the resultant "look" and sound of the poem. Lyn said that how you

arrange the poem on the page depends upon "what sound you're after". (B. Miller journal, Mar. 15, year 2)

During this second year our schedule even allowed for each student to compose his own melody to a second poem of his own choosing. Using the model that we had employed as a whole class on the Rosetti piece, all the individual students marked long or short lines over each word to match their reading voices. Then they found the important words and drew a bar line in front of them, thus creating the measures and determining the time signature. They then created a melody for their rhythm by labeling the rhythmic notation with letters. Finally, they transcribed this working copy into traditional notation. [A student sample of this process is found in Figure 1.]

Figure 1. Composing process

It was exciting to see that, by now, some students also were beginning to realize the power of music to augment the expressive notions found in poetry. A few students were even able to talk about how they purposely chose a certain melody or rhythm to describe the words or feelings of their poem. This seemed to indicate not only a willingness to speculate in their musical choices, but an awareness of the descriptive power of the music. Although Swanwick and Tillman (1986) describe this awareness as "unlikely" before the age of 15, their description of that awareness seems to fit a couple of the students: "At the *Symbolic* level

there is a growing sense of music's affective power and a tendency to become articulate about this experience” (p. 333). For example, Josh explained that he wrote "Chipmunks" [see figure 2] with quick, steady quarter notes because "that is the way chipmunks sound", and also that he chose the repeated pattern in the first line to match the repeated words.

It was particularly gratifying to see the level of Lyn's involvement in this most deeply musical of all the projects in our two years of integration. While she had been attentive to all the projects and had taken part in most of the music activities to some extent, this individual student composing might have been considered a tricky endeavor even by some music educators. Yet one day she surprised us both by saying, "I can help the kids finish their compositions while you're gone this week!"

Discussion

Integration

In this study I once again found that organizing the inclusive term "integration" into subgroups (topical, related skills, conceptual ideas, higher level thinking, and pedagogical) provided the classroom teacher and me with a mental schematic of different kinds of integration as we worked toward a holistic curriculum that was authentically integrated. Thinking about integration as an assortment of subgroups broadened the range of possible intersections in our minds, which helped us to see more possibilities for connecting music with the general curriculum in ways that honored all subjects equally.

For example, the choice of "outer space" for the small group found-sound compositions was purely convenient and *topical*, since I could have used many different topics for the student composition theme. The fact that we taught rhythmic notation and fraction equivalencies during the same time period took advantage of the *related skills* inherent in those two subjects.

An example of a *conceptual* connection can be found in our study of instruments, which coincided with the science of sound unit. Promoting *higher order thinking* in our students was of utmost importance to both Lyn and me. We deliberately set up problem solving situations for our students and consistently used Socratic questioning rather than lecture. One can see many opportunities for higher order thinking in our plan. For example, we asked students to *compare* descriptive writing with how music can describe, to *classify* instruments by families, and to *deduce* how instruments work from principles learned in science class.

That emphasis on encouraging higher order thinking in our students also illustrates our *pedagogical* integration. Additionally, we were deliberate in our focus on striving for transmission of real-life knowledge. As constructivist teachers, we both considered ourselves

facilitators, rather than authoritarians, so we designed opportunities for students to work in pairs or small groups, we encouraged dialogue, and we used interactive materials. Lyn and I both felt that our similarities in philosophy--thus, in teaching style--helped the children see the curriculum as a holistic entity and, especially in the case of the first year, helped them view us as united in our insistence on good behavior and a high-quality work ethic.

Student Outcome

One of the goals for this project was to see if a tightly integrated curriculum would interest the fifth grade students like it had the first graders in the previous study. In fact, there were several factors that spoke to the beneficial effect of our integrated curriculum on student interest. First, the quality of the products—both musical and nonmusical--produced throughout the two years by the students showed a high level of interest and achievement. As Lyn and I designed units that highlighted the authentic commonalties among subjects, the students' interest was piqued. They enthusiastically composed original music for poems, contributed to group improvisations, constructed their own musical instruments, sang songs of the Revolutionary War period, and much more. At the end of the two years, the fine quality artifacts, such as their original melodies, indicated successful student achievement. Indeed, although most of these youngsters were no more than average and below average students on local and state assessments with virtually no students taking music lessons outside of the school setting, the time given to integrative and collaborative work resulted in the completion of more deeply musical projects than perhaps in any other year of my career.

Second, although the fifth graders were not as likely to shout and wave their arms at me when perceiving commonalties as the first graders, they frequently commented on similarities and connections. In addition, their improved behavior was witness to their interest. Those few students referred to in the local jargon as “bad actors” were drawn into the classroom activities despite themselves. What child can resist constructing three-dimensional space creatures that conform to the demands of a particular planet's atmosphere—and then composing music to match? Like the previous study, teacher observations and videotapes of lessons showed students demonstrating their interest through alert body posturing, on-task behavior, and enthusiastic verbal responses. Like the students at Martinez High School in Bresler's (2011) research and in the Feller and Gibbs-Griffith (2007) study, our students' interest in our curriculum offerings seemed to result in a desire to listen, to participate, and to self-monitor.

These real-life, daily observations, although not ascertained through paper-and-pencil assessments, led us to believe that our efforts at total integration were valuable both as educational tools and as behavioral modifiers. As Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) wrote:

The inevitability—for participants—of having to live with the consequences of transformation provides a very concrete ‘reality check’ on the quality of their transformative work, in terms of whether their practices are more efficacious, their understandings are clearer, and the setting in which they practice are more rational, just, and productive of the kinds of consequences they are intended to achieve. (p. 592)

Collaboration

In an earlier reflection, I wrote, “Initially expecting collaboration to be only a functional necessity, I was happily surprised to discover it was actually the bonus ‘toy’ in my crackerjack research package” (Miller, 1997a, p. 61). Collaborating on an integrated program of study is one way that teachers can mitigate a sense of isolation and gain new insight on the complicated job of teaching children. Lyn’s and my efforts to integrate the curriculum resulted in a new collegiality that helped to assuage our loneliness as the only fifth grade teacher and the only music teacher in the building. We not only helped each other through the two years of the study, but also established a history of friendship that served us for years to come as we continued to teach in the same district.

As in the prior study, I once again found myself watching and learning from an excellent classroom teacher. As a general classroom teacher, Lyn saw things through different eyes, and, therefore, she sometimes had a different reaction to what we saw in the classroom. Her big advantage was being part of the students’ lives during the majority of the week while I was serving other schools. Our frequent conversations also informed me: “As Lyn and I talk, I grow. Things come out of my mouth that I really did not yet consciously know.” (B. Miller journal, Apr. 6, year 1)

Throughout this two-year affiliation with Lyn, I was empowered to teach more stimulating, more in-depth units to her fifth grade students than I ever dared attempt without the help of a classroom teacher or within the usual fragmented one-period-a-week allotment of time. Bresler (2002) found the same results as she studied other teachers in collaborative situations:

The most obvious [transformation] was a change of roles for participating teachers in all sites—a heightened movement toward *developing*, rather than just implementing, curricula. In developing integrated curricula, academic teachers moved away from reliance on textbooks, and art teachers, from reliance on set activities and narrower, discipline-specific skills, towards a focus on larger projects, overarching themes, broad issues and questions. In this process, they also started to draw upon a larger array of resources. On a more fundamental level, they learned to listen to each other in ways that expanded their own vision of their discipline. (p. 27)

For me, the integrative situation produced excitement as I crafted and taught our large, involved units; informed my teaching expertise as I observed Lyn with her students; and made me feel that my music instruction (and, by extension, I as a person) was finally at the heart of the school's instructional program.

The students benefitted from our collaboration, too. It seemed to mitigate off-task behavior to have Lyn and me obviously working together. Also, because Lyn either gave the students extra time to work on their music projects or taught similar information in other disciplines, the students were better able to keep focused throughout the sequence of our music lessons from week to week. Again, I return to Bresler's (2002) research that found:

...integrated arts were characterized by students' active participation, both individually and as a group. [The students' enhanced ownership partly] lies in the transformation that the teachers underwent in their collaborations. [The teachers] having gone through this learning experience served as an implicit model of active engagement.... (p. 29)

In my situation, the effect of our collaborative work, happily, was more emphasis on music and more time for music for the students in those two years' of fifth grade classrooms.

Closing

Unfortunately, integration is still frequently perceived as various "topical" connections or, more superficial yet, as the use of musical jingles to teach skills or facts in the "core" subjects (Shuck, 2005; Stake, Bresler, and Mabry, 1991). Perhaps using the five categories--topical, related skills, conceptual, higher order thinking, and pedagogical--as scaffolding could assist other teachers who wish to integrate more authentically. The problem that arises, of course, is one of practicality. The job requirements of music and art teachers preclude integrating with many classes or grade levels at one time. Perhaps working collaboratively on one cycle or unit during each school year would be possible and fulfilling (Shuck, 2005; Willis, 1995). In the case of classroom teachers, arts integration and collaboration with arts teachers most often takes a back seat to a focus on reading and math in order to score well on mandated assessments (Matsunobu, 2004; Panaritis, 2009; Shuck, 2005; Whitaker, 2001). Many classroom teachers do not perceive that those "solid subjects" can still be taught well in an integrated curriculum.

Despite the difficulties involved, I believe that the benefits of integrating music with the general curriculum make it worth considering. I do not presume that what worked for Lyn and me will necessarily work for other educators. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) wrote:

The original inquirer cannot know the sites to which transferability might be sought, but the applicators can and do. The best advice to give to anyone seeking to make a transfer is to accumulate *empirical* evidence about contextual similarity; the responsibility of the original investigator ends in providing sufficient descriptive data to make such similarity judgments possible. (p. 298)

However, it may be that integrating music with the general classroom curriculum could provide increased motivation and meaningful learning opportunities for other students like it did for our fifth graders. Perhaps other teachers, too, would find that a collaborative effort would prove personally and professionally empowering and insightful.

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About the Author

Beth Ann Miller taught public school music for 39 years, with a special interest in elementary general music. She earned an Ed.D. in Music Education from the University of Illinois in 1995. Her focus on such topics as curricular integration, student composition, learning modalities, higher order thinking skills, and children's literature reflects her commitment to

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Dr. Miller has served on the editorial boards of *General Music Today* and *The International Journal of Education & the Arts*. She contributed a chapter to *Dimensions of Musical Learning and Teaching* (Boardman, ed., 2002) and has been published in *Research Studies in Music Education*, *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *General Music Today*, and *Teacher Research: The Journal of Classroom Inquiry*. Dr. Miller's most recent work includes a chapter on student composition in a private studio setting for Barrett and Stauffer's (2012) book, Narrative Soundings: An Anthology of Narrative Inquiry in Music Education.

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The Visiting Artist in Schools: Arts Based or School Based Practices?

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Abstract

In this article, we discuss some issues raised by the increasing number of comprehensive national programs for visiting school concerts and art events in Norwegian schools. We ask what this increase in activity might mean for the nature of arts education subjects in schools, in particular music, what kind of rationale and philosophy the national art event programs bring to schooling and what challenges this new situation represent for the artists as well as teachers involved. We argue that the lack of school ownership of these practices can be understood in view of a dominating rationale based on romantic aesthetic theories. We also argue that neither education nor the visiting arts programs seem to have adjusted their practices to recent trends in western performance practices and aesthetics and to an educational practice building sufficiently on a pedagogy of relations. We propose then to actively embrace, but also to adapt, the relational turn in both fields, but not uncritically and not in a way that might reduce the meaning and importance of great art, nor the quality of educational

learning and Bildung. We think art and aesthetics as well as education has something to offer in the construction of a new relational arts based pedagogy.

Introduction

In Norway, events and activities in the art field initiated by cultural institutions *and* arts education in schools are increasingly being considered as equally relevant for the education of coming generations. In this article, we discuss some issues raised by the increasing number of comprehensive national programs for visiting school concerts and art events in Norwegian schools. We ask what this increase in activity might mean for the nature of arts education in schools, in particular music, what kind of rationale and philosophy the national art event programs bring to schooling and what challenges this new situation represent for the artists as well as teachers involved. In addition to our experience and situated knowledge about the Norwegian context, our discussion is triggered by findings from a close study of four school concert program processes in their making as well as on observation of a great number of visiting practices in schools. This background study is also the empirical part of the first author's PhD project, where the second author is her supervisor.

Findings in the first author's study suggest that visiting school concerts and their artists are deeply grounded in what we call an artwork-based approach in their conceptions of educational quality practices. A piece of music/artwork is not only the starting point for the visiting artist, but also seems to be the very nexus of the arts program preparation for school visits as well as its implementation. We discuss some historical as well as sociological reasons for these findings, arguing that this aspect of visiting artist practices creates challenges for school ownership, as well as for integration of the visiting programs into learning and everyday school education programs. We argue that the lack of school ownership of these practices can be understood in view of a dominating rationale based on romantic aesthetic theories. We also argue that neither education nor the visiting arts programs seem to have adjusted their practices to recent trends in western performance practices and aesthetics and to an educational practice building sufficiently on a pedagogy of relations (Noddings, 1992; Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004; Biesta 2004). We conclude by suggesting that the dominating rationale and practices of arts education subjects in schools as well as visiting artist programs needs to be supplemented by aesthetical and educational theories and practices that are more genuinely partnership-oriented and relational in kind than today's mainstream practices.

Background

The national School Concert program in Norway, administered by "Nor- Concert" (Rikskonsertene) and the Culture department, has this year been running for more than four

decades in Norway. Since the conception of the first national program in the late 1960s, the school concert program has increased in volume, new cross arts programs have been introduced and programs have changed and developed in contents as well as in their formations and implementation. However, the underpinning philosophy and rationale for the programs have always been the same: The introduction of art of high quality to young people within the framework of public schooling. Almost every municipality in Norway, approximately 2 997 schools, and 630 000 students between ages 6 and 15, are now visited by artists several times per semester, bringing concerts or art events, most often in the form of a 45 minutes happening. The idea that students in all schools in Norway should be offered access to living music and high quality arts is a political as well as educational decision. However, a number of critics have claimed that the programs, despite these basic intentions, never have become a natural part of everyday school educational life. In the study serving as the empirical background for this article, the research focus has been threefold: 1) to examine the quality conceptions of musicians and producers in the production of school concerts and how such conceptions are constructed; 2) to examine in which ways and to what extent quality conceptions in the artistic field interacts with quality conceptions of educational practices, and 3) how existing conceptions of quality in visiting arts teacher practices can be challenged and developed.

