

Teaching Interdisciplinary Artistic Research

Diane Carp

**Master of Education in Arts &
Research Group Arts Education
at the Amsterdam University of the Arts**

Teaching Interdisciplinary Artistic Research

Diane Carp, 2017

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

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Diane Carp researched in 2015 and 2016 the teaching practice of Henk Schut, Artist in Residence (AIR in 2015) at the Master of Education in Arts.

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This research was commissioned by the Master of Education in Arts at the Amsterdam University of the Arts, and supported by the university's Research Group Arts Education and the Artist in Residence programme.



Amsterdam University of the Arts



Testing-personal-space experiment with student and teacher Henk Schut

ON AIR / Results of the Artist in Residence programme are published in the series ON AIR.

Publication 9, December 2017

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PUBLISHER

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© 2017

ISBN 978-90-71681-33-2

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Acknowledgements:

The researcher wishes to thank Henk Schut and the students of the Master of Education in Arts, class of 2014–2016, for their willingness to participate in this study, as well as Ellen van Hoek, Maria Wüst, Folkert Haanstra, Talita Groenendijk, and Marike Hoekstra for their extra support.



Blindfold for the sound walk by one of the groups of Henk Schut in the NDSM building

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Blindfold sound walk by one of the groups of Henk Schut in the NDSM building

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the Master of Education in Arts in 2006 at the Amsterdam University of the Arts (AHK), the course Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration has been part of the curriculum. When designing the Master of Education in Arts program, it was thought that in addition to the strong theoretical component (literature and empirical research, philosophy and didactic/pedagogical training), it was also important to strengthen the artistic side of the arts educators and to further challenge their individual disciplines with interdisciplinary work. The course Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration gives the students the opportunity to re-examine artistry and immerse themselves in interdisciplinary, creative experimentation. It also directly contributes to the nationally mandated competency 'artistic proficiency' for a Master of Education in Arts (M.Ed.).

It was a deliberate choice to give the leadership of this course to an artist. The creative process as seen through the eyes of an artist gives the course its authentic foundation. The master program has been fortunate to have artist Henk Schut as a guest teacher from the beginning to develop the course from scratch. In 2012, I (drama/theater educator), was brought in as a co-teacher to add a structural reflection component to the already strong, creative collaboration processes. Reflection assignments were developed in direct relation to the instruction from Henk Schut as well as from the artistic research and creative work of the students.

Over the years, the unique contributions from this two-year course have been recognized by the students as an important part of their continuing education as a teacher in the arts, and inspiring, not only in their own discipline, new directions for interdisciplinary work. At the end of each year, the courses were evaluated by the students and the instructor. The instructor's comments

coupled with the feedback from the entire master's team contributed to adjustments to the program.

In 2013-2014, the Master of Education in Arts program was given the opportunity to work with the international artist collective, The Authentic Boys, as artists-in-residence. Work with this group alternated with Henk Schut's teaching days in the first-year program. Moving forward from that experience, Schut used that academic year as an opportunity to organize his impressions of the last few years, to consult with the co-teacher and master program coordinator, and share his conclusions about his method. As a result, he restructured his approach so that students would experience a cumulative effect through the training in artistic research in year 1 and the focus on interdisciplinary collaboration in self-directed teams in year 2.

In the summer of 2014, a new description was written of both the course on artistic research and the course on interdisciplinary collaboration, incorporating the specific focus of each study year. In addition, clear assessment criteria were developed for the final, overall reflections. Since September 2014, the master students in years 1 & 2 have responded enthusiastically to working within the new frameworks.

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THIS STUDY

From the student feedback over the last years, it appears that both courses offer a successful forum for the training of artistic research and creative collaboration. This gave rise to the need to know and understand the nature of the success factors. However, when looking for a research methodology, there were no comparable professional development courses that met all the following criteria: a two-year course within a master program; that

is 'taught' by a professional artist; to master students trained in various artistic disciplines; who themselves are teachers and professionals in the arts.

It was decided that I, as the co-teacher in the course, would follow one group of master students (2014-2016) through their two-year course working with the artist Schut in order to record and examine the in-class activities. Through this study, the artist's program for the students could be described, as well as the students' perceptions of their learning. More specifically, this research aims to examine the relationship of the didactic approach of Schut with how the students identify what it is they learn about artistic research, interdisciplinary work, collaboration, and which aspects of the course they will take with them to use within their own artistic teaching practice.

As part of my new role as researcher, I was invited to join the Research Group Arts Education of the AHK under the chairmanship of Professor of Arts Education Folkert Haanstra. Professor Marijke Hoogenboom of the AHK Artist in Residence program chose Henk Schut as artist-in-residence for the academic year of 2014-2015, lending further support to this study within the Amsterdam University of Arts.



Location of the lessons of Henk Schut: NDSM wharf, old shipyard and enormous warehouse where Schut and other creative entrepreneurs have their studios.

2. LITERATURE STUDY – Teaching Inter- disciplinary Artistic Research

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Preparation for the empirical study began by searching for information from literature to find what was being done elsewhere to teach interdisciplinary artistic research within a master of arts in education program. The search looked for program descriptions that met all four of the following criteria: a two-year course within a master program; that is ‘taught’ by a working artist; to master students trained in various artistic disciplines; who themselves are teachers and professionals in the arts. Without a direct comparable program, it was decided to search independently for different aspects that could be involved in teaching interdisciplinary artistic research. This resulted in the following literature study using articles and research papers from artists, artist-teachers, professors, researchers and philosophers to lay out a collected overview of definitions and teaching strategies as described from their individual perspectives.

This literature study first attempts to construct a description of artistic research involved in studio practice and looks how this takes on new challenges when artists collaborate in artistic research. This is followed by an examination of two questions: 1) What would be involved in a teaching approach to interdisciplinary artistic research?; and 2) Which competencies would an artist bring to this teaching situation?

2.2 ARTS RESEARCH

Contexts for arts research

This study looks at teaching artistic research in an interdisciplinary context. It is useful to be clear about the definition of artistic research used here in comparison to similar terms. Until recently, research in the arts has

often referred to non-laboratory, academic studies in which all different aspects of the arts disciplines are investigated by both artists and non-artists, and where outcomes are presented in the form of written theses. Current debates into arts research are looking into the inclusion of the creation processes within the arts themselves as valid research methods (Wilson & Van Ruiten, 2013; Borgdorff, 2006). This proposed expansion to the avenues of inquiry has added to the proliferation of labels to describe research involving the arts that sound similar, but are completely different in intention and approach:

Arts research within academia: When arts research takes place within academia, it has three characteristics: 1) The research is intended; 2) It makes an original contribution; and 3) It enhances general knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in such terms as a) Research *on* the arts that views the arts as an object and which the researcher investigates from a distance; b) Research *for* the arts, where the investigation is intended to provide new insights & instruments for concrete use in art practice; and 3) Arts-Based Research, Practice-led Research, and Artistic Research where there is no distance between the subject and object and theory forming is intertwined with arts practice. Inherent in all of these forms is some type of scholarly reporting of the results (Borgdorff, 2011).

The artistic research of artists: Outside of academia, artists use the term ‘artistic research’ to describe their own creative processes when developing new work. To this end, music educator Eric Booth (2009) argues that the term ‘artistic research’ should not only be thought of ‘as a noun’ that defines the end product of an investigation. He proposes the definition be expanded to also embrace the processes that went into the creation

which he calls ‘the verb’. Supporting the inclusion of arts practice within the definition of artistic research, artist-researcher Jeremiah Day (2013) writes, ‘I think, the moment calls for elaboration and exemplification of “research” that emerges from art making. What is needed is a bottom-up interrogation, not a top-down one. The term “artistic research” (can be) used in a generous and general sense, as an ongoing “life of development” in one’s practice’ (p. 64). He sees artistic research as a method and not a subject. In his eyes, artists are performing research when they are making art as well as when they are looking for ways to add to their repertoire of skills.

2.3 ARTISTIC INVESTIGATION

Starting points for artistic research

If artists are engaging in art making and artistic research which Day names a ‘life of development’, how do they begin? Dancer-researcher Sarah Rubidge (2004) describes a practice-led starting point as, ‘research which is initiated by an artistic hunch, intuition, or question, or an artistic or technical concern generated by the researcher’s own practice which it has become important to pursue in order to continue that practice’ (p. 6). Borgdorff (2010) identifies this as a ‘discovery-led process, not hypothesis-led’, and explains, ‘the artist undertakes a search on the basis of intuition, guesses and hunches, and possibly stumbles across some unexpected issues or surprising questions on the way’ (p. 180). Borgdorff goes on to describe this as a form of action research where the arts practitioner actively seeks to add new skills, techniques, and materials to their existing studio practice. This personal quest is inherently cyclical, fluidly alternating between learning, experimenting, reflecting, and integrating. Both Borgdorff and Rubidge

suggest that artists develop their practice in one of two ways. They can take on new skills when looking for new ways to express ideas, and they can also accidentally ‘bump’ into an idea, becoming inspired while playing with new techniques and materials.

Philosopher John Rajchman (2013) poses the question, ‘What is it to think in the arts?’ His answer:

Vital to the process of thinking in art, and in its forms of research, is something raw and wild, given by things one cannot quite identify or see or say, creating a kind of blindness or muteness combined with a sense of an inchoate necessity that causes or forces one to think—or rethink—often opening up in the process new unanticipated relations with others. (p. 196)

Here, as in the descriptions from Rubidge and Borgdorff, the artist’s feeling of urgency, intuition and being open to the unexpected leads the way. Rajchman calls this thinking process of the artist *esthetic research*. He describes it as one which involves thinking with one’s whole body, using information from the senses, one’s own experiences and training, both informing and letting go in a process of searching and researching. It is an authentic, subjective act inextricably tied to the artistic researcher himself.

Developing research questions

How do artists develop their artistic questions?

According to Rubidge and Borgdorff, artists can do this from two general starting points. An artist’s own curiosity about something can lead him/her to frame specific questions which s/he proceed to investigate by means of experimentation. Artists can also begin by experimenting with materials through which they focus their curiosity, leading them to formulate specific questions

that they want to investigate further. Professor in Arts Education Jeroen Lutters (2015) suggests that artists can inspire themselves by making associations, working with coincidence, imagining possible worlds, exploring dream worlds, fantasizing, and following hunches. He also sees artists as being inspired by the thoughts of philosophers. In another line of thought, artist and teacher trainer in the arts Robert Klatser (2013) believes artists can trust in the process of ‘aimless thinking’. He describes this as a fluid interaction between the artist’s own unconscious and conscious where purposeful thinking about something and purposely ‘letting it rest’ can ultimately deliver clarity. This ‘materialized thinking’ from Klatser mirrors and informs the creation process in which the artist draws upon his/her own artistic knowledge, feelings, insights, sensory information, experiences with esthetics, and ethical choices in order to create art.

2.3.1. Is artistic thinking not the same as creative thinking?

Creative thinking: Creative thinking is the combining of familiar things in new and unfamiliar ways to dream up something unique, yet also appropriate. It is a problem-solving process involving the combination of reason and imagination and is informed by domain knowledge and fueled by personal motivation (Orey, 2016). It can be described as a nonlinear thinking process of divergent thinking:

- *flexible thinking* to look at an object, a word or an idea in many different ways;
- *fluent thinking* to generate an abundance of ideas; and
- *original thinking* to come up with unique ideas.