Methodology

The first author's study is an observation study of 4 production processes randomly chosen among Nor-Concert's 2010/2011 touring program. Observation was connected to casting, specific production processes for each concert, and student reception of the concerts in schools. Data include field notes, video films, sound recordings and 12 semi-structured interviews with musicians, producers, and teachers. The teachers interviewed were all experienced music teachers because quality conceptions were a major topic. A major intention in the design of the study was to focus on musicians' and producers' conceptions of quality in school concert productions, and how these conceptions of quality were manifested in processes, communication and implementation of the programs. Analysis of relevant documents, such as curriculum documents, political documents and working documents within the Nor-Concert organization is also part of the relevant data.

Our Position and Background

The evaluative aspect of our discussion makes it crucial to expose our own educational and artistic values and experiences- in short our positions in education as well as aesthetics. Both of us, a PhD student and her supervisor, are now based in music education, but with very different and to some extent complimentary experiences and practices which include musician practices, school concert producer practices, evaluation practices and music education

research practices. Thus, we have our professional experience mainly from the educational, but also to some extent from the artistic field. Our specialities are art program production and research into music education classroom curriculum methodologies and practices. Important theory inspiring our position and lenses are socio cultural theory, e.g. Bourdieu's contribution to the field (field, habitus, capital, definitional power and doxa (Bourdieu, 1979/1995), progressive education (Dewey, 1939/1998, 1916/2004) and Bildung theories (Klafki, 1963, 2000). We are very familiar with 19-century aesthetic theory, e.g. (David Hume (1711-76), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) and recently inspired by relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998/2002) and relational pedagogy (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004).

Quality Concepts as A Nexus for Understanding Practices

In the first author's work as a program producer, the concept of "quality" was always present, - in open peer discussions as well as a sort of a tacit consensus, probably with different meanings and understanding. Quality is a contextual concept. To talk about quality as a general phenomenon is not only difficult, but according to Wittgenstein (1953/2001), meaningless. The concept of quality in practices can only be meaningful with reference to specific practices. Quality has a sort of double contextuality, because different cultures and discourses often have different values corresponding with the life world different individuals inhabit (Dahler-Larsen, 2008). Quality also has different levels, e.g. when someone within the educational field will reject the whole notion of visiting artists in schools, whereas others might start a discussion on a different level and focus on criteria for quality in such practices. Langstedt, Hannah and Larsen (2003) label these two levels in quality conception "consensus level" and "conflict level". When operating on a consensus level, quality discussion might be meaningless because of lacking consensus about the *value* of a phenomenon. To discuss quality constructively, one needs to operate on the conflict level and leave the first level in agreement about the value of the phenomenon. It is only when agreement about the values is reached that different views on what makes practices good or less good, how they can be measured and how they should change to reach the highest possible quality, can meaning take place (Langstedt, Hannah, & Larsen, 2003).

We do think the educational field and the artistic field in the Norwegian context have established a consensus about the value of school concert programs and visiting teaching artists to some extent, and this is certainly the case at a political level. But we are uncertain as to whether this has taken place among its agents, teachers and artists, operating in schools. However, we are convinced that certain groups of experienced music teachers and artist musicians have established such a consensus through their views on school concerts as Bildung (Klafki, 2011).

Vignette

The two boys are first year students, 5 or 6 years of age and in their first school concert in the gymhall. They sit together with their teacher. She touches their shoulder gently when they turn around to talk to peers, helping them to focus by whispering in their ears. The smallest one is gently being silenced when talking. He has lost attention now, but tries to concentrate and return to what is happening on stage. The teacher is busy, stops student movements, keep turning student heads towards the stage, but approaches her task in a very quiet and almost unnoticeable way. The piece is quite long and complicated, really stretching patience and attention. But the boys seem genuinely interested from time to time, trying to understand and find meaning. The whole situation tells them that this is what we do in school, this is what the teacher wants us to do, and this is what big schoolboys do, even if it is hard(Fieldnote/description based on video from concert situation)

Teachers as well as musicians seem convinced "stretching" is necessary to achieve a rich experience during the concert. This is different from the usual experience commercial popular culture is able to offer. Both groups want the school concert to represent values as well as an experience, which can engage the students beyond cognitive understanding and appreciation. In an American study, teachers interviewed by Bresler (2010) used the concept of "stretching" to describe attempts at opening up and widening the educational experience when involving the arts.

Findings in the Norwegian study in question here modifies Bresler's finding somewhat because musician artists believe and hope that this "stretching" is possible through a mere presentation of serious art music for a child audience, whereas the teachers in the study point out that an added prerequisite is that the music as well as the communication in the situation must be contextualized and be close enough to the world of the school and the students to fully be a platform for meaningful communication and education.

Triggered by these findings in the first author's study, we suggest that there is a missing consensus about quality concepts that is paradigmatic by nature between what might be labelled an art paradigm and an education paradigm, where the major goal of the first one is the communication and transmission of the art work and the accompanying artistic experience. We have observed that, in our work experience as well as in the first author's PhD-study, that the major goal of teachers co-operating with artists is "learning", but also "entertainment", where the concerts' function as relief and variation in a busy school day is openly and positively welcomed. In a recent national evaluative study of the quality of arts subjects and visiting arts programme in Norwegian schools, Anne Bamford (2012) found that teachers' attitude to these activities could be described as "cosy arts", and that such an attitude

seems to be typical for arts activities in Norwegian schools. She writes, “The intrinsic aims of the arts are highly valued in Norway, in particular, a sort of ‘cosy’ (‘koseleg’) feeling that stresses fun, enjoyment, and pride” (Bamford, 2012, p. 8).

When a national study presents the main finding as “cosy arts”, something that is a bit strange, a bit exciting, and a little funny, questions need to be asked connecting this finding to quality conceptions of art among teachers and the role and position of accountability measures in schools. Accountability does not normally affect the arts in a positive way and Norwegian schooling is no exception. In Norwegian teacher education, arts subjects are being marginalised and statistics on arts subjects’ competence in schools show very low levels. Consequences might very well be that teachers choose the easiest way and regard the concert and the visiting artist as an easily added value and a break away from school routine. At the same time they see the value of it, but are unable to utilize its full potential in educational follow up or preparation. The doxa (Bourdieu 1979/1995) of the musicians on the other hand, focus on the performative mediation and communication going on during the 45-minute visits. Their focus is not on the contextual and longitudinal aspect of their activity. Teachers and musicians therefore, both celebrate the concert- but for very different reasons- as an important event, but *not* connected to everyday educational life.

In the first author’s study, we find that many musicians seem to be obsessed by a strong urge to transmit the artwork as art per se and with a basic conviction, *illusio* (Bourdieu, 1995, p. 227), that the magic of the artwork in itself will create the intended experience in the recipients, i.e. the students. This conviction seems to be based on romantic aesthetics of the 19 century established by Kant (1790/1995) and his followers, Hanslick (1854/2002) and others. Within a paradigm framed by a romantic aesthetic rationale, the focus is not primarily on learning or contextual elements, but on the pure experience established through a presentation and performance, which is true to the essence of the artwork.

Several of the musicians in the first author’s PhD study seem to base their quality conception on this conviction without reflecting on whether their audience have understood their conception of quality or whether the concert is meaningful for the audience. Some of the musicians seem to mean that a pure mediation of the music, i.e. musicians’ performance and students listening copying a concert hall format, is the most efficient format for an aesthetic experience. They sometimes oppose the inclusion of student movement, dance or drumming in the concert because this might endanger the artistic value and the experiential aesthetics of the situation. Teachers seem to give away their definitional power in these matters, accepting that the artist is the sole decision maker. Not even very experienced music teachers, even though they point out the importance of contexts, look at themselves as competent enough to take active part in production decisions, selection of music and aspects of the performance.

This means that teachers are socialised into the dominating aesthetics of visiting artists: artistic and aesthetic decisions overrule educational and contextual aspects.

The Arts and Recent Trends in Educational Philosophy

The Arts have a long history of interacting with education and the discussion of what role and qualities artists might bring to education have surfaced from time to time. One hundred years ago, in what can be labelled as the pioneering stage of modern music education in schools, professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music, London, Stewart Macpherson, suggested that the artist musician working in schools:

...has, with the impatience of rule and method somewhat characteristic of the artistic temperament, been inclined to trouble himself little, and to care less, about such matters as the scientific presentation of the facts he has been called upon to impart to his pupils or the psychology of the "human" boy or girl it has been his duty to teach. (Macpherson, 1916, p. 6)

Closer to our own time, a number of writers have pointed to qualities inhabited by artists and observable in artistic practices as particularly suited for teaching and the teacher's profession, e.g. improvisational skills. Beginning in the 80s, several educators explored improvisation within a metaphor of teaching as performance emphasizing the artistry of teaching (e.g. Timponson and Tobin 1982; Eisner 1983; Sarason 1999). Eisner (1979) argued early in his career that teaching is an art in four ways, pointing out: 1) the similarity of a classroom to an aesthetic art space; 2) teaching skill as the ability to respond during a course of action; 3) the teachers' ability to avoid routine and respond creatively to the unique contingencies of each classroom, and 4) the teachers' ability to achieve emergent ends rather than predetermined ends. Sawyer (2011) pays tribute to the theories of these scholars and the aesthetic dimension of teaching, but argues that the teacher as a performing artist metaphor "has severe problems" (p. 4). The focus on "art" he says, neglects the large body of structures that underlie teacher expertise. Sawyer argues that teaching as performance metaphor needs to be extended towards a metaphor underlining *teaching as an artful balance of structure and improvisation*.

Aesthetic Learning Processes

In Scandinavia, there has over the past years, been an increasing focus on *aesthetic learning processes* suggesting that the nature of such processes are different from learning processes in general. The advocates of aesthetic learning processes are based both in general education and within arts education (e.g. Austring & Sørensen, 2006; Høhr & Pedersen, 1996; Sæbø 2005; Selander, Lindstrand & Thorsnes, 2010; Illeris, 2006). Austring & Sørensen (2006) describe three different kinds of learning processes: 1) the empirical learning process, which is

described as the students direct meeting with the world; 2) the discursive learning process, which they call the theoretical – representational meeting with the world, and 3) the aesthetic learning process which is described as the child’s aesthetic- symbolical meeting with the world. These three learning processes are not separate, but weaved together. They follow us throughout life as tools to interpret, process and participate in the world. An aesthetic learning process is according to Austring & Sørensen (2006, p. 100) characterized by:

A way of learning where the individual during the process of expressing him/herself in a culturally transmitted multimodal language of forms, appropriates this language at the same time as it is used to process her/his own reality (*our translation*)

Comparing Austring & Sørensen’s conception of aesthetic learning processes to other well established theories of learning, e.g. a constructivist learning theory (e.g. Vygotsky, 1978) or a progressivist learning theory (e.g. Dewey, 1902, 1916), a common denominator seems to be the position of ”impression” and ”expression” as continuous, holistic, contextual and interactive elements of the learning process. Moreover, aesthetic learning processes are very often described as being arts dependant, where the multimodal elements of the arts in the form of multisensory and bodily experience and expression characterize the learning process. Applied on art events in schools, e.g. school concerts, a mere presentation of a work of art, no matter how well performed, might therefore seem inadequate in its quest to release the learning potential of the situation in question.

Bildung Theories

The history of modern ”Bildung” theories has a long tradition in Europe reaching back to 16th century theorists such as Humboldt (1767-1835), Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Herbart (1776-1841). The concept of Bildung as conceived in its origin has close connections to concepts of ”quality”. The 18th century brought about a concept of ”Bildung” which connected the concept to privileges of the upper class and a development of canons of subjects, work of arts, and cultural codes. This concept of Bildung is characterized by ”good taste”, being familiar with western scientific knowledge and the right works of art (Janck & Meyer, 2009). The classical concept of ”Bildung” was grounded in the enlightenment and implied training and education in responsibility, self-regulation and solidarity with a goal of emancipation as well as social and cultural learning (Klafki, 2011).

Both concepts of ”Bildung” include learning as an important element. If listening to school concerts can be seen as ”Bildung”, the mere listening to concerts can be seen as a learning activity. This conception of musical learning through listening was legitimized through the so-called ”music appreciation movement” in the first part of the 20th century and further developed to adapt to progressive ideas about interaction and pupil activity by including

“mental activity” as a learning prerequisite during music listening (Scholes, 1935; Espeland, 2011).

The “Bildung” concept of the enlightenment since 1959 has been reintroduced and further developed by Wolfgang Klafki (2011). In Scandinavia, this re-introduction has been successful to such a degree that it seems to have replaced progressivism as the most influential philosophy of education. Klafki underlines that “Bildung” has an objective and material aspect, which presents us with a spiritual as well as natural reality, and a subjective and formal side, which frames our options to open up, reflect and act in relation to different aspects of reality. His theory of learning describes three different kinds of processes: 1) a process where the essential learning is *formal*, inviting such learning activities as project work and information processing; 2) a process where learning is based on the *material*, focussed on the qualities of the cultural artefacts in question, and a 3) a process where learning is categorical, which represents a fusion of the other two opening up to the formation of categories helping us to experience, develop and control ourselves and the world. Although favouring the categorical variant of learning, Klafki underlines that conceptions of quality in learning processes have a material aspect by reinstating the material and objective aspect of learning processes, in our case the work of art, which cannot be anything, but needs to be selected very carefully.

A Pedagogy of Relations

A dominating characteristic in our time suggests that human beings are autonomous, rational, and independent individuals, and to us this existential aspect of western societies seems to be mirrored in the mainstream of global education, in short, an individualistic conception of life, education and learning. But this individualistic conception is also being strongly challenged by modern science. From psychology, Kenneth Gergen (2009) claims that human beings constantly and continuously exist in relational processes, and that purely subjective experience is non-existent because they always are based on one or more human relations. Gergen’s relational view indicates a view of human identity as culturally constructed, but at the same time as an individual with thoughts, feelings and actions that continuously relates to and plays along with the relational participatory life of others and groups.

From neuroscience, Susan Greenfield (2011) opens her book, “You and Me: the neuroscience of identity” by quoting Oscar Wilde’s “Most people are other people”, opposing his famous line and celebrating the uniqueness of the individual. Even so, she claims that this uniqueness is shaped through relations and connections, not only in real life but also in the way the brain (and mind) works:

...that the biological basis of the mind is the personalisation of the brain through unique dynamic configurations of neuronal *connections*, driven by unique experiences (Greenfield, 2011, p. 57)

Greenfield (2011) explain consciousness as constantly changing neuronal assemblies and claims that the very relational structure of the brain with all its synapses, transmitters and connectivity is mirrored in how identity, and learning, is formed and developed. This connectivity she claims, this awareness of how a person or object or action relate to other people or objects or actions, is what can be “viewed as understanding” (p.79).

This relational turn, as we may call it, in psychology and neuroscience, is echoed in Gert Biesta’s (2004) thinking about what education really is. He claims, not surprisingly, that the idea that education is an interaction “...between the (activities of the) educator and (the activities of the) one being educated is, as such, a sound idea”. And he goes on to say,

It shows that education is basically a *relationship* between an educator and the one being educated. But in order to understand the precise nature of the educational relationship, we should take the idea that education consists of the interaction between the teacher and learner absolutely seriously. We should take it in its most literal sense. If we do so, it follows that education is located not in the activities of the teacher, nor in the activities of the learner, but in the interaction between the two. Education, in other words, takes place in the gap between the teacher and the learner. (Biesta cited in Bingham and Sidorkin, 2004, pp. 12-13)

Seen through relational lenses, education and learning must mean that teachers and students participate in each others lives, and it must mean that a major goal of education is to achieve quality learning at the same time as enabling students to develop and release their potential for taking part in relational processes locally as well as globally. To teach as well as to learn means to participate in each other’s educational practices.

Proponents of a relational pedagogy claims that a “fog of forgetfulness is looming over education” and that a pedagogy of relations represents a new and alternative way to existing mainstreams that they label “traditionalists” and “progressivists” (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004, p. 3) This solution, they claim, “relies on neither brute force of exclusion nor on romantic expectations”. “Schools”, they claim, “must focus on human relations and address the core of the problem” (p. 6).

In their anthology, Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) offer a manifesto of relational pedagogy along with a number of writers who offer contributions of what a relational pedagogy might mean, as well as critique. According to these writers a relational pedagogy implies that:

A relation is more real than the things it brings together. Human beings and non-human things acquire reality in relation to other beings and things.

The self is a knot in the web of multiple intersecting relations: Pull relations out of the web, and find no self. We do not have relations, relations have us.

Authority and knowledge is not something one has, but relations, which require others to enact.

Educational relation is different from any other, its nature is transitional. Educational relation exist to include the student in a wider web of relations beyond the limits of the educational relation.

Relations are not necessarily good: Human relationally is not an ethical value. Domination is as relational as love. (pp. 6-7)

With a relational conception of education and pedagogy, learning cannot be conceived of as a fully individual process, but as an interactive relational journey. However, the concepts of relations and relationships harbour a number of complexities and challenges, which can be described along a continuum of contrasts, such as authority and democracy, structure and freedom, and variation and consistency. Relational pedagogy therefore, is not an easy solution to educational challenges in a global education atmosphere characterized by individual achievement and accountability. Seen as a new educational rationale for music education, it fits well with what we described as aesthetic learning processes because such processes are holistic, interactive, and action oriented in their nature. It is also possible to make connections to Bildung theory because the process of Bildung is communal by nature and is in many ways *categorical* in its quest for self-regulation and transfer of learning to a relational life world (Janck & Meyer, 2006). However, the connections and relations are not as obvious when it comes to the positions of objects and artefacts, and the educational potential and magic of specific art works.

If applied to visiting artist practices in schools, the meeting of the audience (here students and teachers) and the artist will create a potential relational space where those present bring their contexts as contributions to a communal event. The intention of this event is a shared

experience for all, more than a monological relationship where the work of art is transmitted “down” to the audience by means of some magic and objective qualities in the art work. As art educators, however, we are not ready to abandon the magic of great works of art as a vehicle for meaningful educational practices and learning processes. To us therefore, relational pedagogy is not complete before relations to high quality objects and artefacts, in Bildung terms, the material, is included as a legitimate and enriching element of a pedagogy of relations. We shall return to this question towards the end of the article. For now, let us first turn to recent trends in the performing arts.

Arts Based Practises on the Move

A very interesting development from an educational point of view has in the last decades taken place within the arts themselves. Arts institutions in western societies and gradually also in Norway, seem to be in a process of changing their views on audiences and in particular young people. This, however, is not solely an audience recruitment driven movement, but also something that is looked at as beneficial for the artists and art itself. The pedagogical turn in community arts, performative art and aesthetics, relational aesthetics, and the teaching artist movement represent art practices, which can be viewed as an expression of a new trend within the art field towards a more active role in peoples’ everyday life, including education.

This is not a new development but started nearly 100 years ago with Duchamp’s sculpture “Fountain” in 1917 (de Duve, 2003) and it seems to have diverted quality concepts in the arts somewhat away from qualities in the work of art itself as an object, towards what kind of relations an art project may release and maintain. The underpinning theories of what we might call “the relational turn” in the arts seem to contribute to break down the dichotomies between art and artists on the one hand and teachers, students, and audience on the other hand, at the same time as the position of art and the artists are not being devalued or radically changed as such. Art and artists remain within the art world, but is allowed in the name of the artistic process to move away from the ivory tower and become a signifier for something more than “disinterested judgement” (Kant, 1790/1995). In the following, we shall take a brief look into the rationale of the relational turn in arts practices.

Performative Aesthetics

The performative work of art, which originated within theatre performance, is connected to an event, Ereignis (Fischer-Lichte, 2008), which takes place at a certain time in a given space and with specifics groups of people on stage and in the audience. The audience is given a central role in the performance, and in this way the original piece of art, whether it be a theatre performance or a concert, is transformed into an event that is not fully produced until the audience has contributed. The central mechanism of the performative event is the *feedback*

loop, which takes at its starting point that the audience and the artists are part of a communal event where they share room and space. A dialogue is started between the participants, which triggers a response, and the audience and the artists “talk” verbally or non-verbally with each other, thus activating the feedback loops (Fisher-Lichte, 2008). A flexible and improvisation oriented performance evolves, something which destabilizes the traditional dichotomy of sender and receiver. This gives the receiver more power, but also more responsibility for the event and the sender (the artist) is more of a *transformer* operating from the original work. The audience dialogue and her/his input becomes a transmitter of a specific piece of art.

It is possible to view this process as a learning process with Bildung theory lenses focussing on the development of personal and collective responsibility as well as with lenses grounded in relational pedagogy focussing on shared practices and an expanding network of relations crucial to understanding and learning of whatever can be learnt in such a process. What might seem haphazard and accidental during these arts events however, is not necessarily the case. Thygesen (2009) also underlines that the rationale for performative aesthetic events allows the existence of stage directions and an artistic production plan, and that the artists are strategically agents in their initiatives towards the audience. The criteria for artistic quality, however, as well as the very conception of quality, become very different from events framed by traditional receptive aesthetics, e.g. by focussing on the quality of the interactive process.

Relational Aesthetics

In 1997, the French curator, Nicholas Bourriaud, published a collection of essays he called *Esthétique Relationnelle* followed by his book on relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998/2002). Based on his curating practices and the development in performance art, Bourriaud (1998/2002) offers a radical conception of what art is. “Artistic activity” he writes,

...is a game, whose forms, patterns and functions develop and evolve according to periods and social contexts; it is not an immutable essence (p. 11).

Bourriaud’s conception of what art is and what a change in our conception of art might mean is not new. Already Umberto Eco (1989) in his essay on the poetics of the open work suggests the new potentials of such a change. “The poetics of the ‘work in movement’ (and partly that of the open work)” he writes,

...sets in motion a new cycle of relations between the artist and his audience, a new mechanics of aesthetic perception, a different status for the artistic product in contemporary society. It opens a new page in sociology and in pedagogy, as well as a new chapter in the history of art. It poses new practical problems by organizing new

communicative situations. In short, it installs a new relationship between the contemplation and the utilization of a work of art (pp. 22-23).

The focus of art as conceived through the lenses of relational aesthetics is moved from the piece of art itself to what it means for the *participants* (this is what audiences and performers are called). The relational musician then, initiates communication and becomes a connecting transmitter of energy to a piece of art that evolves through co-action with the involved. The participants are the main persons in relational art, and art becomes art in the social space. The artwork, as we traditionally know it, is no longer the centre of attention, or it can be a starting point or the realisation of an artistic idea. This means that the art event no longer is framed by a specific time or a specific space as in performative aesthetics, but can have any time frame, take place anywhere and in any kind of relation. It is the relation that *is* the piece of art. Relational art can involve participants who do not know each other, but the process involved may in itself lead to this kind of relations. A summary of Bourriaud's description of the basic principles of relational aesthetics may look as follows:

Art lies in human interaction and its social context rather than in a free and symbolic domain.

Art is a meeting and artistic meaning is developed "collectively".

Rather than a one-to one relationship between the individual and the piece of art, art is situations where the audience create a community

Newness in the form of an artefact is no longer an important criterion

The role of art is no longer to fill utopian and imaginary realities, but to be a form of life and a model of agency in the world

Form can be defined as a continuous meeting, - formations rather than form and artistic form only exists when it contains human interaction (Bourriaud, 1998/2002).

Compared to art theories and aesthetics of the 19th century, relational aesthetics is radical by nature, and has of course not escaped criticism. The critics (Bishop, 2004; Kester, 2004) admit that Bourriaud has been an efficient spokesman for contemporary trends in the arts focusing on process, performativity, openness, social contexts, transfer and production of dialogue, and that he has given a rationale for this as an alternative to modern but still traditional object orientation and hyper individualism. The problem of Bourriaud's aesthetics, they claim, is that it does not reach far enough as a social experiment, because the artists as well as the audience

have situated the relational discourse in fine art circles. The participants then are ok with changing the art and the aesthetics, but not society.

To us, however, the most interesting part of relational aesthetics is the way these practices seem to reflect and mirror an *incredible culture of sharing* which increasingly seems to be a global phenomenon. The increasing interest and activity art institutions display for *sharing* underlines the immanent educational potential of all of the arts, namely to reach out, to affect, to entertain, to move, to touch, and thereby educate. What Bourriaud tries to tell us, we think, in his theory of relational aesthetics is that contemporary aesthetics continuously must be redefined to keep its position as a theoretical foundation for contemporary art.

The Educational Turn in Curating

In visual art, the role of the curator has changed from being an archivist to becoming a creative vehicle for the composition of exhibitions and art mediation (O'Neill & Wilson 2010). In some visual art institutions, artists become curators for special occasions. We see some of the same development in theatres where the dramaturgist is more actively involved in the structuring and redefinition of performances creating a setting and context which informs, engages, renews - and educates, we will add. The fact that the different roles of curators, dramaturgists and creative music producers in art production in this way becomes a mixture of artistic and what we would label as educational activity, opens up new perspectives for arts education. This change of roles seems to take place to such an extent that it becomes difficult, sometimes impossible, to define what is artistic and what is educational. In this way, art becomes pedagogy and pedagogy may become art.

Teaching Artists

The teaching artist movement (TA) originated in the U.S. is an established activity with their own journal, website and practices. The reason we bring the phenomenon of TA into focus in this article, is the fact that this movement these days also seem to materialize in Norway, and there are very strong similarities as well as differences between TA programmes and nationally funded art programmes for schools in Norway. Booth (2011) defines a teaching artist (artist educator) as:

...a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills and sensibilities of an educator, who engages people in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts.
(p.1)

Originating in the 1980s when president Reagan removed arts subjects as a compulsory part of school programmes, the resulting vacuum made a number of artists enter school activity on a voluntary basis or sponsored by mentors to remedy the situation. This was a very different

approach for the Norwegian national programmes where art was imported into schools on a visiting basis, and led to a number of creative partnerships where teachers and artists shared long time commitment and working relations (Booth, 2011).

Booth defines TA as a sort of artistic hybrid where some of the basic characteristics is high focus on personal relevance, engagement before information, identify and build on the situational competence, balance process and product, work with the teacher, plan with the school, be curriculum relevant and be artistically updated. Booth (2009) describes artistic experience as "*the capacity to expand the sense of the way the world is or might be*", and he underlines that this description is very similar to a description of what learning is (p. 5). TA/community artists are quite widespread in the U.S., but they are not part of national state funded programmes as is the case in Norway. If schools in the U.S. are part of such arrangements, it depends on school and community interest and opportunity rather than a state-provided educational and art-based service. Deasy and Stevenson (2005) refer to such arts based practices as a third way to learning.

The Norwegian model is based on a democratic concept securing access for everyone to art. All schools *have to* receive a certain number of visits by artists and programmes whether they like it or not. A major finding in the first author's study, as pointed out earlier in this article, is that the art field and the artist have the definitional power of this activity for many reasons, maybe first of all because of the structural framework of the national programmes and their "pay a visit" (usually 45 minutes) character, but also because the artistic competence inhabited by artists is given greater value from politicians than the competence of the teacher. In this way, the Norwegian model secures a sort of quantitative fairness, but not shared responsibility, shared definitional power, shared implementation of the artistic event, and shared planning. We argue that this lack of sharing is a major and fundamental weakness of the Norwegian model, that is; if the intention is to create quality practices where learning and education is just as important as the transmission of art. This explains, in our view, the lack of school ownership in the Norwegian model and the lack of influence on schools' everyday life: And what is more; it threatens to undermine what art is all about and reduce it to mere entertainment.

Towards a New Relational Arts Based Pedagogy

As we see it, the artistic and the educational fields have never been closer to a common and shared philosophy, be it artistically or educationally, about questions concerning audiences, present and future, and about the educational value of the arts as a foundation for sustainable and democratic societies. What remains, however, is to see to what extent art institutions as well as schools are willing or ready to adopt the change from a work-based focus towards the relational in their respective and shared practices. We are not saying that these changes do not

take place, but to what extent is it a conscious and willing choice based on new rationale? What we propose then, is to actively embrace, but also to adapt, the relational turn in both fields, but not uncritically and not in a way that might reduce the meaning and importance of great art, nor the quality of educational learning and Bildung. We think art and aesthetics as well as education has something to offer in the construction of a new relational arts based pedagogy. Crucial questions in such a change of philosophy and practice for the art field are: How will the practice of a “relational musician” be different from a work-oriented musician? What basic attitudes and rationale will be the starting point for the development of relational practices, and how will such practices be shaped and unfold in various contexts? How can it lead to categorical Bildung (Klafki) in the generations to come?