In convergent thinking the many ideas are ordered and structured to work toward solutions. Finally, elaborative thinking comes into play to expand upon and communicate new ideas to others (Gartenhaus, 1984). Creative

thinking is the motor behind development processes in many different fields, not only in the arts. But when creative thinking is directed toward artistic processes, it becomes the intellectual motor and guide for the inquiry.

Artistic thinking: Artistic thinking takes the creative thinking a step further. It takes place within an esthetic context where artists give artistic form to ideas, thoughts, and feelings and share their outcomes with the public. Day (2013) names this process ‘investigatory poetics’ in which the artist searches and creates while leaving room for his own imagination and, eventually that of the public, to fill in ‘the story’. Curious about what types of cognition the artist engages in during the process of creating, professor-researcher Graeme Sullivan (2001) asked two artists to map their thinking processes while making work for an exhibit. When examining their notes, their thinking revealed a set of characteristics which he named ‘transcognition’. This is a complex system of influences which he sees as ‘thinking in a setting’. He describes it as ‘an on-going dialogue between, within and around the artist, artwork, viewer and context where each has a role in co-constructing meaning. This process is iterative and strategic in nature as meaning is encompassed and negotiated’ (p. 9).

2.4 ARTISTIC RESEARCH PROCESSES

‘It is a mistake to think that chaos is needed for the creative process. Ninety-nine percent of the greatest inventors worked very orderly or had a team that worked very orderly.’

Chef Ferran Adrià

The process of artistic research

‘Often in artistic research there is a phase of divergence, exploration, and journeys down many alternate paths before undergoing a phase of convergence, to a delimiting of the research space’ (Serig, 2012, p. 6). Philosopher Giles Deleuze visualizes this search and researching process in the form of a rhizome.

This shows a process spreading out in different directions, forever shifting and adjusting to fresh encounters and relations, advancing in fits and starts, with many moments where one cannot see how to go on. It was thus something that had to be undertaken each time anew, since there were not preexisting rules or paths for it... (p. 96).

Comparing investigations in science and art

Is there something specific to the research process in arts that is different from other fields? Stemming from the word ‘research’, there are logical comparisons to be made between the fields of science and art. Professor of Logic and Philosophy Paolo Garbolino (2013) compared the research processes between those two fields by weighing the intentions, work forms, and outcomes of each against the other. According to his comparison, both the scientist and the artist ‘intervene in the world’. Both scientists and artists, as well, make use of experimentation as their mode of working. Garbolino elaborates on this by borrowing the metaphor from art historian George Kubler who visualized fields of inquiry in the form of fibers that overlap in a ‘linked progression of experiments’ (p. 83) where multiple solutions can stem from one problem. Confronted with this multiplicity, both scientists and artists are similarly faced with the dilemma, of when, at which point, to end their experimentation. When is

an artwork finished? When has the scientist reached a satisfactory answer?

But where science and art do differ, according to Garbolino, is in their approach to the experiments. Scientists make use of teams, directed experiments, specialized tools, and make inferences from data which they then explain in formalized language to share their findings. Artists, on the other hand, take a more informal route. They can work alone or in groups. They can also make use of specific techniques and materials, but just as easily work with unspecialized tools and everyday materials. Artists spend much more time than scientists 'playing', they make deductions from their experiments, and can explain their findings using natural language, or not even explain their results at all. Explaining the artist's results further, Garbolino identified one more important distinction. Whereas both examine phenomena, the artist also creates phenomena, what Garbolino calls 'representations', by producing knowledge about phenomena and their relation to the world. Artists give these phenomena shape through esthetic forms. This idea is echoed in the words of Elliott Eisner (2007), Professor of Arts and Education, when he quoted education reformer John Dewey who said, 'science states meaning, art expresses it' (p. 8).

In an article from 2003, Eisner described artists as, 'people who can use their imagination, who can experience their work as it unfolds, who can exploit the unexpected, and who can make judgements about its direction on the basis of feeling as well as rule' (p. 243). Borgdorff (2011) described the making and sharing of artwork as inherently open-ended, heuristic, and constructive, and invites the public to share in making their own interpretations and building their own responses.

2.5 FROM PERSONAL TO COLLABORATORY ARTISTIC RESEARCH

Artistic research within domains

Philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1987), speaking about the creative act in cinema, categorically states, 'You don't have ideas in general. You have an idea about something in a certain domain.' His proposal is that an artist takes on artistic research only to answer specific questions related to his/her own discipline. Deleuze also compares the researching of scientists with artists, and like Garbolino, sees collaboration in both fields being initiated to investigate 'urgent problems'. But for Deleuze, the initial research questions for each are only relevant if they arise, are framed, and answered within each of their respective domains. Borgdorff is of the opinion that this is also true of multidisciplinary research projects. He writes, 'multidisciplinary research projects must still be understood as collaborations between different disciplines around a particular topic, whereby the theoretical premises and working methods of the separate disciplines remain intact. (...) Only very rarely does such multidisciplinary research result in any real hybridization of domains' (p. 53).

Intentional interdisciplinary artistic research

But what if the research intentionally seeks to be interdisciplinary? How is that different from multidisciplinary artistic collaboration? The differences lie in the starting point, the way the disciplines are involved and the sort of answers that arise out of the partnership. To expand on Borgdorff's explanation, multidisciplinary researchers do not enter the collaboration with the intention of combining disciplines, but rather, work separately within their disciplines to make expert contributions to the collective, esthetic response. To that end, their

disciplines need to remain intact. On the other hand, the starting point for interdisciplinary artistic researchers is the collective identification of an artistic problem for which they want to find an esthetic solution. They work together throughout the research process, focused on the problem and contributing from their expertise, actively blending and integrating relevant aspects of their disciplines into the solution. Their result becomes interdisciplinary because without each other's input, it wouldn't have existed (van Boxtel, 2009; Konings, 2009).

2.5.1 Framing an interdisciplinary-artistic-research question

If artists are used to investigating within their own disciplines, how would they frame an artistic-research question with partners from other arts disciplines? What constitutes an artistic-interdisciplinary-research question?

Developing research questions in a team: Professor of interdisciplinary studies Clinton Golding (2009) explains the contribution of multi-perspectives within interdisciplinary teams and the need for integration and synthesis. Of the process and goals, he writes, 'Interdisciplinarity involves a synthesis or balance of multiple perspectives to produce such things as a deeper understanding or illumination, a balanced judgement, viable solution or a product that creatively accommodates the different perspectives' (p. 4). University lecturers Newell & Green (1987) describe the role of the discipline insights in the collaboration, 'this process of synthesis requires an appreciation of the full complexity of the disciplines involved, especially an awareness of their often unconscious assumptions, in order to discern the underlying common ground or conflict between their insights' (p. 5). Using the previously explained premise that an

artistic hunch or intuition can start the investigation of an individual artist within their own practice, wouldn't it follow that collaborating artists would have to find ways to integrate individual, urgent questions and frame their starting points together? Research questions would then become both personal and meaningful to each of them. Working through the research together would draw on the expertise and experience of all of those involved. That way, insights from all disciplines would be involved, critically evaluated, and when deemed useful, integrated. The answers to the research questions would also be completely interdependent, resulting from the input from one another. The intellectual skills of divergent thinking and creativity would then become fundamental to the search for synthesis within interdisciplinary collaborations.

In sum, interdisciplinary questions arise out of the personal curiosities from those involved and are negotiated and synthesized by the entire team. The team collaborates to develop its own answers within the esthetic context of the arts. Interdisciplinary work can be achieved by multidisciplinary teams who research together from beginning to end. They collaborate on the development of their artistic research questions, and put their different perspectives and disciplines to work during their creative processes. Their answers and results are interdisciplinary because their input is intertwined and interdependent.

Characteristics of interdisciplinary artistic research: Combining all of these multiple perspectives, it is possible to construct a set of characteristics for interdisciplinary artistic research as being: 1) an investigation by means of the arts by artists; 2) born out of a personal curiosity; 3) starting with a question collectively framed by all the participating artists from varied disciplines; 4) working together through a discovery-led process of

inquiry from multiple perspectives; 5) which is driven by intuition and playfulness; and 6) leads to a sharing of the discoveries expressed in an esthetic form.

2.6 THE ARTIST AS TEACHER

If intuition and discovery play such a dominant role in artistic thinking and research, how can it possibly be taught? What is involved in teaching artistic research from an interdisciplinary perspective? But first, who is doing the teaching?

The artist as teacher

This research investigates how an artist can teach artistic research with an interdisciplinary perspective to a group of master students, themselves already teachers in the arts, many trained in a single discipline. More often than not, artists are also trained within a single arts discipline even though they may have extended their work to include others. What do artists in teaching situations (artist-teachers) need to know about interdisciplinary collaboration in the arts in order to teach it to others? According to Golding (2009), having their own experiences collaborating with partners from other arts disciplines would certainly inform their teaching, but it is not an imperative. Rather, he finds it is an ability to take a meta-view of collaboration and to speak across the disciplines. Equally important, he says, is an ability to teach the skills needed for interdisciplinary collaboration by modeling them during work with the students. Through modeling, the artist can encourage and value multi-perspective input, synthesize and balance ideas from the group, help them to think critically and constructively, and to support their esthetic search for collective solutions. Because the success of an interdisciplinary

collaboration stands and falls on the successful functioning of the group, artists come better prepared if they plan ahead of time how they will implement cross-discipline thinking and negotiation, instead of simply responding intuitively to the needs of the group.

2.7 TEACHING APPROACH

If artistic research is described as a subjective, personal activity, it would follow that the teaching of artistic research starts with the person. It is not surprising then, that artists and teachers in the arts tend to explain the personal qualities and thinking processes they want to stimulate in their students rather than describing a method for teaching artistic research (Murgia, 2015; The Authentic Boys, 2013; Booth, 2009; Hall, 2010; Orey, 2016; Pringle, 2009; Thompson et al., 2012).

Sensory awareness

A common starting point involves tuning back into one's own basic sensory awareness (Murgia, 2015). The goal is to use one's own sensory abilities in order to re-experience the world through multisensory input. International artist collective The Authentic Boys based their 2013 artist-in-residency at the Master of Education in Arts in Amsterdam on their own identification and reawakening of essential 'sensitivities' in the students. They see 'the body as a creative instrument'. The following list (Fig. 1) describes the skills The Authentic Boys feel are necessary to be ready and open for artistic thinking and discovery. For the Authentic Boys, the artistic process is informed by a combination of sensory-based observations and purposely opening oneself up to new challenges.