The other field, education, also needs to adopt the change. Even if artists become more relational and more inclined towards working in longer and integrative partnerships, what will happen if they generally meet teachers without aesthetic experience and competence and with little understanding of the importance of creative and aesthetic learning processes?

When comparing U.S. based practices as described above with the Norwegian model, it is a paradox, that the established Norwegian model with a *for all* philosophy as its basis seems to harbor an underpinning rationale and practice resulting in lack of school ownership for art programs, whereas the U.S. model with a ‘for the selected few’ philosophy (perhaps not intended, but still in reality so), seems to harbor a more relations based philosophy, at least in a number of cases resulting in school embracement, involvement and ownership far beyond a 45 minute visit.

If asking what this means for arts education subjects in schools, we think teacher training institutions need to insist on the arts as a compulsory part of a basic teacher education, not only because the educational potential of this field for learning in, but also far beyond the subjects themselves. However, they also need to realize that education in the 21st century no longer is the sole responsibility for schools and educational institutions. It is already a shared practice between a number of agents, institutions and organizations, and to meet this situation, the educational field needs to adopt the relational turn in their own practices by actively involving themselves with art institutions and organizations in a quest for re-investing in arts education as a shared practice (Dwyer, 2011).

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Helper, Guard or Mediator? Teachers' Space for Action in *The Cultural Rucksack*, a Norwegian National Program for Arts and Culture in Schools

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Abstract

Arts encounters in schools are often portrayed as encounters between art/artists and children. However, in such encounters, teachers are most often involved. The study presented discusses teachers' experiences with and space for action within The Cultural Rucksack; a national program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools. Observations and qualitative interviews show, on one hand, that teachers are pleased that students and teachers are able to enjoy professional arts and culture at school. On the other hand, a series of dilemmas, challenges and tensions are evident in the teachers' statements and actions. The teachers statements about the programme are characterized by a positive attitude, still, the teachers state that they lack of influence over the programme. A perceived twosomeness between artists and students makes the teachers almost redundant as teachers. As a result, teachers have to position themselves in other ways to regain a place within the programme; as artists' helpers, students' guards, or as mediators between artists and students. The study presented is

part of a three-year national and interdisciplinary research project on The Cultural Rucksack that was commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture.

Introduction

It is audition time for roles in the annual 7th grade school opera. Around ten students, both girls and boys, are sitting under the window in the music room - nervous and excited at the same time. They have prepared a text to read and a song to sing. One by one, the students are called to the front of the room, where three instructors – an actor, a musician and a costume designer – are sitting behind a table, ready to observe and evaluate the students' performances. They tell the students to perform the texts and the songs in different ways and with different expressions: "Sing it like you are a mean person!", "Please read the text as if you were drunk". Some students are nervous; some are embarrassed; while others seem to flourish under the pressure. Students who are unprepared, who take too much time, who make excuses for themselves, or who argue with the instructors, are given feedback in a direct, but not crude manner: "I understand that you have caught a cold, and that you find it difficult to sing, but you cannot say that to the audience in two weeks, can you?" In the meantime, the students' class teacher, who is also a music teacher, sits in the back of the room with a blank expression. He has some papers on his knee that he keeps looking at. Sometimes he glances at the auditions, sometimes he looks at the sky outside the windows, he even leaves and re-enters the room several times during the auditions.

Arts encounters in schools are often portrayed as encounters between art/artists and children. However, as the above example shows, there are also teachers involved in these situations. What, then, are the teachers supposed to do during these encounters? What is expected from them? How are teachers perceived, and how do they perceive themselves and their space for action in such contexts?

Such questions form the basis for the study presented, which has been investigating teachers' work within The Cultural Rucksack program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools. In this article, I will present and discuss the teachers' experiences with this program and the teachers' perception of their space for action within the program. Observations and qualitative interviews show, on one hand, that teachers are pleased that students and teachers are able to enjoy professional arts and culture at school. On the other hand, a series of dilemmas, challenges and tensions are evident in the teachers' statements and actions. It is essential to examine these in order to undertake a fundamental discussion of the program and of arts and culture for children, The Cultural Rucksack, as an educational and cultural political project will be considered, as well as possible implications it has for arts education in schools.

About The Cultural Rucksack and the Study

The Cultural Rucksack (TCR) is a national program for arts and culture in Norwegian schools, the aim of which is to give all children access to professional artistic and cultural productions of high quality, to enhance experience of and understanding of culture in all its forms, and to make TCR (and therefore arts and culture) a natural part of everyday life in schools. A TCR production typically involves artists visiting schools, or students and teachers attending public events like concerts, exhibitions, and plays during school hours. The program is intended to support the learning goals of the curriculum, and it is supposed to supplement, not replace, arts education (KKD, 2007, p. 23).

The program is a collaboration between the Ministries of Culture and Education; it is financed by the Ministry of Culture, and implemented in the domain of the Ministry of Education. The foundation of the program was laid in the 1990s, when a series of culture policy reports on arts and culture for children were published in Norway. This led to various local arts and culture initiatives, which were eventually transformed into a national program. TCR was implemented for classes 1-10 in 2001, and for upper secondary schools in 2009, thereby encompassing all students age 6-19 in Norwegian schools. There have been several evaluations of the program. The 2006 evaluation was the most extensive and also the most controversial, pinpointing tensions between the sectors of education and culture, criticizing TCR productions for being too monological, and calling for more involvement of teachers in the program (Borgen & Brandt, 2006).

The study presented in this article is one of several carried out in a three-year national research project (2010-2013) that was commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, and executed by researchers from Uni Rokkan Centre and Bergen University College. The research project as whole has been inter-disciplinary, involving four senior researchers and eight master students from different fields, and including a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as topics. The researchers' mandate was to do independent, critical and empirical research on the TCR program, focusing on the TCR agents' perspectives, especially those of participants in the schools (Breivik & Christophersen, 2012).

The study is a qualitative interview study focusing on teachers. A total of seven individual interviews and one group interview were conducted, all of which were semi-structured. Five primary school teachers and four lower-secondary school teachers, from four different municipalities in two counties, were interviewed. The counties and municipalities were specified beforehand in the national research project. Within each municipality, schools and productions were randomly selected, the most important criteria being that it was possible to attend a TCR production at the school. The criteria for teachers sought to ensure even gender

distribution, a variety of subject backgrounds, and number of years of teaching experience. In addition, an even distribution between regular teachers and so-called “culture contacts¹” was sought. All interviews were conducted at the schools, most of them following TCR productions, which the researcher attended along with teachers and students at the school.

“The Teachers Need to be More Positive!”

There are many examples of negative statements about teachers in the research material from other studies in the project. Producers, bureaucrats, politicians and artists have eagerly articulated opinions about teachers and their involvement in arts encounters for students. For instance, in a public debate meeting about TCR, a representative for a large culture organization declared that: “The teachers need to be more positive”. At the same meeting, a leading local culture politician maintained that “the teachers need to do their jobs better”, and a local culture bureaucrat stated that “teachers must cooperate better”. No teachers were present at the meeting.

The researchers have heard tales about teachers who are uninvolved and who do not pay attention to what is happening at the performance; and of upper-secondary school teachers who do not even attend, sending their students to performances without showing up themselves. There were also some reports of poor behavior on the part of attending teachers at performances. For example, some teachers do not pay attention or disturb the performance by actively silencing the students or by talking on the phone or with other teachers, and some teachers are said to meddle too much. According to one of the artist’s interviewed, “You just feel feeble if teachers are completely uninterested; when they enter the room, sit down, lean back and sleep. Then you really can’t expect an enormous engagement from the students either”. In a tenth anniversary TCR publication, several artists write that they do not feel welcome at schools when the schools have forgotten that they are coming, when the assembly room has not been rigged according to specifications, or when there is nobody there to welcome them with a smile and a cup of coffee (Norsk Kulturråd, 2011). Project data reveals that when teachers are mentioned, they are systematically mentioned in a negative way. Other TCR researchers have also pointed this out in their research: “From the interviews, it is our impression that the teachers are made responsible for ‘all that goes wrong’” (Borgen & Brandt, 2008, p. 88). It seems to be a fair conclusion that teachers are not highly regarded by

¹ Each school has a so-called “culture contact”. This is the TCR person, who communicates with the local TCR administration, and who provides the school and the teachers with information about TCR and TCR productions. This person is most often one of the teachers, but he/she could also be in the school administration.

other stakeholders in TCR, and that the main criticism of the teachers is of their lack of cooperation, involvement and enthusiasm.

However, when teachers are asked directly, they express a very positive attitude towards TCR. This is shown by previous research (Haugsevje & Haugsevje, 2002; Røyseng & Aslaksen, 2003; Lidèn, 2004; Borgen & Brandt, 2006), and corroborated by our research. Responses to our 2010 survey of principals and TCR contact teachers indicates that there is a virtually universal consensus (97%) regarding the importance of letting students meet professional arts in schools, a high degree of consensus that TCR is providing the students with good experiences (90%), and that it does not disrupt the school day (92%) (Rykkja & Homme, in press). This corresponds with statements from the qualitative interviews, in which teachers express an enthusiastic and positive attitude to the program. They consider that TCR makes an important contribution to students' professional, personal and social growth and development, and that it is a good source of inspiration and professional learning for themselves.

During this research project, the researchers have observed teachers who lean back and more or less ignore students' behavior during the performances, as well as teachers who are so eager to discipline the students that they actually disturb the artists' performances. Such an apparent lack of situational discretion can, of course, be provoking, and may be perceived as a lack of respect for the artist at work. On the other hand, one may question some artists' basis for making assumptions about schools and teachers. Most TCR productions are so-called 'hit and run' productions; that is, short performances in a gymnasium, concert hall, theater etc. The artists' comments about teachers are in many cases based on 35-40 minutes encounters, and that leaves little room for taking into account what has happened before the performance, what will happen after it, or the total school context within which the performance takes place. One could therefore argue that the artists' comments about teachers seem to be based on singular events that are taken out of context. These comments may also demonstrate a certain lack of knowledge and respect for the complexity of the teaching profession and school life.

The description of the teacher during the audition for the 7th grade opera exemplifies a situation that can be interpreted in different ways. If the observations of the teacher had been limited to the audition, the impression of the teacher could be that he was uninterested and made little effort to get involved. However, several days of observation revealed a very competent music teacher who had been told by the music instructor not to interfere in the musical processes, but who nevertheless subtly facilitated the event to hinder the visiting musician's lack of experience with school children from becoming a real problem. When asked about this, the teacher said, "I offered to help him in the music room, but he said he didn't need it. But I help him anyway; I have to".

This demonstrates that actions and things that happen can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the circumstances. The different understandings of TCR may be equally correct and reasonable, which derives from hermeneutic principles for interpretation and understanding; there is no way of seeing something from nowhere in particular. There are always different interpretations of every text or situation, and these interpretations are guided by the interpreter's viewpoint and previous experiences (Kjørup, 1996). It may be inevitable that artists and teachers, not to mention researchers, interpret situations differently. In the following, I will present the teachers' descriptions and statements about TCR, thereby showing in more detail how teachers view the program, and its importance and impact. This presentation is a condensation of the interviews, and contains translated quotations from the interviews.

Teachers' Descriptions of The Cultural Rucksack

In their interviews, the teachers expressed their concern about the students' learning, and were very positive to TCR productions that supported general learning goals or the direct learning of the arts. In addition, the teachers stressed that the curricular potential and focus on achievement should not overshadow other educational dimensions. Encounters with arts and culture could support an integrated development in which, to quote the lower-secondary teacher, "students grow as human beings" into "citizens who understand the culture they live in, and who knows where they are coming from".

Acknowledging the importance of listening and contemplating, the teachers still emphasized active participation in which students create their own art or scenic productions that can be displayed or performed, in school or in the local community, for family and friends. Such things were said to produce a sense of ownership, belonging and pride. Teachers stressed that, in order for the arts encounters to have growth potential, the art and the artists had to communicate with students. The teachers did not, however, confuse communication with easily digestible art. Art could challenge the students, but however challenging, it was still important that the artists communicated well with the students, and that they presented their art in ways that were perceived as relevant for students. There should be reciprocity in the arts encounters, according to the teachers: not only should art be made accessible to students, but students must also open up for arts experiences. The teachers therefore emphasized the need to learn good audience behavior. Learning the arts, according to the teachers, requires patience and respect for what is different and unfamiliar: "It is to sit still, listen, watch and let curiosity be provoked, thinking that 'this was really strange, but could it actually be a good thing' ", one teacher stated.

The teachers were very positive to TCR on behalf of the school and teachers. They experienced the arts productions as something out of the ordinary. The sense of the extraordinary could be connected to excursions, or to activities that were otherwise difficult due to the expense or to the requirement for specific artistic expertise. TCR was also considered to make an important contribution to ordinary school activities when productions were connected to the curriculum. However, contrary to the objectives in the mandatory guidelines, TCR productions may go beyond their intended support function. Several teachers reported that productions were used to cover topics in the curriculum in which teachers are less proficient, thereby replacing rather than supporting the school program.

Last, but not least, teachers reported that they were very inspired by working with artists in the classroom. While teachers' competency is broad and covers many fields, artists are highly specialized in a specific field. Collaboration was therefore mentioned as a possibility to learn about the artist's field of knowledge, thereby expanding the teachers' own competency: "It is supplementary training", one teacher said, "you get to see somebody who is very skilled working with your students. That is great!".

There were some inconsistencies in the teachers' interview statements. For instance, the teachers' answers revealed a difference between theory and practice when asked about the preparation and supplementary work required for TCR productions. On the one hand, the teachers emphasized the importance of such work in order to help the students understand unfamiliar arts expressions, to learn correct audience behavior, and to an overall learning and development; aspects that are also emphasized in the mandatory guidelines for TCR (KKD, 2007). On the other hand, when talking about their own part of the work, the teachers' replies indicated that they might not be quite as thorough in their preparations and supplementary work as their statements in general imply. For instance, a primary school teacher said that he had prepared students for the performance "a little bit this week. I had prepared them a little for what was coming. I showed them the picture, and we looked through the songs they were singing" (*italics added*). Several others make similar reservations regarding the degree of preparation. These statements could indicate that the teachers were not preparing the students well enough, or at all; alternatively, the statements can be understood as a statement of general uncertainty as to whether they had done a good enough job.

There were also differences with regard to how different topics were discussed. The teachers gave exhaustive answers when asked about students, the students' relationship to arts, and how the students experienced different arts productions at the school. However, when asked more directly and specifically about TCR, for instance how the program works and if they can suggest any improvement measures, their answers tended to become shorter and vaguer. One answered that he thought "it was a difficult question" and that he "did not know that

organization very well” and another said that she “did not know”. These statements may indicate insecurity. They may also indicate a lack of knowledge about how the program actually works. The teachers in this study reported a general lack of influence over the program and the selection of arts productions, which is consistent with previous research findings (Borgen & Brandt, 2006; Vibe, Evensen, & Hovdhaugen, 2009). One could therefore imagine that the teachers’ lack of insight and ownership may affect their actions and give the appearance of indifference.

The differences and inconsistencies described above raise questions regarding the space for action the teachers have within TCR. Framing this discussion, I will draw upon our findings in the overarching research project (Breivik & Christophersen, in press), and explore some common perceptions of TCR that may impact the teachers’ experienced space for action.

Common perceptions of TCR

Debates on TCR are generally characterized by a strong rhetoric of enthusiasm, and with a frequent use of superlatives: It is “fantastic”, “great”, “a gift”, “magic”, “fun”, “incredible” and so on. Following this enthusiasm, there is a tendency on all levels to under-communicate or even deny objections, tension and conflicts within the program (Breivik & Christophersen, 2012). At the same time, it is very common to describe TCR productions as warm, intimate and happy encounters between artists and students (Aslaksen, 2003). A dyadic relation between artists and students may leave little room for teachers. As pointed out by Digranes (2009), reports on TCR in media tend to describe art as free and groundbreaking, while school and teachers are portrayed in terms of force, hindrance and restraint. Our research shows that this tendency to mention art positively and school negatively is not limited to the media; it seems to be a very common way of describing TCR within the system as well.

On the one hand, TCR is described positively as free from friction; on the other hand, teachers are quite harshly criticized from artists. This gives a rather paradoxical impression. Given the fact that two traditionally distinct sectors are supposed to collaborate on a joint political project, it is reasonable to assume that there may actually be a considerable amount of tension on different levels in the program. The active denial of tension and conflicts between the field of culture and the field of education could be hindering a more interesting debate on how tensions could emerge, and how tensions may influence the program and the participants. For instance, it seems likely that the enthusiasm that surrounds TCR, together with the lack of debate, could be an obstacle for a critical review of the program and its epistemological foundations. Thus, one may also interpret the teachers’ overwhelmingly positive statements about TCR as expressions of political correctness. Adding the perceived dyadic relationship between artists and students to this picture, it creates a rather trivialized perception of both arts and education that may influence the space for action for both artists and teachers.

Enthusiastic portrayals of arts encounters between children and artists as almost entirely meaningful and magic are questionable. First, linking arts to only positive emotions overlooks art's inherent potential to create or recognize other emotions like anger, surprise, or even disgust (Varkøy, 2003). Second, arts encounters are not always necessarily meaningful; they can also be trivial and insignificant. Aasen's (2011) fieldwork among third and fourth graders indicates that in many cases the students experienced the arts encounters of TCR as boring and irrelevant. A philosophical explanation of "boredom" is lack of meaning (Svendsen, 1999). Some arts encounters can therefore be labeled as simply meaningless. Third, the celebration and elevation of TCR encounters as something festive and extraordinary may contribute to a separation of arts and daily life. For instance, Bjørnsen (2011) claims that the art practices of TCR are mainly governed by adult middle-class taste, and therefore quite far from children's preferences and daily lives.

The question of whether arts experiences are connected to inherent qualities in art works and artistic expression, or whether art is subject to material, social and historical conditions, is part of a fundamental philosophical debate about art's nature, which I will not go into here. However, it is a clear objective for TCR to make arts and culture an integrated part of school life, which in turn is a major part of children's daily lives. According to the philosopher and the educator Dewey, it is essential to recover the continuity between art and daily life, so that art can be experienced as relevant, and as an enrichment of human life. Elevating art to the position of something special that is reserved for particular arenas and certain situations will make art into a "beauty parlor of civilization" (Dewey, 1934, p. 344); that is, a replacement for lack of meaning and joy in real life. Enjoying art, therefore, implies that one has to leave one's daily, dull life, and enter the school gymnasium or other arenas for performance and exhibition, and later to return to one's ordinary life. Following Dewey's arguments, TCR productions may function as an indirect comment to the quality (or lack thereof) in children's daily lives and in school life.

These common perceptions of TCR also indicate an apparent separation of experience and learning, which develops into an assumption that artists will handle the experiences, while teachers will deal with learning; the former is exciting and groundbreaking, while the latter is boring and suppressive (Digranes, 2009). In this way, TCR is reduced to an opposition between art and school, aesthetics and pedagogy, the extraordinary and ordinary, and festivity and routine; a situation in which the arts apparently do not contribute to learning and in which learning is without any element of experience. The artist's responsibility can thus be to provide good experiences for the students, while teachers may be supposed to facilitate the encounters between artists and children, and outside of TCR, to deal with the more "serious" learning processes. In the following, I will discuss how such perceptions may contribute to defining a space for action for the teachers.

The Teacher as Helper and Guard

The lower secondary school students were sitting quite still on the floor in the gymnasium during the nu jazz concert. They did not disturb and they politely applauded in all the right places. The students were apparently paying attention to the concert, but there was still much going on between the rows of students on the floor. The concert functioned, therefore, as a coulisse for the students' own play. They had sat down in groups with others that looked like themselves: well-groomed girls wearing makeup, boys with short hair dressed in sportswear, and a group of emos - both boys and girls. The young people were gently pushing and shoving each other, checking out other boys and girls, fixing their hair, whispering to each other - all in a very discrete way. Most of the teachers had placed themselves by the back wall of the room, quite far from the students. One of the teachers was sitting in the very front of the room to one side of the musicians, facing the students. She could hardly see the musicians at all, but had a perfect overview over the students, and she was ready to intervene if necessary. Now and then teachers went up to a group of students, ordering some of the girls to sit up straight, and telling a boy take off his cap.

This example describes a typical TCR performance: The communication is mostly between students and artists, while the teachers stay in the background and off-center. If TCR productions first and foremost are supposed to create warm and intimate encounters between students and artists, there is not much room for the teachers. Even if there are local variations as to how much influence schools and teachers have on the programming and selection of productions, the interviewed teachers in this study reported having little or no influence in such matters. The teachers' statements regarding how they could contribute to such arts encounters and what they actually do in the TCR situation, indicate two possible roles, or subject positions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999; Edley, 2001): Depending on the situation, the teachers can either function as the artist's helpers or as the students' guards.

In workshop-like situations where students are closely collaborating with the artist, the teachers let the artist take charge of the situation and contribute with an extra pair of hands. According to one teacher, "Often, they need some help, the teacher then helps out, it is like being an assistant". Before performances, teachers assist the artists by preparing the students in accordance to instructions from the artists or the producers: They rehearse songs, read poems or stories, study certain paintings, and so on. During performances, however, the teachers become guards, as the example above illustrates. This is also noted by Bresler, Wasser & Hertzog (1997), who, in a study of a dramatic school performance, describe teachers as guardians of children's manners. Likewise, the teachers in the presented TCR study, make sure that pupils behave properly and in accordance with traditional codes of conduct for audiences, thereby showing politeness and respect. Another teacher confirmed this, stating that "During concerts, there is not much we can do, we are just watchdogs".

The twosomeness linking artists and students basically makes the teachers redundant as teachers. This study found that the teachers cope with this redundancy by positioning themselves in other ways, in this case like helpers or guards. Still, these new positions may not be clear and unambiguous regarding how teachers are expected to behave. In a study of classroom teachers visiting Performing Arts Centers with their students, Bresler (2010) notes that teachers could experience conflicting roles as both being an outsider/visitor and also an insider/leader for the students, sub-hosting the event (p. 135). This contrast is apparent also in TCR contexts. It seems to be a rather common view among the interviewed artists and producers in our research “that they (the teachers should) participate, that they are audience” in the same way as the students. The teachers are, however, not an ordinary audience. They are at work, and they are responsible for the children. A primary school teacher maintained that, “This is certainly not free time, because organizing students and controlling them without anyone noticing it, is in many ways easier in the classroom when you are doing the teaching yourself”. As her statement demonstrates, the codes of conduct that apply in schools may be in conflict with the traditional expectations of an audience. When students misbehave, according to one or the other set of rules, teachers must decide, on the spur of the moment, whether to intervene or not, and also in what way. The teacher cited above manages to balance the two sets of rules or conventions by playing the role of guard in such a way as to comply the perceived expectations of her as an ordinary member of the audience. All teachers may not be able to uphold this subtle balance, and some may maintain quiet and order among students in a more boisterous way, or not at all. Our interviews with artists revealed that they perceived both teachers’ controlling behavior and teachers’ lack of control very negatively. According to Aasen (2011), some TCR productions resemble school, meaning that artists assume a quite traditional role as the teacher. However, our interviews with artists indicate that they are only willing to adopt some aspects of teacher behavior, those related to the communication of the arts and art artifacts. The active disciplining of the children seems to be left to the teacher. The teachers are then, seemingly, met with contradictory expectations: They are supposed to be there, but they should not be noticed.

The Teacher as Mediator

Observations of TCR productions and the teachers’ interview statements also show an alternative understanding of the teachers; not as helpers or guards, but as mediators in arts encounters. Highlighting the growth potential in arts encounters, teachers convey a broad notion of education that unites experience and learning, thereby demonstrating a *Bildung* perspective. Growth and development as a human being is a main purpose of the process of *Bildung*, which implies an individual growth process within a community and a society (Gustavsson, 2009; Markussen, 2011). The teachers insist that art, by stimulating curiosity, creativity and reflection, can provide experience and insight that may help the young to pose

and reflect on some of life's biggest questions, such as what does it mean to be a human being, a fellow human being, a citizen, even a citizen of the world?

However, according to the teachers, the realization of arts' educational potential depends on two things: first, it requires work over a long period, perhaps many years and second, it requires the ability to communicate with students to make sure that the art, even though complex and challenging, is presented in ways that make it accessible and relevant for them. In this way, the teachers position themselves as somewhere in-between the artists and the students, "kind of like a connection between artist and children", as one teacher says. The notion of the teacher as a mediator between artist and students requires some reflection². According to Pálsson, "The issue of 'mediation' or 'translation' logically suggests some degree of misunderstanding; if people fully understand each other, there is no need for translation" (Pálsson, 1993, p. 29). So, what could the problems or the misunderstandings be in regard to TCR? In a panel debate on arts for children, an artist stated that, "Arts encounters for children are an encounter between differences". There is no reason to interpret such differences between artists and students as something fundamentally problematic. On the contrary, teachers report that the TCR encounters between the artists and the students seem to be mostly enriching for both parties. However, an example from the previously mentioned opera project in 7th grade may shed further light on the question of differences and misunderstandings. Below is a brief description of the work in the composition group that were working with the musician to create and perform the music for the opera:

The musician struck a friendly chord with the students, and the mood in the music room was good. The musician had high expectations of the students, and it was impressive to see how much better they played after only a couple of days of rehearsals. However, it became clear that the musician treated the students as he would have treated any other musicians, both with regard to his expectations to them and his way of talking to them. He said things like "Remember the accentuated notes in the middle part!", which the students could not understand at all. Several times, the teacher had to intervene and translate the musician's instructions to something that the students could understand, either by explaining with other words, or practically showing the students what the musician could have meant, for instance by singing it for them.

² The notion of "mediation" also touches upon a larger debate concerning arts, school, school art, children's understanding of arts and an alleged pedagogization of arts in schools (Aslaksen, 2003; Bresler, 2003; Juncker, 2003), which I will not address here.

As this example shows, there are some challenges here: The artist is an adult, the students are children; the artist is at work, the student's participation is mandatory. These two parties do not come together accidentally – the encounter is arranged for them. In this encounter, which is expected to contribute to growth, development and insight, their focus is a form of artistic expression in which one party is supposed to be an expert, and the other the learner or experiencer. Connected to the attributed roles as an adult art expert and a younger art novice, there is also a distinction between a highly specialized abstract language, and a concrete, lay language (Borgen, 2001; Kvile, 2011). This is very apparent in the example above, where the musician used abstract and specific professional terms, and the teacher translated these to everyday words for the students, thereby closing the gap between the students and the musical expression that was created by the musician's expert language. As Hannerz (1993) writes:

... if I feel reasonably sure that I satisfactorily understand someone else, I may be equally convinced that I will have to intervene to help that someone understand somebody else again, whose perspective and characteristic forms of expression I am somewhat familiar with. (p. 51)

Several worlds, realities and languages meet when artists and students come together, and teachers are familiar with all of them. Teachers know their students and what levels of understanding, skills and attention to expect from them and teachers feel more than qualified to advise artists in these matters. On the other hand, teachers have some competency in the arts. While not as competent as the artist, they are presumably more competent than the children. In that way, the teachers convincingly position themselves as possible mediators by connecting the artist and the children while the artist is there, by smoothing out differences and making communication flow, by making sure the artistic work is relevant to the students and to the school, and by ensuring good working conditions for the artist. Teachers may also keep the connection between the children and the arts open when there are no artists present, thereby maintaining continuity with the arts and supporting further growth.

Concluding Remarks

As we have seen, debates on TCR and schools seem to be characterized by stereotypes, and to a large degree claim that teachers are negative, unenthusiastic and uncooperative. Our research corroborates what has been stated in others reports, namely that teachers are actually very positive to TCR. However, our research implies that teachers may not experience the same degree of ownership as the artists since they have little influence on the program. The view that TCR is a dyadic encounter between students and artists/art is prevalent, leaving little room for the teacher. Our research shows that this makes teachers more or less redundant as teachers, and that teachers must position themselves in other ways to regain a place within

TCR. Bresler (2010) states the significance of “reaching out to teachers, nurturing their roles of framing these experiences [for children] and becoming part of the insider audience” (p. 135).