THE SENSITIVITIES FROM THE AUTHENTIC BOYS, 2013

PLAYFULNESS	Being open, light-footed, able to work spontaneously without a specific plan, making associations, withholding judgements
MULTI-PERSPECTIVES	Looking at a subject from different angles, open for the input of others
EMPATHY	Being able to stand in someone else's shoes
MOVEMENT	Being flexible, investigative, responding to new information
COURAGE	Daring to try, willing to be challenged, and to take on challenges
CURIOSITY	Wanting to investigate, discovery-led
FAILURE/IMBALANCE	Planning in risk-taking, using failure constructively
DIALOGUE	Communicating with yourself, your surroundings, and with others
SHOCK	Being open to completely new and surprising input that can turn your thinking on its ear
NERVE COSTUME	Using head and heart as a complete system to experience the world

Figure 1. The Sensitivities from The Authentic Boys

Connecting cognitive, affective, and physical domains

Implicit in this list are behaviors involved in creative thinking, problem-solving, and critical reflection. There is an openness to observe, to being surprised, to learning new information and communicating with others. These are skills involving both thinking and feeling, and also becoming physically involved in the process. Looking at this list of sensibilities, it becomes apparent that there is a constant overlap between these domains that inherently work in concert with one another. This intertwining of thinking, feeling, and the physical not only describes the involvement of the whole person, but places the individual at the center of the artistic research.

Professor of Education Gert Biesta (2016), describes how working in artistic processes stimulates that interlacing of skills. This fluid interconnectedness makes essential contributions to the development of the individual, such as opportunities for the discovery and exploration of one's own voice, the practice of flexibility in the ability to explore options, and the development of strategies for experiencing and working with material and social constraints. For Biesta, involvement with the arts activates a personal, internal collaboration of head (thinking), heart (feeling), and hands (wanting to engage with the world).

According to drama educator and researcher Ana Marjanović-Shane (2008), when an artistic researcher initiates his/her own investigation, s/he becomes the subject of his research as s/he relates to the object of his/her research. The subject-object relationship of the individual suggests that the researcher is following an authentic path, constantly checking in with his/her own feelings and thoughts in relation to what s/he is physically and mentally manipulating, and thereby, creating his/her own meaning. The professor and the researcher

are, independently from each other, making the same argument. They see artistic research as a process one embarks upon stemming from a personal motivation to investigate in the first place. They see no distance between the research and the researcher. Rather, artistic research arises and develops from each researcher as an imperative, who asks questions centered around his/her relationship to specific materials, to other people, and/or to his/her surroundings, and finds meaning in the answers.

Teaching students artistic-thinking tools

As awakening sensibilities and developing investigative skills are initiated by an artist-teacher, the responsibility does not only have to rest with them. Lecturer in visual arts and design Lyke Poortvliet (2004) performed experiments with design students to help them to become actively aware of their own thinking skills by separating the intuitive from the perceptive and the investigative. Insights shared in class and backed up by theory gave the students more tools to combine their own cognitive and affective thought processes during the creative process. This suggests a teaching strategy initiated by the artist which purposely involves the students into becoming conscious, interacting participants in the development of their own artistic thinking.

Teaching approach for interdisciplinary artistic research

Based on the ideas explored above, a teaching approach would be based on a person-centered orientation with the goal of developing the students' own skills as artistic researchers. To engage them at the start of the process, their sensibilities are awakened in order to tune them into themselves, each other, and the world around them. To embark on their investigations, students' thinking

skills are focused and developed toward the process of searching, creating, and reflecting. Vital to this person-centered approach would be the artist-teacher's awareness of the constant link between the cognitive, affective, and physical domains in order to design strategies to address them in the students, not only at the start, but also throughout the research process. Ultimately, the approach for each artist-teacher can and will be different and personal, stemming from his/her own arts discipline(s) and experiences with what works.

2.8 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Interestingly, artists and philosophers independently agree with one another that purposely created separate spaces are the preferred learning environments in which artistic research should take place (Rajchman, 2013; Hall, 2010; Pringle, 2009; Thompson et al., 2012; Marjanović-Shane, 2008).

Separate physical spaces

Rajchman (2013) was inspired by philosopher Michel Foucault's principles of a heterotopia as a model for an artistic research environment. Heterotopias can be seen as physical locations that function as in-between spaces (being on a boat on the water), separate from the everyday. These locations have flexible uses (such as theaters) that are socially and historically defined (Foucault's example is the changing societal role of a cemetery). These places are free from the usual time constraints and obligations and there is a conscious entering and leaving of the space, sometimes seen as an informal ritual (Foucault, 1984). What appealed to Rajchman about this model was 'to set up a space of exchange outside instituted disciplines, formulating larger questions that

belonged to no one domain [...] it was about the creation of extra-disciplinary spaces and de-disciplinizing experiences from which new questions might come, outside of usual institutional habits, and leading to new inventions' (p. 2011).

Socially constructed space

Obviously, it is not enough to simply relocate creative sessions outside of an institution, scheduling in enough free time for the participants and inviting them to work together. The separate space for artistic research is also a socially constructed one. Which agreements need to be made among the participants in order to collectively construct their learning environment conducive to collaborative artistic research?

Agreements

Collective researching calls for an open atmosphere for risk-taking where artistic questions are not only actively identified, but are seen as opportunities and the starting points for investigations (Gartenhaus, 1984). In order to work together and explore the problems from many angles, participants need to feel free to share ideas, support one another and be willing to accept critical feedback as long as it moves the process further. Faced with ideas that lead nowhere or experiments that don't work, requires a redefining of the concept of 'failure' so that it does not demotivate the group process, but can be used constructively (Carp, 1992; The Authentic Boys, 2013). The artist-teacher can take the lead in helping the group to create its own social rules.

Group dynamic

What happens within this separate space? What is the group dynamic? Marjanović-Shane (2008) explains that a whole group, or the group subdivided, builds for

themselves temporary 'frames' within which they develop their own guidelines for a shared, creative experience, one in which they can safely play with ideas and relationships. 'Building an imaginary playlike frame is an activity that places the participants in a special bond of collaboration, thus creating an inner group of people that share something no one else does' (p. 113). Participants do not come empty-handed to their 'fictional' frames. They bring all of their experiences and expertise with them to explore, examine, and reflect on their chosen topics. Central to this collaboration is the input from the participants' multi-perspective vantage points using language, their imagination and often metaphors to share and expand on their ideas. Having to relate their 'results' to those outside the frame challenges each group further, as they look for ways of communicating to others what they have discovered themselves.

Here again, is a blending of thinking, feeling, and the physical within the creative-learning environment. Importantly, this can have an effect on the person not only within the group, but outside the group as well. Each individual makes a conscious decision to take part in a collective and creative process, making and living by the self-made group rules. Within the group, s/he is free to mold and manipulate ideas and to try on new ways of interacting with the others. 'In fact, the imaginary play frame is a construction zone not only for the TOPIC; it is also a construction zone for the particular roles that the participants assume within the frame and thus can be used for developing their own sense of self (ME) in the perspective of the other (YOU)' (Marjanović-Shane, 2008, p. 113).

Communities of practice

Placing this sort of artistic group collaboration within the educational setting, researcher and Professor in Arts

Education Emiel Heijnen (2015) uses the term ‘learning community’ to describe this authentic participation where both teacher and students contribute from their own experiences and expertise for the purpose of collaborating on a collectively identified and mutual endeavor. This concept of a learning community was named by Wenger & Lave as a ‘Community of Practice’. During their research in 1998, they observed that instead of finding a one-way learning situation from master to apprentice, they identified a mutual and complicated learning relationship between teacher and pupil.

Wenger (2015) describes communities of practice as having three basic characteristics:

1) Domain: The participants share the same subject domain and make a commitment to work together. Implicit in their commitment is the belief that they can value each other’s competencies and learn from each other;

2) Community: The members of the community work together in their domain by sharing interests and engaging in activities and discussions. They see their social interrelationships as an intrinsic part of their domain interests;

3) Practice: The community members focus their activities on sharing their experiences and problems in order to improve their own practice. Together, they develop their repertoire of skills further. Adapting the principles of the community of practice to an educational setting, Heijnen writes, ‘A class is not a community of practice, but can incorporate some of its most powerful pedagogical characteristics in order to establish a community of learners’ (p. 168). Describing the socially constructed space for interdisciplinary artistic research as a community of learners then, can give clearer guidelines for sharing interests, learning, and communication for students and teachers embarking on artistic investigations together.

The writers of the articles and research reports used as references for this study are all too aware of the daily constraints that can get in the way of doing their own artistic research, let alone when working with students. When looking at educational arts programs in museums, school classrooms, or other settings, researchers (Gartenhaus, 1984; Marjanović-Shane, 2008; Hall, 2010; Thompson et al., 2012; Pringle, 2009; Wenger, 2015) have signaled the need with each new group to collectively create their own social, time-and-space parameters, conducive to collaborating in artistic thinking and researching.

Learning environment for interdisciplinary artistic research

As described above, a learning environment for interdisciplinary artistic research has both physical and social characteristics. It begins, ideally, with a purposely selected space that is flexible and is free from both the usual time limits as well as the usual obligations and institutional habits. Within this physical space, the group develops its own social dynamic. The participants make a commitment to each other to share their focus, experiences, and problems with the intention of growing their repertoire of skills together. The group decides new norms and behaviors and collectively establishes an atmosphere for risk-taking. As they begin to work together, multi-perspective input drives the creation of ideas and the reflection process. Failure of ideas that don’t work are embraced as opportunities for critical analysis and starting anew. Within an educational context, the participants within a socially constructed space can become a community of learners. For each individual, the participation in this collective group can contribute to their own personal development of identity.

2.9 COMPETENCIES OF THE ARTIST-TEACHER DURING INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTIC RESEARCH OF THE STUDENTS

How does an artist-teacher interact with the students once the group has established their learning environment? What can s/he do to foster and support the artistic research of the student collaborations? By studying artists in teaching situations with young children, Hoekstra (2008) identified four areas of competencies when artists work as teachers. From their own studio practice, they bring to the classroom their authentic, first-hand knowledge of artistic investigation and production, their understandings about working in the realm of creativity, their experiences of working with a process-directed approach, and, as trained artists, are themselves guides in the world of the arts. Related to teaching situations around interdisciplinary collaborations, a fifth competency from Golding (2009), which is the modeling and facilitating of collaborative reflection, becomes a vital addition. Below, these five competencies are explained and supported using sources from other practitioners and researchers in the arts:

1) Authenticity: Studies in authentic arts education (Hoekstra, 2008, 2015; Meijer & Carp, 2010; Kampman, 2010) have shown that artists bring something extra to teaching situations. They have first-hand knowledge of the creative process and the identification of starting points for their own artistic research. Further, artists can use their own practice as a model for the students. Their own ways of describing a problem they want to solve, which environments, ideas, and materials inspire them are personal, yet can be shared with others. They, as no other, can describe the steps they took during the process of making art and the personal discipline involved

in the search. In these ways, artists are themselves authentic role models as artistic researchers. When interacting with students by asking them to think and work as artists, they create authentic learning situations (Booth, 2009; Pringle, 2009; Hoekstra, 2015; Makol, 2012; Hall 2010).

A person-centered pedagogy is also a model for authentic teaching. As explained earlier, doing artistic research is integrally linked to the person's own questions about specific subjects. Artist-teachers can stimulate that intrinsic motivation when they give open-ended challenges to students leaving the research questions open for them to fill in with what they want to explore. To do this, artists often start this process by 'waking up' the students' sensibilities and creative-thinking skills and tuning them into their own abilities to observe. When an artist-teacher plans and negotiates with the group on how to proceed, with the focus on what is best for the whole group, they are working from an equal-power relationship, treating the students as peers and as artists themselves and place the students at the heart of the process. The exploration and development of ideas relevant to students, doing the real work of professionals, working through complex and complete assignments in collaboration with others within the cycle of doing and reflecting are all characteristic of authentic arts education (Kampman, 2010; Haanstra, 2011; Heijnen, 2015). This approach to teaching by artists is supported by research (Thompson et al., 2012; Hall, 2010; Pringle, 2009) which also revealed that the underlying motivation of artists was to help students develop their identity and make meaning through the arts.

2) Valuing and stimulating creativity: How do artist-teachers stimulate creative thinking and when do they intervene? Just as they themselves work from

hunches and intuition, the coaching from artist-teachers to students can also be intuition-based. Based on their own experiences interacting with materials and work forms, they are able to model respect for unusual and unique discoveries from thinking creatively and encourage students to use play and experimentation to develop them further. Artists understand the use of metaphors and symbols to give form to ideas. As guides, they can help students select those that explicitly express what they want to convey. If the learning environment feels safe for the students, artists can challenge student ideas in positive ways and stretch their imaginations by asking divergent questions. They can make conscious choices to intervene or not, sometimes interrupting the students' process by imposing new constraints to set their thinking onto another path, sometimes letting a group wrestle with its creative dilemmas on its own (Hoekstra, 2008; Gartenhaus, 1984; Marjanović-Shane, 2008; Hall, 2010; Pringle, 2009).

3) Working from a process-directed approach: Because there is no standard curriculum for teaching artistic research, artist-teachers create their own methods, designing and choosing exercises for different purposes, often based upon their own enquiry techniques (Booth, 2009; Hoekstra, 2015; Hall, 2010). In teaching situations, Pringle (2009) discovered that what artists found essential when working with students was the stimulation and encouragement of conceptual enquiry. They wanted to stimulate and excite students about the process of investigation rather than focus on an end product. These artists found ways to share their knowledge of art within the processes of making art.

In the process of inventing their own didactic style, artists take the opportunity to develop assignments depending upon the type of sensibilities and thinking

skills they want to encourage. This also gives them more freedom to respond flexibly and spontaneously to students' needs and questions. Writing about these choices of curriculum design, Jaffe (2012) explains,

We can teach very directly; we can step back and let students work with no direction; we can choose an infinite number of points between those two extremes. Another way of looking at this same range of (didactic) choices is to think in terms of the range of creative freedom and constraints in approaching the art making. We can very narrowly define the creative parameters of a student project; we can provide ideas for a project and ask the students to frame the creative problem from the beginning; and we can choose an infinite number of points between the two extremes. (p. 39)

Central to the description of an artistic research process is the dynamic cycle of doing and critical reflecting. When working with students, reflection can be used as a didactic and an artistic instrument in artistic research (Leijen, 2012; Pegman & Keurentjes, 2002; Wesseling, 2012). Reflection can be used to support authentic pedagogy with questions that help students tap into and make them aware of their own cognitive and affective input within their artistic search. Leijen (2012) developed this sort of reflection model that stimulates the 'exploration of relation and connection between professional and personal identity' that strives to make transparent how they mutually influence one another. When reflecting outside of the artistic research process, students can take more time and distance to think about the relationship between the why and the what that they have been working on. Ultimately, under the coaching of an artist-teacher, the goal is for students to develop their

own independent self-reflection and self-critique abilities in order to reflect on 'purpose, process, and context' (Pegman & Keurentjes, 2002, p. 85) beyond the guided situation.

4) A guide in the world of the arts: Artist-teachers are versed in the larger world of the arts and bring this professional world with them into learning situations. As artists, they are versed in techniques, work forms, and theory. As teachers, they are charged with bringing their professional practice into the students' frame of reference. They can use examples from other artists within and without their own discipline to explain concepts, thinking strategies, and share practice. They can inspire students by connecting the students' creative explorations with those of artists similar to their own. Artists can also share the development of their own work, offering students a unique insight into the profession of artist from the interactions with their own teacher (Hoekstra, 2008; Kampman, 2010).

Artists working in learning situations can see their work with students as a continuation of their own creative development. It can give them something back and help them to reflect on their own art work as well as their teaching strategies. By guiding students on their journey, they themselves are continuing to learn, reflect, and develop their own dual identities as teacher and artist (Booth, 2009; Hall, 2010).

5) Modeling and facilitating collaborative reflection: Reflexivity is organically built into the process of researching and creating (Borgdorff, 2006; Leijen, 2008). Individual artists intuitively take pauses in the creative process, stopping to look, reflect, and evaluate before taking the next step. Within an interdisciplinary setting, this intuitive reflection and evaluation process will also

take place, but it will be done as a shared activity within the group. To this end, the collaborating partners will need to develop ways to communicate with one another to share individual ideas and to ask themselves as a group whether what they are developing is consistent with their collectively framed research questions. This is where the artist-teacher can play an integral part by modeling and preparing students for collaborating by practicing the interdisciplinary thinking skills of balancing and synthesizing ideas, necessary for finding collaborative, esthetic solutions. During group discussions and self-directed searches, the artist-teacher can continue to teach these skills by modeling them when assisting groups with their artistic negotiations (Golding, 2009).



Blindfold sound walk by one of the groups of Henk Schut in the NDSM building

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a qualitative research project in the form of a single case study (Baarda, 2005). The case involved spans the two-year period of the master course *Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration* and follows the teacher and the students. This descriptive research focuses on the input and interventions from the course teacher, artist Henk Schut, and what the master students perceive to have learned from those interventions. Drawing from this information, the study attempts to determine the role and impact of this course within the overall program of the Master of Arts in Education in Amsterdam. The research took place primarily at the off-campus location NDSM-wharf in Amsterdam North where the course met and the artist has his studio.

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study asks the four main questions below to investigate the approach of the artist and the perceptions of the students about their own learning:

1. What is the approach of artist-teacher Henk Schut when teaching interdisciplinary, artistic research to master students in arts education from different artistic disciplines?
 - What is the artist-teacher's didactic approach to teaching artistic research? What is the role of critical reflection in his approach?
 - How does Schut stimulate collaboration among the students from different arts disciplines?
2. How do students experience the lessons by artist-teacher Henk Schut? What are their perceptions of their own learning in relation to his approach?

- Discoveries related to Schut's in-class input and interventions
- Discoveries related to their experiences with collaboration

3. Which ideas do the students develop about interdisciplinary artistic research?

4. How do the students describe and place the contributions of this two-year course in interdisciplinary, artistic research within the context of their overall professional development during the AHK Master of Education in Arts program?

3.2 THE PARTICIPANTS

The students

There were eighteen students enrolled in the master program 2014-2016 and all agreed to participate in this research during both years of the course Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration. A nineteenth student joined this group for year 1 and also took part in this study for that year.

All of the students were at the time working in arts education with students and participants of all ages and experiences in the arts. Seventeen students came to the master from a training background in one arts discipline and two came with other backgrounds, primary education and in-school culture coordination, and museum education (see Fig. 2).

Figure 3 shows the distribution of their fields of work which varied from teachers in the disciplines themselves (visual arts, dance, drama, and music) to the trainers of teachers in arts disciplines at teacher training colleges.

Some also worked as consultants to schools from external arts organizations, one was a gallery owner and three had their own professional arts practices.

The artist-teacher Henk Schut

Henk Schut is an artist who has not limited himself to one arts discipline. Over the years, he has built up a multidisciplinary resume, working both nationally and internationally in the traditional disciplines of opera, theater, and visual arts, as well as developing work using augmented reality and site-specific sculptural and sound installations which give careful thought to the audience experience. Choosing the right medium to fit the message, Schut often develops his own concepts for projects and then seeks collaboration with partners with whom he can share his vision and can supplement his own skills. This was evident in the commission, *The Van Gogh Mile*, an interactive walking tour between the Van Gogh Museum (closed for six months for renovation) and the temporary housing of works at The Hermitage. After the reopening of Van Gogh Museum, Schut curated the exhibit *When I give, I Give Myself* in which he asked 23 visual artists each to respond with a new work to a specifically chosen letter from Vincent to his brother Theo. Schut has also tackled more than once the social subject matter around refugees in the Netherlands. Most recently, he stepped back into his role as artistic and experience designer for Humanity House in The Hague, working with a new team to renew his interactive exhibit about the refugee experience. In 2015, Schut was named AHK Artist in Residence, giving an added dimension to his work with the master.

The role of researcher/participant observer

As I was the co-teacher in this course, I became a participant observer (Baarda 2005). Permission from the students and the artist-teacher were obtained before beginning the research and all were aware of my double role as researcher and co-teacher. For my part, I reduced my in-class participation as I took on the role of observer. Yet, as co-teacher, I was already responsible for the written-reflection assignments for the students which became the basis of my research material from the master students. As co-teacher to Schut's artist, I had become his sparring partner in one-on-one conversations in class during which he articulated his ideas and, together, we reflected on the effect of the interventions on the group. For this study, I formalized those conversations by using an interview structure in order to understand how he had developed his vision and then translated it into didactic practice.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

This study collected information from artist Henk Schut and from the students in the course.

All parties responded in their native Dutch language. For the purposes of this report, all citations used have been translated verbatim or in close keeping with the original intent of the sentences.

Data was collected from the following sources:

- Observations
- Interviews with Schut
- Video and audio recordings
- Student written reflections
- The Sensitivity Meter

	Drama/Theater	6
	Dance	3
	Music	3
	Visual Arts	5
	Museum education	1
	Primary education/ Culture coordination	1

Figure 2. Student arts disciplines

	Drama/ Theater	Dance	Music	Visual Arts	Culture Coordinator
Primary school	2	1	1	1	1
Secondary school	1			3	1
Secondary vocational school	1				
After-school arts	2				
Teacher training primary school	1		1		
Teacher training secondary school	2	1		1	
External arts organization		2	1	1	
Own arts practice	2			1	

Figure 3. Distribution of student fields of work

Observations and interviews with Schut

Information was collected each day of the course by observing the interactions between Schut and the class followed by after-class one-on-one interviews with him in which he was asked to respond to four questions (see appendix II) related to his planning and the outcomes of the day. The observation and interview material was written up as an account of each day's activities. On twelve of the days, video and audio recordings in the class and of the interviews were made in order to record the actual dialogue and to minimize the incidence of interpretation. This material was transcribed, translated, and added to each day's description.

The student's written reflections

As one of the educational requirements of this course, the students were given written reflection questions (see appendix II) after each of the course days in year 1. For the purposes of this study, the written reflection questions were adapted to the research needs in three ways: 1) They were framed as open questions; 2) The questions were standardized; and 3) They were extended through year 2. To this end, the students were asked these same standard questions after nine of the sixteen classes (four classes in year 1 and five classes in year 2). This created a set of data in the form of ongoing written reflections. At the end of years 1 and 2 respectively, the students were also given two different series of written questions as a means to summarize, contextualize, and evaluate their perceptions of their own learning. This method of reflection was in line with the Ipsative approach (Sluijsmans, 2008) of self-assessment where one reflects on one's own growth only in relation to oneself.