TCR is intended to be a collaborative effort between the fields of culture and education, and there have traditionally been close connections between education and cultural policy in Norway with teachers also functioning as cultural workers. However, the teachers’ feeling of redundancy in the program indicates a new situation. According to Borgen (2011a; 2011b), there has been a gradual development away from the partnership spirit that characterized the program in the early phase. The new mandatory guidelines (KKD, 2007) state a clear division of both labor and responsibilities between the fields of school and culture: The latter is responsible for defining and deciding the TCR content, while the first is to facilitate the implementation by means of planning, preparation and follow-up work. This implies a turn from a model of “professional presentation of arts and culture” to a model of “presentation of professional arts and culture” (Borgen, 2011a).

While the cultural political objectives of TCR are quite obvious, the educational implications of the program are less clear. The arts are under pressure in Norwegian education: Reports show that teachers are not well educated in the arts (Lagerstrøm, 2007), and that the arts have suffered a significant reduction in percentage of school hours (Espeland, Allern, Carlsen, & Kalsnes, 2011). At the same time, several government funded arts-in-education initiatives are being introduced in schools. However, as seen in TCR, the concept of “collaboration” between the fields of culture and school implies schools facilitating arts encounters between students and other actors – in other words opening the doors for cultural initiatives, giving external specialists access to children during school hours:

The Cultural Rucksack has become an example of how artists and art organisations have succeeded in erecting an image of themselves as indispensable to arts teaching and learning, and of the increasing mistrust of schools and local initiatives and practices. (Borgen, 2011b, p. 381)

TCR is intended to supplement and strengthen the schools’ arts education. It remains to be seen whether this will actually be the result, or whether TCR instead represents the first step in an outsourcing of arts education.

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Performing Interpretation

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Abstract

Utilizing a/r/tographic methodology to interrogate interpretive acts in museums, multiple areas of inquiry are raised in this paper, including: which knowledge is assigned the greatest value when preparing a gallery talk; what lies outside of disciplinary knowledge; how invitations to participate invite and disinvite in the same gesture; and what new forms of interaction take place within acts of interpretation. Five concepts organize our investigations into museum interpretation – framing, mapping, shifting, in-between, and potentiality. We employ a conceptual fold by bringing our individual research narratives into contiguity, continually seeking for resonances and dissonances in our studies that point to meaningful understandings about art museum interpretation.

There are times in life when the question if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all.

- Michel Foucault (1984/1985),
The History of Sexuality: The Use of Pleasure; p.8

Introduction

This paper is an experiment in folding together and intertwining two performances presented by researchers in art museum education about interpretative practice in museums. It investigates what lies in-between the performativity of live museum gallery interpretation and the multiple layers of invitations that prompt viewers to become participants in interpretive processes. Putting to work a conceptual fold (Springgay and Irwin, 2008), we seek to present two entities that meet, and by meeting, become something else. Allowing room for understandings, resonances, uncertainty, and dissonances, presenting our studies in juxtaposition enables us to conceive differently of interpretation, knowledge, and participation, both in museum practice and in arts-based research methodology. Exploring spaces within which knowledge is constructed and in which participation takes place, we navigate the terrain of museum interpretation through two a/r/tographic studies (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, and Gouzouasis, 2008). Through these investigations, we utilize arts-based methods to raise questions about the processes of investigating Herbert Spencer's curricular question "what knowledge is most worth?" (Spencer, 1860), and how people are invited to participate in museum spaces.

Five resonating concepts organize our investigations into museum interpretation – framing, mapping, shifting, in-between, and potentiality. Our individual studies are brought into contiguity in each of these sections. Through these folds we evoke "an infinite number of undulating entities unable to be separated into parts" (Springgay and Irwin, 2008, p. xxvii). Though addressed independently, these concepts converge and diverge, embracing the notion of potentiality (Rogoff, 2010a) within the undulations. Mirroring the embrace of the unknown in performing museum interpretation, this form allows for sometimes purposeful, sometimes tentative, but always evocative, associations between the studies. We perform interpretation similarly to Charles Garoian's (2001) call to "perform the museum" through "dialogic play" (p. 247). In this research dialogue we bring together the threads of our personal research narratives, public narratives about museum interpretation, and private narratives about interactions within museum spaces.

Framing

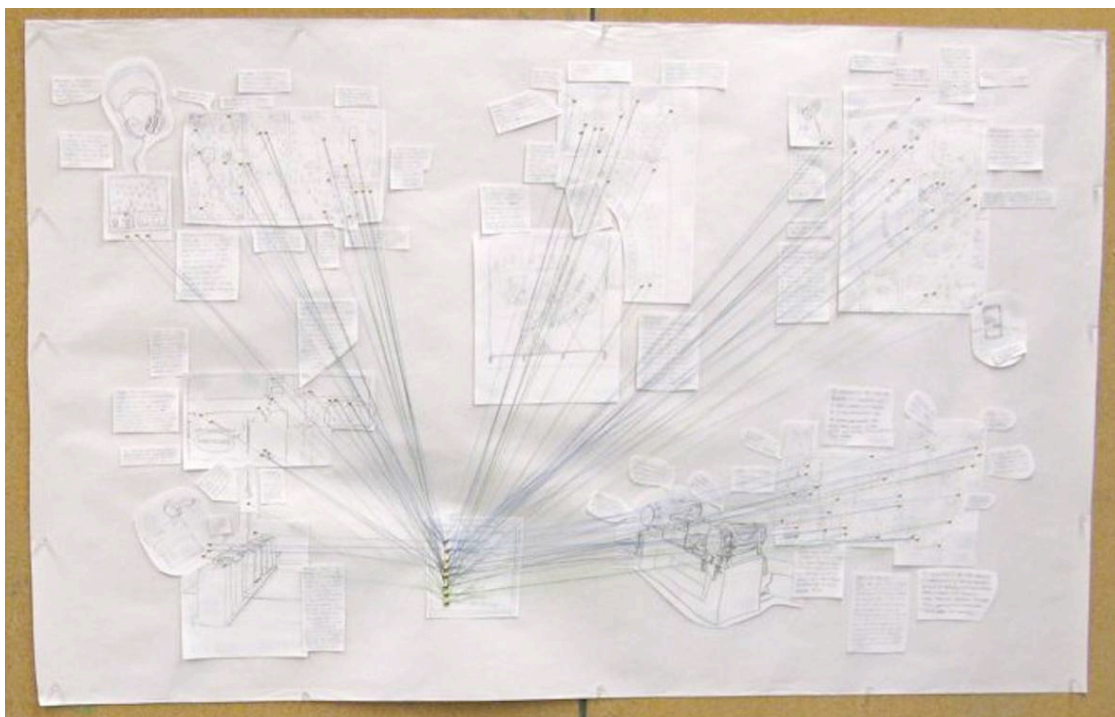


Figure 1. Mapping Invitations to Participate, photo courtesy of Heidi May

Having spent much of my time as a museum educator organizing and facilitating experiences for others, in this study I explored the process of participation from the perspective of the participant, simultaneously drawing on my knowledge and experience as an educator. Therefore, this project, *Mapping Invitations to Participate* (Figure 1), was an effort to understand more about participatory and interactive interpretive strategies, and in particular, how people are invited to participate. While inquiring into these strategies, I was interested in participatory moments facilitated by an educator or guide, but especially moments in which people arrived at a stationary interpretive element, such as a letter from an immigrant written to their family or a listening station where Inuit works of art were given context through listening to radio stations and market interactions in Inuktitut.

Several questions revolving around the concepts of invitations, interpretation, and participation guided this study. Primarily, I was concerned with the question: Why are there some invitations to participate that we accept and other invitations that we don't accept? Several other questions cascaded from this initial query: What makes an invitation 'inviting'? What makes some invitations 'uninviting'? What do invitations look like in various places such as art museums, community events, bars, concerts, activism, and personal interactions? What barriers are put in place that keep people from accepting invitations to participate? What

can I learn from successful and unsuccessful invitations from a variety of settings that can inform art museum education and interpretation? These questions were explored in a variety of participatory contexts, including three museums, one contemporary art gallery, a concert venue, and an outdoor dance performance.

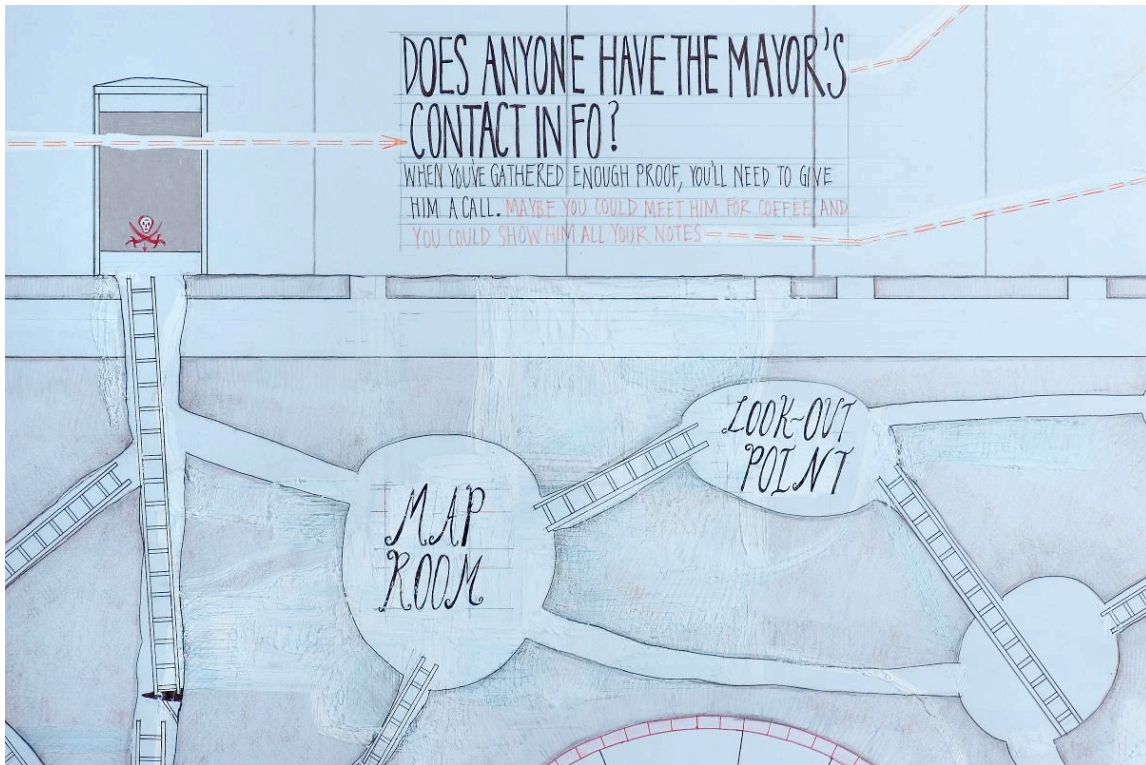


Figure 2. Deb Sokolow, *Someone tell Mayor Daley the pirates are coming*, 2005, detail, photo courtesy of the artist

Inspired by several artists, particularly Chicago-based artist Deb Sokolow (www.debsokolow.com), I undertook a layered process in order to gain further understanding about invitations to participate. Sokolow employs humor, intrigue, and a healthy dose of suspicion to weave narratives that take viewers on what can be described as a choose-your-own-artistic-adventure, where you may end up following Richard Daley on a hunt for pirates (Figure 2), or being to asked to participate in a conspiracy with your neighbor, the sometimes hitman, sometimes sculptor, Richard Serra (Figure 3).

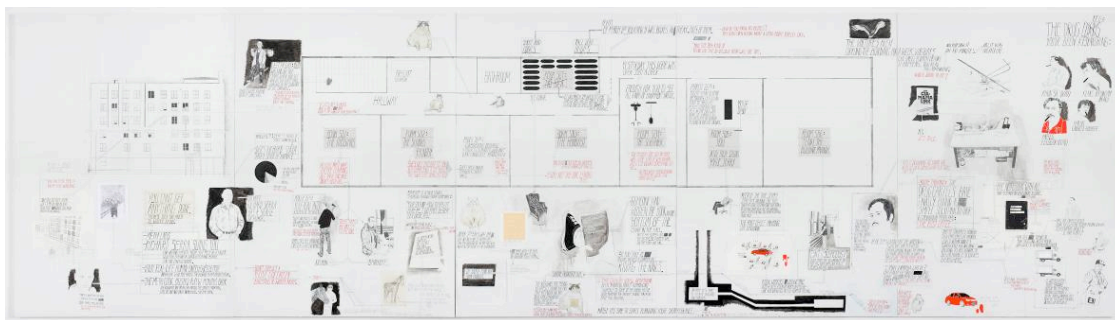


Figure 3. Deb Sokolow, You tell people you're working really hard on things these days, 2010, photo courtesy of the artist

Employing the narrative and mapping aspects, rather than the crime-sleuthing aspects of Sokolow's work, I created a visual narrative of several sites in which I searched for invitations to participate. I visited these sites, of which five are represented in a large map, with an eye toward moments in which an invitation was extended. Following the visits, I created a memory map¹ of the site tracing my chosen route through the space, noting invitational moments along these paths. I noted my internal dialogue with the space and the invitations, as well as dialogue that took place when I visited with others or overheard particularly interesting conversations. Finally, the maps were laid out and I used color-coded thread to understand more about the types of invitations – including familiarity, personalization, enthusiasm, playfulness, narrative, sociability, uniqueness, and listening, as well as anti-invitations – that I encountered in these spaces (Figure 4).

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Lynn Beudert for initially introducing me to the concept of memory mapping.