The Sensitivity Meter

The Sensitivity Meter (see appendix III) is a self-assessment instrument that I developed, inspired by

international artist collective, The Authentic Boys, during their artist-in-residency at the AHK Master of Education in the Arts. It consists of a list of ten qualities that they deemed essential for practitioners in the arts and on which they focused their workshops during their residency. The ten sensitivities are: playfulness, perspectives, empathy, movement, courage, curiosity, failure/imbalance, dialogue, shock, and nerve costume. Under each of the qualities are key descriptive words accompanied by a number scale of 1 to 10. The Meter is filled in individually by scoring oneself on each quality.

The Sensitivity Meter was developed as a self-assessment instrument by listing each of the qualities with a few words of definition from the Authentic Boys accompanied by a number scale of 1 to 10. I first tested the Sensitivity Meter with the group of master students who had participated with the Authentic Boys during their residency in 2013-2014. I implemented it at the end of their residency as a reflection instrument for the students to examine their personal experiences with the sensitivities. They not only scored themselves on the Meter, but also explained their highest and lowest scores. With permission from the students, I shared the results with the Authentic Boys to give them feedback on the effect of their workshop material from the students' points of view and in their own words.

Even though this list of sensitivities originally came from other artists than the artist-teacher of the course being researched, the students in this study were open to the possibility that, while following this course, these qualities could also apply to themselves as arts practitioners. But first they needed to 'make it their own'. Before filling it in, I discussed each sensitivity with the class by sharing the initial definitions from the Authentic Boys. As a group, they filled out each definition with key words so that they were all agreed on a

common definition for each sensitivity. I added the class definitions to each sensitivity in the Meter. The students were then given the Sensitivity Meter as a pre-test before the start of the two-year course in year 1. The students individually scored themselves as they perceived themselves to be at that moment and sent their Meters back to me. At the end of the two years of the course, the students were given the Sensitivity Meter again as a post-test, asked to score themselves at that moment, and send those back to me. At the end of the two years, the students were asked to compare and reflect on their own scores in their written reflections.

Because I had a repeated sampling from fifteen of the nineteen students (ten sensitivities per student) with two measures for each sensitivity, the matched pairs t-test was performed to make a statistical comparison between the pre- and post-test scores of the fifteen students for each sensitivity. The statistical analysis is in appendix III. A description of the findings can be found in the student section under *5.1.1. Personal Discoveries*. However, it is important to note that this instrument was used here strictly as a tool for self-assessment and a means for dialogue between student and teacher. This was also in line with the Ipsative approach for this course. But it is not meant as an instrument for normative or psychological testing. For those uses, more research on the validity and reliability would be required.



Meetings between students in speed-date format to help them form groups

4.

ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTION ONE:

The Approach of the Artist-Teacher

What is the approach of artist-teacher Henk Schut when teaching interdisciplinary, artistic research to master students in arts education from different artistic disciplines?

4.1 WHAT IS THE ARTIST-TEACHER'S DIDACTIC APPROACH TO TEACHING ARTISTIC RESEARCH?

The didactic approach of artist-teacher Schut is an experientially-oriented program driven by active, collaborative work in which he puts the students to work as artists. The research question is answered first by a description of his curriculum design, including the physical setting he offered for the course and the social-learning environment he created by developing the class into a working collective. Following these are the instructional strategies he implemented and the research skills that he taught in order to better equip students to perform their own collaborative artistic research.

4.1.1 Curriculum design

Schut developed his approach to this course about artistic researching based upon his own creative research processes as an artist. Artistic thinking and researching for him involves a cyclical process of observation of specific material, experimentation of that material with self-imposed restrictions, and critical reflection. When creating new work, he uses the investigation process of the material to inspire him to develop the form and the story of the new piece. Using his own studio practice as a model, Schut made didactic choices for this course that reflected the skills and conditions he found essential for doing artistic research. He explained, 'I literally follow my process. That's exactly what I do.' Schut designed the two-year course as an experientially based learning situation about the creative process by deconstructing his own steps and scaffolding the introduction and practice of them with the students.

Schut explained his motivation to teach in the following way:

I am interested in teaching because I have to externalize my own process sometimes. I want to teach because I have to share my work, although I find it very difficult. I don't like it. It took me years to learn to share. But it is also useful for me. I learn from it. Now I am getting more fun from it. But in the beginning I found it very difficult.

In his curriculum design, Schut used the first year of the course to prepare the students for independent work in year two. In year 1, he planned and ordered the course days around the investigation of individual themes for each day (Object, Space/Location/Time, Light, Memory, Sound, Sound/Music, and Repetition/Sound/Music). He split the days into two parts. His input in the mornings consisted of teacher-led exercises to explore the theme of the day. In the afternoons, he gave the students small group assignments in which they were asked to develop their own research around the day's theme using the material and insights from the morning. At the end of the day, the groups shared their investigations in the form of short presentations. Throughout each day, Schut led the whole class in discussions during which the students reflected on their experiences with the exercises, their group work, and each other's presentations.

In year 2, Schut changed his approach from teacher-led exercises centered around the exploration of themes to the stimulation of autonomous group work initiated by the students themselves. Instead of the students following his lead, he explicitly turned the leadership of the investigations over to them and took on a supportive role as coach and as facilitator of critical reflection and

creative problem-solving. His goal for year 2 was for the students to find partners in class based on similar research interests with whom they would embark on artistic investigations of their own choosing. The students chose starting points using material and research skills discovered in year 1 and, through experimentation and reflection, developed those further. He reminded them to consider the possibilities offered by the NDSM environment as locations for their work.

Physical learning environment: The location and scheduling of the course played a central role in the content. Different from the other courses in the master which were held in classroom settings, this course was located at the old shipyard and enormous warehouse where Schut and other creative entrepreneurs have their studios. Eight entire days, once a month, were planned for this course throughout each school year, sixteen days in total. The location took the students out of the school environment and into Schut's work terrain and allowed for a total immersion into the activities of the day where, often, the location itself became the focus. He explained to the students that he wanted them to think of the class as beginning, not the moment that they entered the studio, but on the ferry that took them on the fifteen-minute journey from the Central Station in Amsterdam to the shipyard in Amsterdam North.

Social learning environment: Schut coached the group into becoming a working collective who could share feedback about personal artistic discoveries and those within their collaborations, make plans together, and place the activities of the days into the larger context of artistic research. To this end, he began the course by helping the students establish a social working environment together that was 1) safe for risk-taking; 2)

welcomed each individual's personal responses; 3) valued the multi-perspectives of others; and 4) gave critical feedback to each other on their own work. In year 2, his goal was for the group to carry these attitudes and skills over into their independent work.

Class-planning discussions led by Schut about the entire direction and goals of the activities in year 1 and 2 also supported the social-learning environment in which the students had a say. Schut played a role in establishing this give and take by always responding to student questions about planning and content. He also invited student input during the days ('How do you want your critique?'). Spontaneous contributions from the students were infrequent at the beginning but picked up in frequency in the first half of year 1 as he asked for their personal experiences in response to exercises as well as feedback about the themes and student work.

4.1.2 Instructional strategies

Leading exercises: Throughout the first year, Schut led thematic-based exercises with three goals in mind. First and foremost, the exercises had a collective function. He used them for the purpose of creating new, in-class experiences with the entire group as common points of reference which they could use throughout the day and refer to on other days. This approach put the students into the role of artistic researchers who could experience multiple ways of investigating in relation to the individual themes. Secondly, the exercises were designed to practice specific skills within the investigation process. Thirdly, through the process of working through and reflecting on the exercises together, the students were also practicing the skills involved in collaboration.

Schut explained in an interview how he planned and intuitively implemented his exercises with his goals in mind:

I plan more than I use, much more. I select the exercises from my planning on the spot. Now we need to go deeper, now we need to play a simple game. You have to watch and tune the group into the selected elements. Only then, can they discover the possibilities. If you overload them, then they only follow you. I have my basic principles ready. But I want to remain flexible. I get my cues from the group.

Coaching autonomous groups: In the second year, the teacher-directed work led by Schut transitioned into student-directed work. In his new role as coach, he visited the groups individually to give feedback and facilitated the critical class-reflection discussions during which the groups shared their progress and asked for feedback from the whole group. In the last three days, when the students were refining their group research projects in preparation for sharing them with a small, invited audience, Schut consulted with each group separately, giving them specific feedback, and urging them to work more precisely and keeping them thinking about the audience's experience of their work.

Sharing professional experiences: Storytelling became an integral part of Schut's instructional strategy. He drew on his own long career as a multidisciplinary artist by regularly telling relevant stories about his own work, his collaboration with other artists, the artist's world of his parents, and observations around the play of his young children. To illustrate specific artistic concepts, he often shared his own and other artists' solutions to artistic problems they had encountered during the creation and realization phases.

The artist as teacher: As an artist, Schut sees his approach to this course as different to that of a teacher

who comes prepared with goals and explanations. He described it in the following way:

Artistic research is not about what you already know. You put yourself in a state of mind to search for what you do not know and you trust the process. That is how you prepare. You begin from nothing and you react in the moment. Stepping into that emptiness can, and maybe should, feel uncomfortable or even annoying. In class, that ‘not knowing’ is between us. That makes the interdisciplinarity possible, and I am the facilitator of the process.

4.1.3 Teaching skills for the artistic-research process

Focus on themes: Schut planned the first year of the course so that each day would be centered around the investigation of one theme or a set of related themes: Object, Space/Location/Time, Light, Memory, Sound, Sound/Music, and Repetition/Sound/Music. By isolating one theme or set of themes per day, Schut focused the students’ attention by exploring each theme with material which they could then investigate and manipulate. He summed up this starting point in the after-class interview by explaining, ‘Artistic material has its own language.’ By the end of the first year, the collective examination of the individual themes had created an in-class repertoire of ‘artistic’ material and ways of researching that became a reservoir for use throughout the second year. In year 2, the students applied their individual and collective discoveries from the thematic research as they worked together to define their own research questions and perform their own investigations.

Research skills: Imbedded within the exploration of the themes in year 1, Schut introduced and practiced with the students what for him are the basic skills of an artistic researcher and mirrored his own investigation process as an artist:

Sensory observation: In the mornings during year 1, Schut started the days by leading guided exercises which asked the students to interact physically and sensorially with the theme of the day. This tuned the students into the theme by becoming open to receive new information, connecting themselves to the material and using their senses to give themselves useful feedback. These experiences also reminded the students to use their own sensory observations as part of their research into the themes. As teachers in the arts themselves, the master students were already familiar with the starting point of reawakening sensory observations in their own students. What was new in this course, was going through the exercises themselves under the guidance of Schut, who was purposefully creating common ground with the group.

Objective observation: Schut used the time in the mornings to focus the students’ attention on examining material related to the theme. As a skill, his goal was to sharpen the students’ ability to see and describe what was actually in front of them instead of already connecting associations to it. This also worked as a collaborative strategy, giving the students from different arts disciplines a level playing field when choosing material for further investigation, selecting material from the options they had experienced together in class.

Selecting material: Schut begins his own artistic research with physical material. Here, he expanded the definition of material to include the students seeing themselves, each other, and their direct environment as material as well. To mirror his own work process, he

gave the students the assignment to come prepared for three classes in year 1 in relation to the day themes of *Object, Light and Sound*. He asked them to select and bring from home an item related to the next theme. This meant that outside of class, the students already needed to think about the theme, considering which object of theirs would constitute usable or interesting material. Implicit in this selection process was the idea of the connection of one's chosen material to oneself. In class, Schut took the time for each student to share their object and explain their choice.

To make an explicit point about 'being humble and letting the object lead', Schut used the following exercise in relation to the theme of Object.

THEME: OBJECT Schut brought in a life-size Japanese puppet and challenged the group with the following question: 'How can you let the puppet lead you instead of you leading the puppet?' Students volunteered to control the puppet while the rest of the class observed the effect on the puppet's movements, eye contact, and 'personality'.

For the themes, *Space/Time/Location, Memory, Sound/Music/Repetition*, Schut used teacher-led exercises to explore the theme and to create new material from the students themselves. In the following example of two exercises around memory, Schut created experiences with the students to introduce the idea that one's own cognitive and physical memory could become material for artistic research.

THEME: MEMORY In the first exercise, the entire class was asked to reconstruct from memory each one's own arrival at the NDSM studio, in the correct order and with the correct actions but without communicating with one another. The second exercise involved the class working in pairs, one putting their partner physically into a series of different positions. After seven minutes, the partners were asked to recreate their own series of positions from memory.

Analyzing the qualities of the material: The next step for Schut in his own creative process is to play with and analyze physical material to identify its qualities. In the classes with the themes of Light and Sound, after each student explained their choice of object, Schut led the group in an analysis about the observed and potential qualities of each item. In the explorations of themes using the students themselves as the source of material, the analyses began with a reflection discussion about their own experiences before going on to discuss their findings as potential material. In both cases, this process of analysis can also be seen as a collaborative strategy, one in which the group examined material collectively and made it 'ready' for potential, further investigation.

Occasionally, Schut shared physical material from his own art work or from his life relevant to the theme of the day and/or the skill he wanted to highlight. Related to the theme of object, he brought in the thick, red rope that he had had specially designed for his public installation that ran between the Van Gogh Museum and the Hermitage in Amsterdam. He explained his choice for the rope, the route it took, and the complexities that he faced with the City of Amsterdam when installing it on the buildings.

Experimenting with restrictions: In his studio work, Schut develops his own research questions

through cycles of experimentation with physical material. He built this process into his guided exercises by often using the same basic exercise, but repeating it several times, each time posing a new problem. Taking the students through a progression of exercises not only deepened the investigation into the theme itself, they were also subtle lessons in the first steps that echoed his own vision of artistic researching; working with the same material, but experimenting with it by introducing new restrictions. The self-imposing of new restrictions or problems to solve is the way Schut evolves his own artistic research questions.

Below is an example of a progression of exercises involving time, space and location. For each progression, Schut gave the group a new problem in relation to time and space. In the last challenge, he also gave them the additional problem of location.

THEMES: TIME/ SPACE/ LOCATION Schut challenged the students to experience the themes of time and space together through a series of exercises in which they were asked to cross the studio and then the warehouse within specific time limits of one, five and ten minutes. Implicit in this challenge, was the need for the students to develop their own strategies for each location and to create their own spatial experiences of time.

Critical reflection: The last phase in Schut's cyclical process of artistic researching is the reflection on one's own research questions and the resultant experiments. It is the end of the process but also leads directly to the beginning of developing new research questions with new experiments that could result in new answers and insights. Because he sees the skill of critical reflection as essential to the experimental process, and even more so in this course where the students needed to work collaboratively,

Schut explicitly taught the students to sharpen those skills which involved: 1) Discussions of personal experiences with the exercises; 2) Modeling; 3) Using objective observation as feedback; and 4) Questioning as a participant. These and the two other reflection techniques in this course are described in section 5.

4.2 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CRITICAL REFLECTION IN SCHUT'S APPROACH?

Essential to Schut's own creative process is his use of critical reflection to solve problems and to evaluate his work-in-progress. Mirroring this, Schut used the two-year trajectory of the course to develop critical reflection skills in the students as they made discoveries in class and developed their own work. The specific descriptions of the four didactic strategies – discussion of personal experiences, modeling feedback, objective observations for feedback, questioning as a participant – are divided by year 1 and 2 to reflect his scaffolded implementation of these skills. A further two reflection strategies – day registrations in year 1 and written personal reflections in years 1 and 2 – further supported the in-class work and are also explained below.

4.2.1 Year 1

Discussion of personal experiences: At the beginning of year 1, Schut led the reflection discussions himself, only asking the students to share their own, personal experiences of the exercises in short discussions. Just as he had given assignments to ask the students to connect physical material to themselves, in reflection discussions about the exercises, he encouraged the students to share their thoughts and feelings in relation to what they experienced. These discussions early in the first

year also helped to lay a foundation for the class to develop as a working collective that could trust each member enough to be open to the multi-perspectives within the group.

Modeling feedback: Beginning on the fourth day of year 1, Schut led the reflection discussions around the students' small-group experiments, adding doses of his own feedback. Through the teacher-led reflection, the students learned to observe and give feedback on each other's work by listening to Schut's observations.

Here is the feedback from Schut in response to an afternoon assignment around the theme of light.

THEME OF LIGHT: This group developed and lit three scenes using different sorts of lights, using the shadows the lights created, and also making use of the darkness. Feedback Schut: 'You created a triptych, three locations that slowly came together to tell one story. Trust in your own images, make choices to enhance your own story. You don't have to create extra actions for your audience. We saw your images more clearly projected onto the wall than "real". Let the object lead. Consider the placement of your audience.'

In the class that followed, the students began to spontaneously share their own observations so that the feedback rounds became ever growing discussions. From this day onwards, the pattern of reflection now included the reactions from the students as well as the feedback from Schut. Reflection often began by first sharing personal reactions to the experiences and then moved on to the sharing of critical analysis.

At the end of the first year, the students planned and led the class in personal and critical reflection about

their own group work. The type of questions that Schut usually asked were now being asked by the students themselves ('What did you hear? What did you "see" in relation to the sounds?') which then encouraged a sharing of impressions and associations in the group. In that way, one can conclude that Schut modeled the artistic thinking and questioning for the students which they, in turn, absorbed into their own way of working and reflecting.

4.2.2 Year 2

From the second day in year 2, the days consisted of autonomous, collaborative work interspersed with collective discussions. Schut continued his modeling of feedback and added two more techniques to train the students in critical analysis for working on their own and sharing critique: objective observations for feedback and questioning as a participant.

Objective Observations: On the second day of year 2, Schut explained the 'rules' and reasons for giving feedback using objective observations as feedback during the whole-group discussions as well as in their own autonomous work groups. Directly following his instructions, the students put these rules into practice in a carefully guided reflection exercise. Schut explained:

The strength is to observe each other's work, not so much to have an opinion, but to see what happens. That frees you from [...] coloring your observations with expectations. Then you are open to each other's work by just watching. Ask each other, 'What happened here? What have I seen? What were the principles of the work? How were we involved as the audience?' You work and rework slowly by asking questions.

From the interview after this class, Schut explained which of his interventions he thought had worked well. His answer:

I had a very clear expectation of the day because I know what kind of preparations I made. The exercise with perception, saying what you have seen. Pure, describe what you see. And then, to hear from the others all kinds of things you had not thought about it – context, doubts, personal issues, those communicate just as loudly as what you have not said. To see how the dialogue between the students could grow by showing their work to each other, observing objectively, and how questions could help to give it shape to sharpen that process.

He was asked to further clarify his answer with the question, ‘How do you see that active reflecting, as a means of communication?’ He answered, ‘No, it is the work. The act of doing is central. Doing is the motor of the work.’

In the next class, the groups spontaneously took charge of the class-reflection discussions about their own work. This was not planned or instructed beforehand, but arose out of their own need to hear how their work was being received and if their intentions were clear. They came prepared with their own questions (‘Could you see what our concept was?’ ‘At which moments did you feel tension?’) and asked the class to respond to artistic options (‘You can change the text or you change the action.’) In problem-solving, give-and-take discussions, they themselves stimulated the critical analyses of their own work with the class and Schut.

Questioning as a participant: Also, in this class, Schut implemented his fourth reflection strategy: questioning as a participant. Now, instead of sharing his own

observations, he stimulated discussion among the students around artistic points he had observed by questioning them. His role in the discussion shifted from leader to more of a participant who raised creative problems for both the makers and the rest of the class to discuss. He asked questions to help clarify the makers’ intent: ‘Did you work with a randomly or purposely chosen story?’ ‘Are you asking something from us as the audience?’ Or he made artistic suggestions to sharpen their work: ‘Seeing the faces is important. Did you film that?’ He also gave the groups positive feedback: ‘Actually, what I like about your research, is that it contains so much detail and precision, a good basis to develop it further.’ Before the lunch break, Schut told the students: ‘Use all of these brains. It is a luxury to have twenty brains together, as twenty assistants.’ During the after-class interview, Schut said of this day: ‘There is a great deal of feedback in the group itself. This is the way it is supposed to be. It is an enormous step from two lessons ago.’

By the fourth day in year 2, the students demonstrated that they had absorbed the rules of objective observations by coming prepared with questions to lead the reflection discussions about their own work as well as spontaneously giving feedback to others in the same manner as Schut. Schut’s input in the discussion was again one as a participant who asked questions to clarify artistic intent. But now, within the context of a 40-minute reflection discussion, he intuitively led the students with his questions toward the consideration and the solving of specific, artistic problems (‘What were the restrictions? Did you research the location? What were the rules for the audience?’), pressed the students to think more precisely, and kept up the tempo of the conversation. Accompanying much of his input, Schut also shared critical moments in his own creative process and personal stories to illustrate his points. From the

transcriptions, it is clear to see that when Schut asked a question or made a comment, it started a new discussion among the students. He focused his compliments to students on their artistic solutions: ‘Good idea. I agree with you, but you also need to share why.’ ‘You are giving us useful feedback.’

In the interview after this class, he was asked: ‘Did you have the feeling that the students were directing the process and analysis themselves? Or did you think, “Now I must intervene. I need to steer this in the right direction?”’ Schut answered:

No. It felt very organic. I didn’t have the feeling that I needed to push things even though I often tend to think that. Because they are trying out so many things, [problems] become apparent and they see it themselves. They need to solve this together because they have taken the steps in the process together. If you take the steps together, then the conclusions become clear. Through this process [of doing and reflecting], they are learning the rules.

From then on, the work rhythm took the form of autonomous student groups with several 40-minute reflection discussions to share and give feedback to each other on specific artistic problems. Schut continued his role as participant-questioner. Two more reflection strategies accompanied the work in class, the day registrations throughout year 1 and the written personal reflections in years 1 and 2.