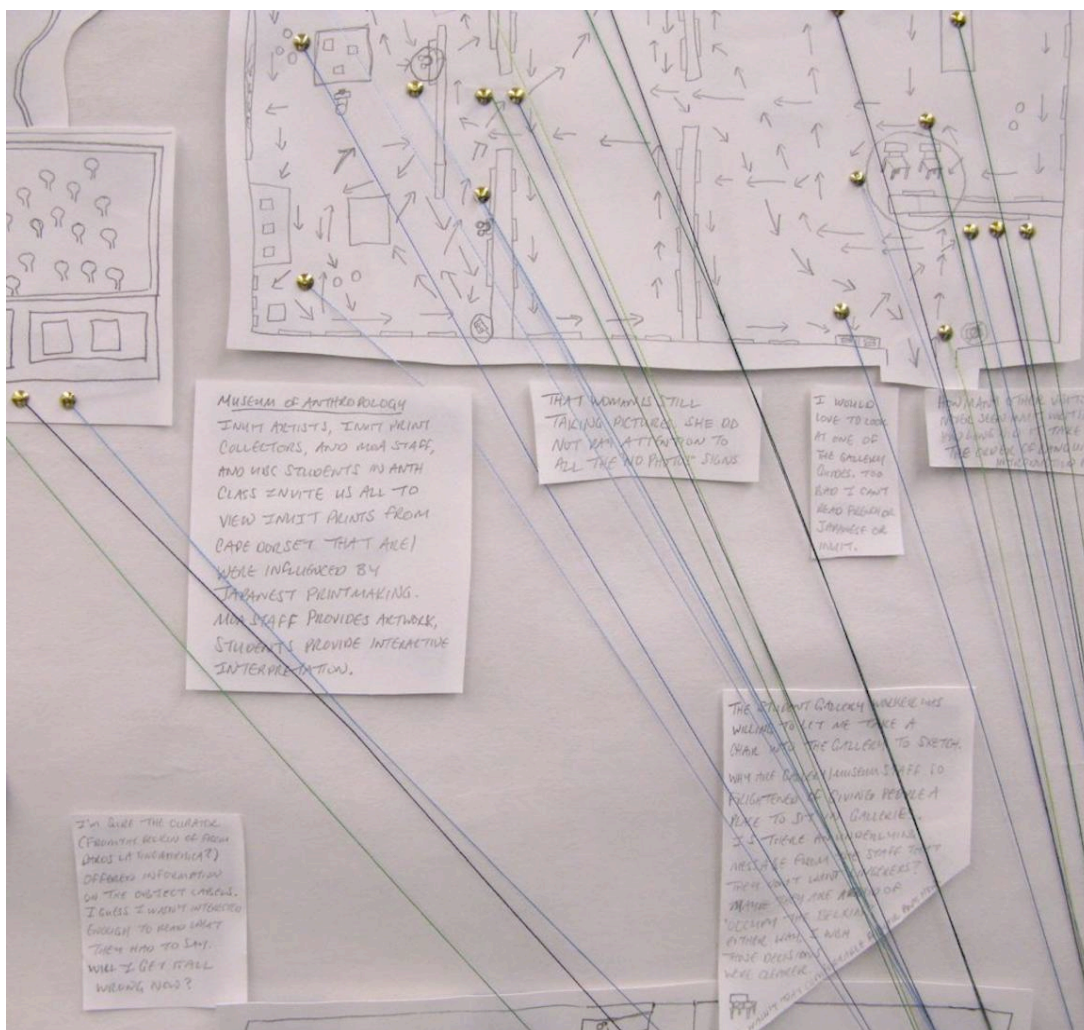


Figure 4. *Mapping Invitations to Participate*, detail, photo courtesy of Heidi May

Mapping

One hundred and seventy artworks on two floors dating from the mid-nineteenth century to 2010. The curator's tour lasted two hours. The exhibition became a walk into an art history textbook – or should I say, a Western art history textbook with some post-colonial revisions. The museum has transformed a personal collecting project into a captivating yet well-entrenched disciplinary discourse. Where did the curator pause and specifically focus our attention? What were the conceptual, historical or thematic threads? During the meeting, I draw a map of the rooms (Figure 5). I need to visualize the space to help me think about the content of my tour. The art historian in me wanted to structure the gallery tour according to post-colonial theory for the historical section, the received canons of B.C. artists (Carr, Shadbolt, Wall) and well-known contemporary First Nations artists such as Yuxweluptun and Jungen. I keep

thinking: “How do I determine which works or spaces correspond to ‘the knowledge of most worth?’”. Yet, the ‘public’ does not exist; visitors are so diverse in terms of gender, age, social context and race, how may I determine in advance? I am reminded of Ted Aoki’s (2005) notion of the ‘curriculum as lived,’ which invites me to remain open to the constant flux of what emerges in the tour. I think also of feminist art historian Griselda Pollock (2011) who insists that, “rather than finding out what art is about – a project leading back to the artistic subject in whom it is thought to originate – we need to ask what artistic practice is doing and where as well as when that doing occurs” (para. 3).

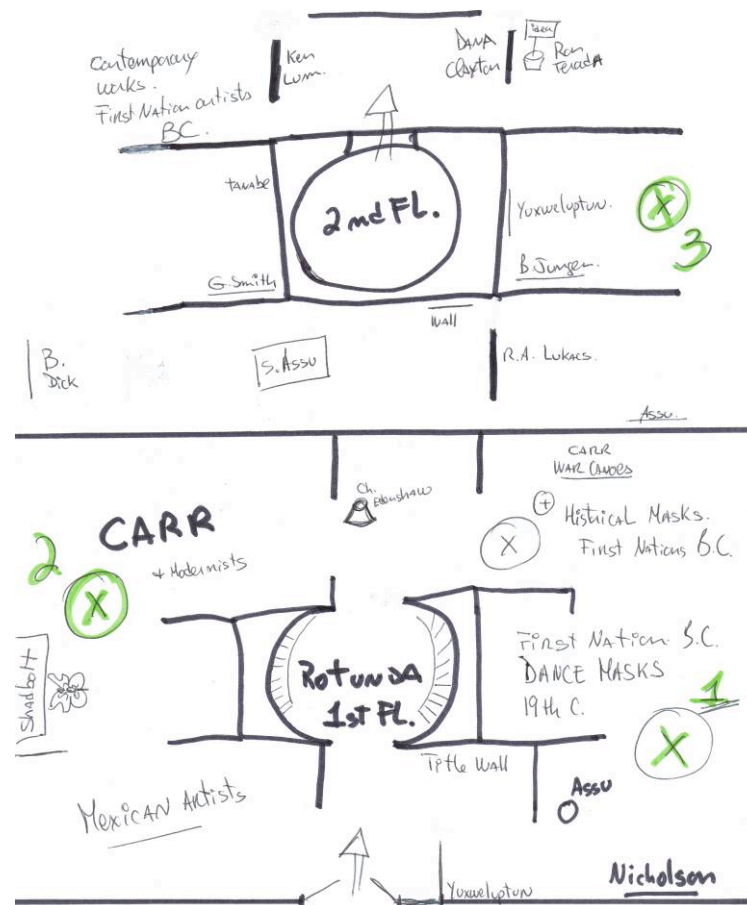


Figure 5. For personal reference in preparing my gallery tour, a hand drawn map of the exhibition *Shore, Forest and Beyond. Art from the Audain Collection*

Utilizing mapping to investigate interpretative practices was a specific reference to the familiar materials of wayfinding located in museum settings (Figure 6). Ubiquitous at most information kiosks and greeter desks are the colorful maps that hold within them the promise

of potential experiences. Signage, symbols, guards, and gallery guides “encourage people to explore, discover their own paths, and make the chance encounters inherent in community life” (McLean and Pollock, 2010, p. 61). Referring to this familiar use of orientation within museums, and to artistic mapping practices, I explored research and visitor pathways, performativity of maps, mapping as a narrative method, and wayfinding as an opening to thinking differently about museum interpretation. Throughout this process the intersection of artistic rendering of maps and research practice through mapping were interrogated for their potential for further understanding about interpretation.

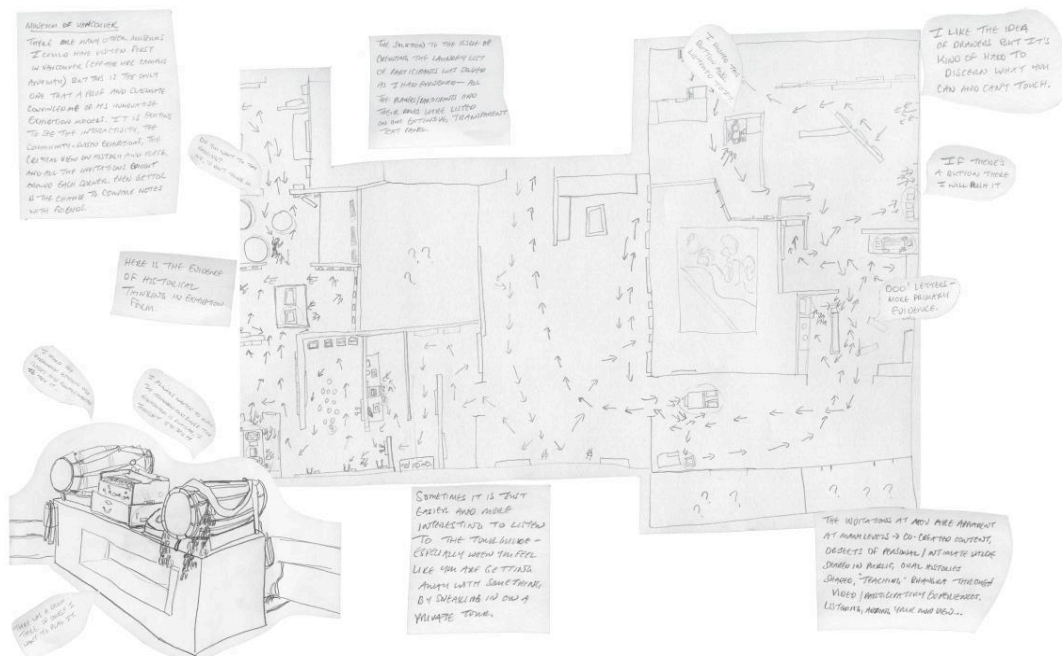


Figure 6. Field notes map of the Museum of Vancouver

Janna Graham (Graham and Jacques, 2005; Graham and Yasin, 2007) describes “lines of desire,” which are the pathways that mark the actual route of visitors or participants in gallery spaces. These pathways “surpass and exceed” (Graham and Jacques, 2005, p. 3), “amend, oppose, and reconfigure” (Graham and Yasin, 2007, p. 159) the expectations of exhibition designers and curators within these spaces. Following the routes I took and connecting my own ‘lines of desire’ allowed me to determine some of the types of invitations that I experienced. Reflecting on the invitations I encountered in one space then opened an understanding of the invitations that were present in other spaces. Tracing my own pathways and lines of desire within these spaces allowed me to further understand the routes, decisions, and reactions of visitors in art museums.

Mapping and the “knowledges it deploys” (Crampton, 2009, p. 840) provided a context in which to register multiple layers of interaction and interpretation taking place in participatory contexts. One of the layers of information created in these maps was a narrative overlay intersecting with the places and moments of invitations to participate in each research site. Noting the “spatialized narrative debris” (Krygier, 2006, p. 44) within each site and locating it within a specific moment allowed for a means of viewing the multiplicity of interactions in each site. Contradictions between anticipated interactions and actual interactions were perceived through noting the site narrative of planning and expectation for certain interactions, and my own visitor narrative of actual interaction. Garoian (2001) explains that this dialogic process “play[s] between the public narratives of the museum and the private narratives of viewers” (p. 239). Associating particular stories to spaces through mapping routes, narrative, space, and experience allows an entry point to locating invitational moments and their uptake or refusal. Artists such as Deb Sokolow and Jake Barton (<http://localprojects.net/>), make clear that in using mapping methods “the key [is] to attach the stories to spaces” (Krygier, 2006, p. 43). These stories were attached through dialogue insets in the physical maps, as well as longer narrative recounting of invitational moments at each site as part of the field notes (Figure 7).

Another characteristic of mapping as a method that I used was tracing the routes followed, rather than designated pathways indicated by the wayfinding markers and spatial designs of each site. As Kathleen McLean and Wendy Pollock (2010) explain, “wayfinding systems need not direct people along prescribed paths” (p. 61). The drawn and threaded routes indicate the indirect paths that take place within participatory spaces; paths that double back, zigzag, move without linearity, and generally are incapable of being predetermined. Instead, the mapping method utilized was one in which I “appl[ie]d different constraints to create a random path through place, in order to open up hitherto concealed meanings and relations” (Warner, n.d., para. 16). Through embracing the pathways determined by interest and invitation rather than designated spatial design, the types of invitations employed –familiarity, personalization, enthusiasm, playfulness, narrative, sociability, uniqueness, and listening– were revealed. In this way, mapping as a process, and wayfinding as an approach toward understanding a space were more valuable than solely following the official maps and orientation systems of each site. Furthermore, the maps “provide[d] multiple points of access to multiple sites of visitation” (Garoian, 2001, p. 246), highlighting the range of ways that people can experience participatory spaces.

Seven stacks of white copy paper. I look around to regain my bearings – this is not the office copier station, not the supply room, not the local copy shop, this is Luis Camnitzer’s exhibition at the Belkin Art Gallery. Around each corner Camnitzer presents, and re-presents, the familiar in juxtapositions that call the nature of these

objects into question. A single light bulb connected by a spare black cord to a fluorescent light, the cord weighed down in an arc of visual and literal weight, hints at the gravity of the circumstances in which similar lights would be used - perhaps a cubicle of workers processing the seven stacks of copies, more likely a reference to interrogation rooms during the Uruguayan dictatorship. At first appears the familiar: a mirror, or a fan idly blowing a pencil back and forth, or a room full of photocopied placeholders for household objects. These first appearances of the familiar dissolve into unknown territory providing an invitation to enter into conversation with the objects, the political history, the art history, the playful, yet meaningfully fraught, gestures that Camnitzer marks through the everyday, the recognizable.