Day registrations: An extra didactic construct in year 1, the day registration, was developed by Schut and myself as an active way for students to reflect upon the themes and activities in class. At the end of each day, two or three students volunteered to prepare a day registration

about how they had experienced the previous class. This was to be shared at the start of the following class. Working together, the students chose what they would reflect upon and how they would present it to the class. The most popular choices for the form were 1) a short presentation; 2) an interactive presentation; and 3) assignments for the group stemming from a research question the day registration students had developed themselves. Starting from the second day of year 1, the day registrations began each new class as an esthetic and/or interactive reflection and also added to the practice of small, autonomous group work.

Written self-reflections: The written reflections were intended for use by the students to capture what they deemed important from their in-class experiences, to use as a reference for assessing their own learning, and to remember which themes and exercises had potential for their own work. The written reflections in years 1 and 2 were meant as a personal guide for each student to take a moment after each day, to reflect privately on what they had learned from the input from Schut, from each other, and what they might have (re)discovered about artistic research. End-of-the-year reflections in year 1 asked the students to sum up their experiences with artistic research and collaboration and to make a connection from this course to at least one other in the master program. At the end of year 2, the students were also asked what, from this entire course, they would ‘take with them’ to their own arts education practice. This is the only course in the master program where the students did not receive grades, but which aligned itself with the Ipsative assessment method (Sluijsmans, 2008) as part of a professional development model where the learner evaluates his/her own learning in relation only to him/herself. As stated before, the students’ written reflections were also

used, with their permission, to collect the student information for this study in relation to their perception about what they had learned from the input from Schut. The written reflections were never discussed in class. They remained a private means of communicating and reflecting between each student, Schut, and myself.

4.3 HOW DOES SCHUT STIMULATE COLLABORATION AMONG THE STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT ARTS DISCIPLINES?

Over the two-year span of the course, Schut continually created new opportunities for collaboration in order for students to undergo different experiences of working together and to interact with partners from different arts disciplines. In all of the group work in both years, the choice of partner(s) was left open to the students. The following section explains how he used the forming of groups, group composition, and his assignments so that collaboration within an interdisciplinary setting itself came under investigation.

Group forming: The experience of collaboration was equally imbedded in the investigations of the themes and the practice of basic skills around artistic research. Just as in traditional teaching, Schut planned not only his content in year 1, but also the development of the group dynamic of the class. He felt that a group must grow to trust each other, be open to one another and share their experiences in class as requirements for collaboration. He began this process in the afternoon of the first day of year 1, by grouping the students for his guided exercises in a variety of different configurations. He had them participate as individuals, as an ensemble, as duos, in small groups, and finally, as two teams. He drew from this

selection of group forming throughout year 1. He created the frames for collaboration for the students to fill in themselves. When asked to work together, the partners and groups were never fixed until the last three days in year 2 in preparation for sharing their research. On all the other days, the students chose their own partners, many choosing someone they had not yet worked with.

Throughout year 1, the student had multiple opportunities for partnering with fellow students from different disciplines. These experiences gave them ample practice in working with others with potentially different thinking and working strategies and yet, needing to find common ground. This practice in collaboration in year 1 paved the way for the autonomous group collaborations in year 2.

Short group assignments: From the second day of year 1, most afternoons were devoted to forming small teams to initiate and carry out their own investigations around the theme of the day. These short assignments within a limited time frame became a controlled environment in which the students could work with partners of their own choosing and practice the basic skills of artistic researching. In their groups, the students experientially developed ways to identify their own research questions and initiate their own artistic investigations with each other. By sharing a quote from Picasso that echoed his own vision – You don't search, you find - Schut reminded the students to start their investigations with concrete material and follow that lead instead of beginning with abstract ideas. It is also clear from these examples below that the use of the basic skills are contained in his instructions for the afternoon: be open to the material and use your senses as well as your objectivity to observe and develop your research together.

Three examples of small-group afternoon assignments:

THEME OF LIGHT: For the afternoon assignment, Schut asked the students to work in small groups, creating a three-minute presentation using the lights brought in by the group members and making use of the qualities identified in the discussion as well as finding their own. He gave the students the following tips: 'Focus on work strategies, your process. Begin by experimenting. You need to trust each other enough to fail.'

THEME OF MEMORY: Schut's instructions: 'You will create a four-minute presentation, just like we have done on previous days. Use your collective and/or individual memories. You can also make use of subject matter that we have worked with on other days. Keep the focus on the strange thing that is called memory. Consider the form, the content and the limit of four minutes.'

THEME OF SOUND: Schut's instructions: 'I propose that you work in small groups and create something very short with sound. You then share with us what you have noticed and decide how you want us to listen. I am curious what you permit yourself to hear as "trusted" sound. Sound is a subject in its own right. I think our investigations would go too quickly with the inclusion of music.'

Autonomous group work: In year 2, small-group autonomous work became the central, didactic strategy of each day. In order to form these groups, Schut used a speed-date format in which the students shared their own interests around the repertoire of theme material in year 1 in order to look for their own partners with which to share their independent, artistic research throughout year 2.

In the following excerpts of the first day of year 2, Schut explained the purpose of the speed date to the students for the investigations in year 2. The students were to look for partners with whom they could share content as well as keep an open mind about the ways to collaborate.

Schut: 'Think which categories from last year you would like to share during the speed date. You will find partners and create the groups by discovering common interests in specific material and not on the basis of "I have this agenda". Begin with each other from emptiness.' Schut: 'The collaboration can take another form.' He showed a picture of a toy installation from his children. He said:

The children made an agreement, one builds, the other plays and creates the story. It is a sort of collaboration. That is also possible. But begin together and start with a thing [...] We need to keep the attention for individual material as well as the restrictions in the second year. Keep the focus on one thing and don't make it too big by including all sorts of other things. I don't want to miss those kinds of observations in the second year.

Collaborative planning: There were a few significant moments during the two-year course where the student input, honored by Schut, influenced the direction of the class as a whole. On the fifth day in year 1, two students had created an exercise for their day registration around the theme of sound and combined it with film. Inspired by their activity, Schut abandoned his own plans and used their example to spontaneously create a new afternoon assignment for the whole class.

At the end of year 1, the students initiated a discussion with Schut about the planning and goals for year 2. A reflection discussion ensued with the students' answers setting the overall goals for what they wanted to achieve in their autonomous groups.

It is noteworthy that the students initiated the ensuing discussion through the use of questions.

The students asked Schut and each other the following questions:

- How do we begin?
- What is our goal?
- What is Schut's role during our independent work?
- How do we create our focus?
- How do we set parameters for ourselves?
- Can we work from our own fascinations?
- Can we try something that we have never done before?
- Do we work toward a presentation or something else?
- Does a presentation also give insight into the artistic research behind it?

There was also further brainstorming about how to show the research process in the presentations.

Schut shared the question he was wrestling with: 'How can we create in the second year the same clarity with the extremely limited choices that we worked with in the first year? The second year is far more difficult than the first year due to the amount of freedom you have.'

As a result of this discussion, the class decided that they wanted the second year to be about examining and presenting artistic research processes instead of working toward a product. They also wanted to look for ways to connect all the presentations with each other. They agreed to continuously share their work and give feedback to each other so that everyone would know what the individual groups were working on. Schut summed

up his perspective and hopes for year 2: 'In the first year, I was the motor. In the second year, you are the motor and I follow your lead. I am always looking for how much input I should give and when I need to keep my mouth shut.'

4.4 SUMMARY

Didactic approach: Schut translates his own studio practice into didactic structures for the students. Artistic research for him is initiated when he interacts with specific material through a cyclical process of observation, experimentation, problem-solving and reflection. Schut actively teaches his version of artistic researching by deconstructing these processes and addressing them individually through teacher-led exercises, facilitated reflections, and autonomous work. Most notably, Schut, himself a multidisciplinary artist, often uses examples from his own art work, his experience with other artists, references to other artists and personal stories as a means to illustrate specific and relevant, artistic points during discussions.

Schut locates his course at the old shipyard where he also has his studio. The off-campus location provides both a creative and historical environment which he uses as an integral part of his program. Unlike the other courses of the master which meet weekly, Schut meets with the students on eight full days spread throughout each school year.

Schut develops a collaborative working relationship between himself and the students by repeatedly demonstrating an openness to student ideas about planning and content. His collegial attitude further serves to instigate trust in the students for his leadership into the process

of artistic researching and paves the way for trust among the students in their own collaborative work throughout the course. This social-learning environment of trust and being open also extends to Schut himself. This is demonstrated by his repeated invitations for student input and feedback on both practical and artistic decisions and the taking seriously of their input. He uses collaborative planning and reflection discussions to help build the class into a working collective.

Schut intentionally prepares the students in year 1 for year 2 where they will need to collaborate in self-directed teams. Throughout year 1, Schut isolates the themes of object, space, time, location, light, memory, sound, music, and repetition for investigation, creating a repertoire of material and experiences for use in year 2. During year 1, what he sees as the skills for artistic researchers – objective and sensory observation, experimentation with restrictions, and critical reflection – are practiced in teacher-led exercises, small group assignments and follow-up reflections in relation to the theme of each day. Depending upon his goals for each exercise, he gives instructions, side-coaches, and/or participates with the group. In reaction to the small-group assignments, Schut uses modeling to share his own feedback and critical analysis of student work and encourages the students to participate.

Critical Reflection: In-class reflection as a skill was imbedded in the days and used by Schut as a research and collaboration strategy. He used specific techniques which he implemented as a progression of skills. He began by building up the trust within the group itself by asking them to share their personal reactions to the exercises. This also served to connect the material to the students and to see their own reactions to the material as a viable source of information in their own research processes.

Once he felt the trust within the group was established, Schut began training the students to develop their own critical analysis and feedback during the reflection of their own and each other's work. He built up their critical reflection skills using a progression of didactic strategies: first through modeling, followed by an exercise in using objective observation for feedback and, finally, questioning as a participant. He did this by portioning out what and how much feedback to give to the students in relation to the exercises and their small-group work in year 1 and then in reaction to their autonomous work in year 2. During year 2, Schut changed his teacher-directed input to one of coach. Under his guidance, collective, problem-solving discussions became a forum for the entire group to respond to the issues and questions that arose from the students' research in their own groups. In doing so, interdisciplinary collaboration itself became a subject of investigation equal to that of artistic research.

The day registrations were introduced in year 1 as an additional in-class reflection strategy. These were developed by small groups of students and, when shared with the whole group, were experienced as unique, esthetic, and/or interactive reflections of the previous day. Ongoing written reflections gave students a self-reflection instrument with which to take distance from each day's activities and record their own personal experiences about the input of Schut, their work with each other, and what they had (re)discovered about artistic research.

Collaboration: Schut develops the group's ability to collaborate from short, teacher-directed research assignments in year 1 to autonomous work in year 2. In all of the work in both years, the students are always given the freedom to choose their own partners and groups. Schut sees trust and being open to one another as fundamental

to the group dynamics needed for collaboration. Within the theme-based exercises in year 1, he builds up these collaboration skills through his choice of exercises and changes the student groupings to suit not only the goals of the exercises but the social development of the class as a whole. In year 2, Schut introduces exercises to help the students discover their own research partners, who then autonomously define their own artistic research questions and plan their own work processes.