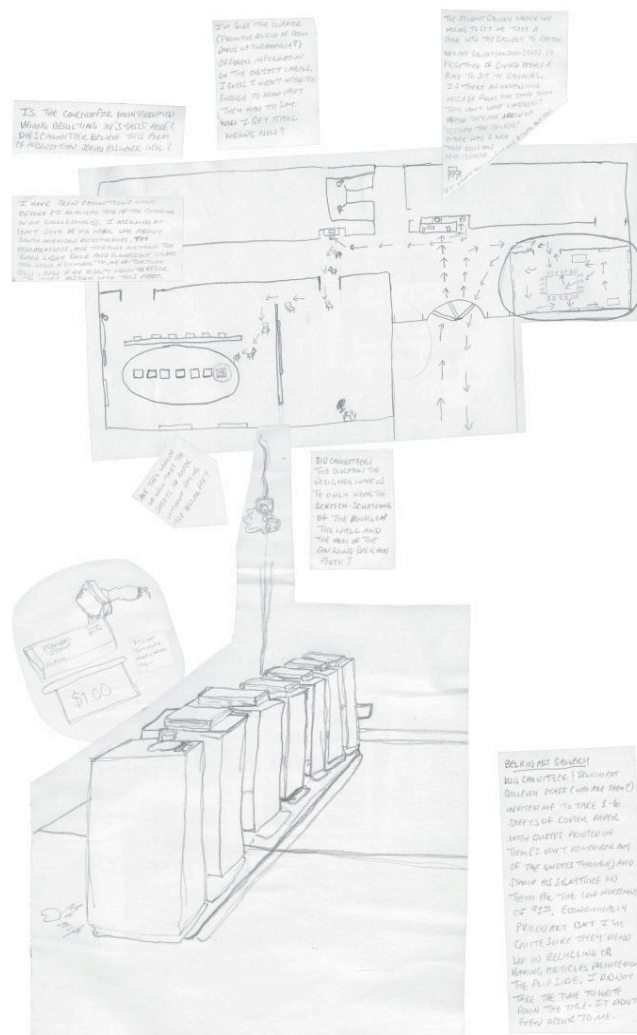


Figure 7. Field notes map of Luis Camnitzer exhibition at Belkin Art Gallery

Shifting

What do we gain from being in front of the works? Attentive looking and experiencing the formal qualities of the work certainly participates in the meaning making process but being in the space is also like entering the exhibition as discourse (Figure 8). This discourse is multilayered: it is both connected to the art market, the socio-political context of the works and the history of art as it has been written in BC. Yet, there are other stories that can be created as we walk through the space. In the background, a detail of War Canoes by Emily Carr: do we concentrate on the adopted art historical discourse (focus on Carr and questions of modernism in art) and/or read her work in relation, in dialogue with the First Nations dance masks displayed in the same room therefore raising issues of politics and representation.



*Figure 8. Art museum educators, Emily Carr, War Canoes, Alert Bay, 1912 (detail).
Exhibition Shore, Forest and Beyond. Art from the Audain Collection*

Taking up Patti Lather's (2007) call for researchers to question "...how might one look for places where things begin to shift via practices that exceed the warrants of our present sense of the possible?" (p. 36), this study was marked by several adjustments in understanding about participatory interpretive practice, as well as the process undertaken during the research. First, given that in a/r/tographic investigations, conducting a study means exploring the "interstitial spaces of art making, researching, and teaching" (Springgay and Irwin, 2008, p. xx) I shifted between these perspectives and processes. Maps were made through artistic processes informed by my understanding of participation due to my background as an educator in order to research the area of participatory interpretation. In addition, I purposefully entered the role of visitor in an attempt to move with, rather than move for, those who create and encounter participatory museum experiences. What was evident in retracing the colored threads that code this research down to one singular point was the movement of action in only one direction (Figure 9). Despite my negotiation and shifting between roles during the research process, the analysis distilled down to a traditional, single-point research perspective. The physical lines created an opportunity to, as Rita Irwin states, "resee [my] experience, to perceive [my] experience again" (Irwin, 2006, p. 79). What I now see is that in order to 'move with,' these lines will need to shift, to surpass and exceed once again, creating a web of experiences, rather than aligning to one singular direction of interpretive, educational, research, or artistic experience.

Shifts also took place in considering how one finds their way within museum spaces. Initially, as I embarked on the study, there existed some sense of correspondence between the anticipated routes laid out by exhibition designers, curators, and educators. While documenting my own pathways though I was prompted to "revisit the world from a different direction" (Barone and Eisner, 2012, p. 16), to notice the discontinuity between the routes planned and the routes taken. Embracing this "disequilibrium [and] uncertainty" (Barone and Eisner, 2012; p. 16), I began to understand the difference between following a mapped interpretive experience, and finding one's own way in a museum. This process is one in which certainty of actions and reactions are set aside, and instead "knowing as you go" (Chambers, 2008, p.123)² is expected. Therefore frameworks for participatory interpretation revolve around wayfinding, rather than directing interpretation and participation in any particular

² Chambers' (2008) curriculum theory of wayfinding also involves "living your geography," and "learning a place by dwelling and traveling in that place" (p. 123). She draws on Claudio Aporta (2003), Tim Ingold (2000), and Béatrice Collignon (2006) in developing this concept. These theories of wayfinding are grounded in Indigenous knowledges of place, therefore, though my taking up of this concept diverges from Chambers' theory, it has been a productive means to dislodge prior conceptions of maps and mapping for this study.

manner. Considering how mapping intersects with finding and making one's way physically, intellectually, interpersonally, and conceptually through a space required a shift in thinking about mapping as a final product toward mapping as a process of finding one's own way within participatory gallery experiences.



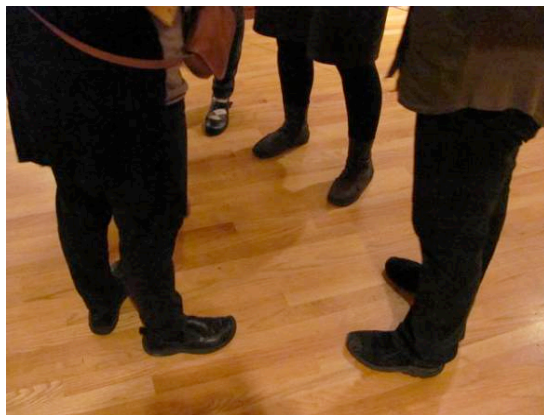
Figure 9. Mapping Invitations to Participate, detail of coding threads, photo courtesy of Heidi May

Potentiality

A colleague wondered why I bothered taking pictures of feet (Figures 10 & 11). I wasn't quite sure at the time; partly for reasons of research ethics, I needed to take some anonymous images but, albeit I could not articulate it at the time, I see now that this picture is very much a visual representation of a meaning making process; it's in the discussion about, with, the work.

As I look at my photographs, I notice a recurring pattern amongst the group of educators in the gallery: most of the time, we form a circle, some kind of unit of

discussion. What is important is happening away from the work, while at the same time being connected and related to it. I realize that my knowing of the exhibition – and what the visitors will experiment – is not simply about knowing facts and concepts about/concerning the works. Ideas and meanings are created around, in between the works. Through relationality, something else is happening.



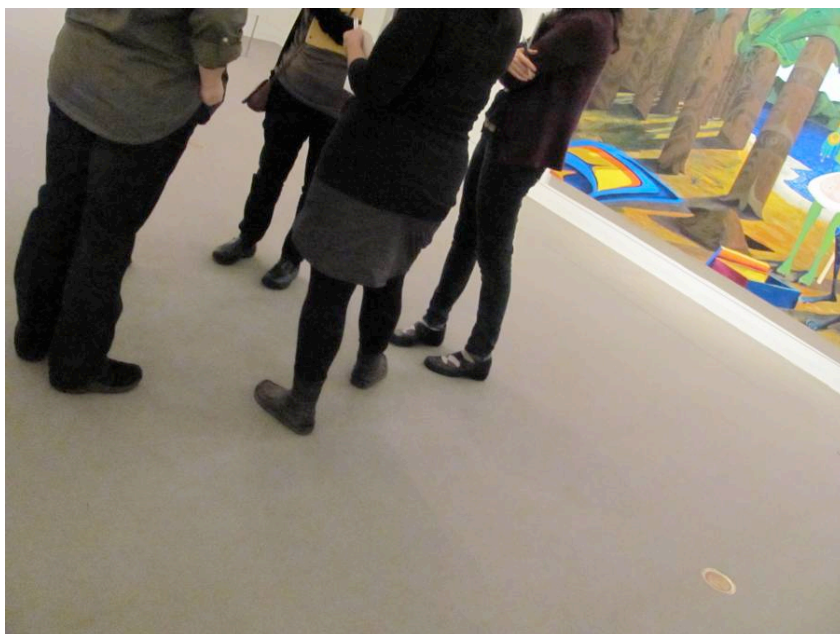
Figures 10 & 11. Art museum educators in conversation and preparing for the exhibition Shore, Forest and Beyond. Art from the Audain Collection

Participatory interpretive processes ultimately require frameworks that allow for a multiplicity of ways of connecting, interacting, reacting, creating, and making meaning. Mapping these points of participation necessitates an open-ended research strategy; it requires flexibility within the research structure. Therefore, this is a study about interpretative strategies that maintain potentiality, and a study undertaken within a belief in the potentiality of bringing research, art, interpretation, and participation in contiguity. Irit Rogoff (2010a) explains that potentiality is “the idea that there might be, within us, endless possibility that we might never be able to bring to successful fruition” (p. 40).

Rather than resulting in paralysis due to an overwhelming amount of options, potentiality allows for a multiplicity of responses, as well as personalized interactions depending on the locations, situations, and the individuals involved. Potentiality means interpretation that can never be known in advance; interpretation that can always be conceived of otherwise (Graham, 2010).

Mapping as a research method made use of potentiality within this inquiry. Mapping as a method “demand[s] processes of investigation and endless curiosity and an impulse towards wonder” (Warner, n.d., para. 4). It is a process that can expand as curiosity annexes new locations, experiences, and interactions to existing mappings. This unfolding allows for connections to be made between the invitational sites experienced. For instance, in this study

about invitations to participate, the invitations multiply if other museums, or other participatory sites, such as land trusts, neighborhood produce markets, libraries, and coffee shops, are mapped. Understandings about invitations to participate accumulate and diverge in endless interpretive possibility. In other words, “no completely accurate and detailed map ever settles the lay of the land; it just begets more maps” (Gieryn, as cited in Rolling, 2004, p. 52). Embracing potentiality in interpretive practice and research about interpretive practice means never expecting to fix these subjects in a singular iteration.



*Figure 12. Art museum educators in conversation, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, **Burying Another Face of Racism on First Nation Soil**, 1997 (detail). Exhibition **Shore, Forest and Beyond**. Art from the Audain Collection*

Dialogue and conversations on/about and beside the works. Looking at my photographs, I notice the constant presence of the works but they are not the sole focus (Figure 12). To ‘know’ the works and the exhibition encompasses the artist’s voice and that of the curator but it inhabits another undefined space outside of the work. Or perhaps, in-between the various disciplinary discourses. Rogoff (2010b) claims that when knowledge is not inserted within an ‘economic’ paradigm, “... it had the possibility of posing questions that combine the known and the imagined, the analytical and the experiential, and which keep stretching the terrain of knowledge so that it is always just beyond the order of what can be conceptualized (p. 4). While I certainly have a strong commitment to disciplinary knowledge, I find it extremely

interesting for museum education to trouble the conventional binary poles of ‘the museum’s voice’ and ‘the autonomy’ of the viewer to thinking in terms of what knowledge ‘does’ and this involves the idea that knowledge should not be conceptualized in terms on ‘possession’ and gain but perceived as movement, as embodied, as happening outside of the object.

In-between

In this study, researchable moments took place at sites specifically developed for participation, but also took place in-between those organized moments. “Coming-together” (Rogoff, 2010a, p. 43) and “being together” (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 60) are fundamental to participatory practice, therefore, many of the participatory moments took place in between myself, an art object, other visitors, and the site itself. These “relations between people and the world, by way of aesthetic objects” (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 42) form participatory interpretation, but require attention to those interactive moments, as well as the permeating spaces and pauses that connect those moments. Moments of participation happened while following a line of desire, which might be in an open space, next to a window, in a discussion while leaving the building, or right in front of a gallery interactive. Following my ‘lines of desire’ allowed me to understand how personal pathways are developed, rather than looking solely to the moments of interaction at designated sites. The participatory waypoints and the space of potentiality in-between were both necessary in developing understandings of where invitations were offered, considered, accepted, and rejected. But, questions remain: How can those spaces in-between be connected in order to further understand how to invite others to participate in interpretive processes? How can lines of desire be split off into multiple other lines to form further understandings about participatory interpretation between various participants? In short, how is the in-between activated in interpretive and research processes?

We are wrapping up after a long meeting. The final tour outline is not complete but we have developed an embodied knowledge of the space. We have a sense of the architectonic of the tour; deciding our movements and travels in space creates a certain narrative and, therefore our curriculum. What knowledge is of most worth is not fixed and absolute. As an animateur, this is no longer the right question for me: knowledge is a process and it emerges in relationality, it activates the relational. Likewise, drawing from Rogoff’s (2010b) need to question what knowledge does; I would argue that the knowledge which is of most worth is not an accumulation of concepts and facts – how ever cleverly organized – but an event triggered in, within and by the work.

I particularly love this last photograph (Figure 13). Some might find it too blurry and

out of focus; what information does it provide about the workings of museum educators and interpretation? Not much besides a strong sense of movement and of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). It doesn't provide sound knowledge. And yet, it made me notice the importance of seeing knowledge as process and as embodied. My initial question 'What knowledge is of most worth?' has not been answered, but complicated and refocused. While being in the gallery space and reflecting on my practice as guide-interpreter, I became deeply aware of the spaces in-between all the knowledge that I have – whether about the art objects or how to engage viewers. As Irwin and Springgay (2008) explain, by folding and exploring in contiguity the visual, artistic and textual elements of my study I did not come up with a definite answer but rather an excess. That excess opens up possibilities for “complexifying the simple and simplifying the complex” (p. xxx).



*Figure 13. Art museum educators walking through the exhibition *Shore, Forest and Beyond*.
Art from the Audain Collection.*

Emerging Understandings

Turning away from expectations for authoritative findings or definitive results, we embrace that our arts-based research “is the conscious pursuit of expressive form in the service of understanding” (Barone and Eisner, 2012, p. 7). Our understandings emerged in the process of

interpreting our own research studies, and continue emerging as we fold these two studies together. The processual threads of our studies about and through interpretative practices were brought together, only to see them disperse again. Holding the belief that the artistic practices we employed did not document, but rather, were eloquent in another way, these practices shifted to reveal at the same moment they shifted to conceal. This uncertainty was embraced, as “[w]e never will know whether what we know is for certain” (Barone and Eisner, 2012, p. 53). Therefore, we turn to concepts that offer generative moments in understanding about museum interpretation and education. Folding, framing, mapping, and shifting happened in-between what was sanctioned as important by other indicators, and thus offered us potentiality to imagine research, to and imagine interpretation that is otherwise.

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