The students, themselves, are teaching professionals from different arts disciplines. They bring all of their skills, knowledge and experience to the course and are asked to work in a variety of multidisciplinary groupings. It is a deliberate choice from Schut that the material at hand focuses the attention of the students and creates a fresh commonality. He says that that is what they all share. In doing so, he asks that the students react spontaneously in the moment rather than starting from their individual disciplines. According to Schut, this creates an organic, interdisciplinary collaboration as they explore material together, frame collective research questions, invent ways to experiment and share critique.



End presentation of group experiment: a network of smell-memories

5.

ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTION TWO:

Student Perceptions Related to Schut's Input

How do students experience the lessons by artist-teacher Henk Schut? What are their perceptions of their own learning in relation to his approach?

In section 5.1, the student's responses related to Schut's didactic input and interventions are considered. Using their written reflections as source material, the students wrote about personal discoveries related to Schut's social-learning environment, his thematic-based exercises, the in-class reflection discussions and their own qualities as researchers they identified using the Sensitivity Meter. They made artistic discoveries in relation to artistic reflection and Schut's stories, practicing objective observations for feedback, and their experiences with artistic research.

Following in section 5.2 are their discoveries related to their experiences with collaboration. These include the reflection of their collaborative skills within small and autonomous group work, their experiences with day registrations, their reaction to a collaboration experiment from Schut, his coaching during their independent work, and their experiences of working in multidisciplinary teams.

5.1 DISCOVERIES RELATED TO DIDACTIC INPUT AND INTERVENTIONS

5.1.1 Personal discoveries

Social-learning environment: The students identified Schut's social-learning environment in year 1 as one in which the general atmosphere was playful and where they felt safe to take risks. Many of the comments from the students made reference to him being flexible and identified the specific times where he adapted his own, prepared program to ideas that were introduced by students. It was seen as 'a good sign that he takes our ideas seriously.' With his focus on sensory observations and the use of physical exploration, some students shared personal discoveries that had to do with becoming aware

of and using new qualities of themselves while working within this learning environment.

In the lessons from Henk, I have to prepare myself for the physical experiences. In my own work, I am mostly at work in my own head. My thinking process becomes a work process done with my hands and not really with my whole body. During these lessons, I have learned that I can do research in another way.

The students also reflected upon the nature of the exercises and assignments they were experiencing with Schut. They identified activities that were intended for each person to ready themselves for the day's work by 'creating a state of mind of sensitivity and opening oneself up on all fronts.' Others saw activities, such as those with trust, as contributing to the group's readiness for collaboration. Assignments were described as open, but with restrictions.

One student described the days with Schut during year 1 of the course in the following way: 'Starting with a theme and focus from Henk, you discover, on the work floor, where your own passion lies with respect to that theme, and how to collaborate with others [from various disciplines] to give shape to your ideas using your artistic knowledge.'

With the focus in year 2 shifting away from the teacher-student relationship to peer-driven work groups, some students wrote positively about liking the complete control over their own research processes in their autonomous groups. One noted that while it gave freedom, it also created a kind of chaos. Further, as the result of a lengthy discussion, it was decided by the entire class, that the work in year 2 would focus on the process of artistic researching instead of working toward an end

product. Many students wrote that they were pleased that Schut honored this proposal from the class.

Thematic teacher-led exercises: The students reflected upon the impact of the thematic teacher-led exercises in year 1 with a long list of individual discoveries. This revealed that the same activity had generated a variety of personal reactions in the group as the students wrote about how they had developed their own relationship to each theme. Common responses had to do with the students feeling that a particular exercise had helped them to develop an increased awareness of using their senses, the use of their own bodies, their own actions in relation to the movements of others, or made keener observations about their immediate surroundings. One student characterized the thematic teacher-led activities as 'expeditions of discovery using the senses to experience things directly.'

Sharing personal reflections: Following a thematic exercise or series of exercises, were moments of group reflection under Schut's leadership. The students valued these opportunities to hear about the in-class experiences from multiple perspectives. They often wrote how this collective feedback added another dimension to their own experiences. For example, in the discussion that followed a soundscape exercise, students learned from each other's reactions that there were not only positive reactions to the experiences. Two students shared how they felt afraid and vulnerable while listening with their eyes closed because they had no control over where the sounds came from. Many students commented in class and in their written reflections that this sharing had opened their eyes to the variety of reactions possible and to be more alert to this in the future.

The Sensitivity Meter: The Sensitivity Meter (see appendix III) was given at the beginning and end of the course, which coincided with the beginning and end of the master program. The students were asked to score themselves between 1 and 10 in relation to ten sensitivities that were first defined by the group: playfulness, perspectives, empathy, movement, courage, curiosity, failure/imbalance, dialogue, shock, and nerve costume. Figure 4 compares the beginning and end average scores for each sensitivity from the fifteen students who responded both times. The black lines represent the average scores of fifteen students for each sensitivity at the beginning of the course; the gray lines represent the average scores at the end of the course. The graph shows that the students as a group scored themselves higher in all of the sensitivities at the end of the two years. Playfulness (6.2) and Failure/imbalance (5.57) started out as the lowest scores, Empathy (7.28) and Curiosity (6.9) the highest. The most growth in the average scores is seen in the sensitivities Courage (6.4 to 7.95) and Nerve Costume (5.8 to 7.5).

Figure 5 shows a comparison of the average beginning and end scores for each of the fifteen students. The gray line of the pair represents each student's average score for all the sensitivities at the beginning of the course. The black line represents each one's average score at the end of the course. Fourteen out of fifteen students scored themselves lower in the beginning of the course than at the end. One student's average (student 12) remained the same.

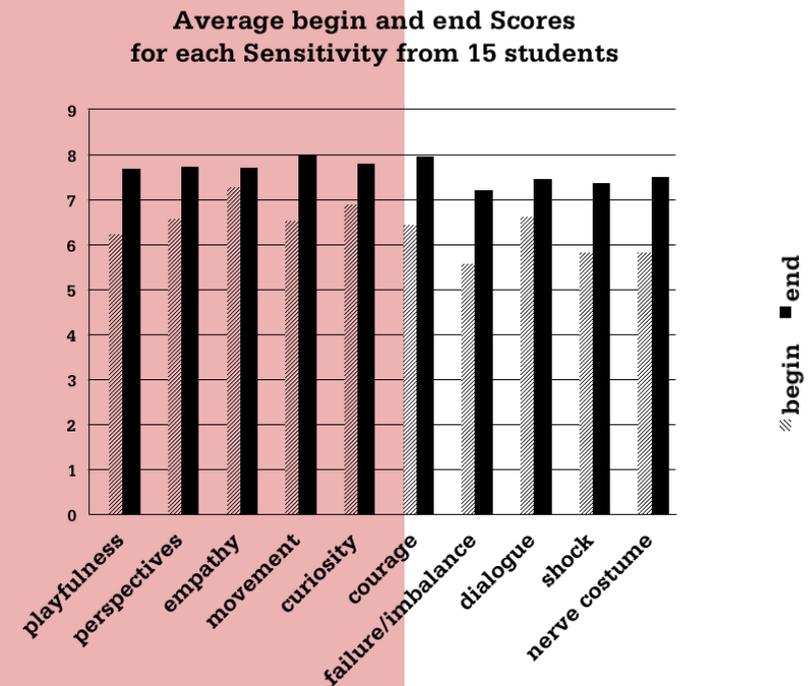


Figure 4. Comparison Sensitivity Scores

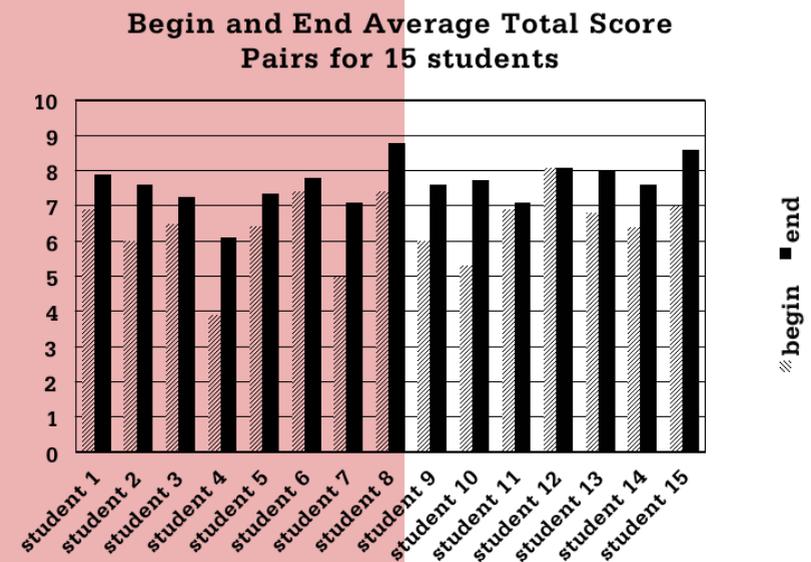


Figure 5. Comparing Student Scores

The numerical results from this instrument are impossible to attribute specifically to this course as separate from the other factors in the master program itself. That said, in their written reflections, the students did make reference to the sensitivities they had 'practiced' in this course. Eight students each cited a specific sensitivity as being further developed through this course (Movement, Dialogue, Shock and Nerve Costume, Playfulness and Failure/imbalance were each named twice). At the end of the second year, many students used the Sensitivity Meter to reflect upon their own experiences with the sensitivities to create a collective list of attitudes specific to an artistic researcher, as well as a list of preferred competencies for the artist-teacher (see Experiences of artistic researching and Artist-teacher competencies in the student section of this report).

5.1.2 Artistic discoveries

Artistic reflection and Schut's stories: Throughout year 1, the personal-reflection discussions evolved to include the artistic discoveries from the exercises as well as the feedback about the students' small-group experiments. The insights and issues raised in these discussions were often reinforced through stories and examples from Schut. For this reason, the students saw his stories as input equal to his exercises because they were directly related to the themes they were exploring in class. In their written comments, they valued the moments where he shared how he had solved a specific problem in his own work, had collaborated with other artists, or shared how other artists had confronted artistic difficulties. Some wrote that his manner of telling gave them insight into the way he sees and experiences things as an artist. In some instances, the students wrote that the stories had directly inspired avenues for investigation in their own group work in class.

In year 2, Schut continued to share stories, but now they were in direct relation to the investigative processes of the students. The students cited such examples as his sharing of how his children organized a collaboration, how one can start a research process from emptiness, the importance of keeping oneself open, the value of restrictions in the creative process, and the need to let go of a personal 'agenda' to collaborate from a common focus. Again, students commented that they valued his sharing of his own thinking processes as an artist because it gave them insights into their work:

I found the discussion after the first round of work in the morning stimulating because of the way Henk had us thinking about bringing sounds to an audience. In our group, we are still investigating this and I think that Henk was able to create a bridge between our experiments and what he has come across (i.e. with sound) in his work.

Objective observation and feedback skills: To further support the students in their independent group work in year 2, Schut took the group through an exercise to emphasize the need for objective observation and feedback. This exercise seemed not only to set a collective tone for the collaborations and reflection sessions, but touched an underdeveloped skill in the students themselves. One student wrote what many had voiced:

Giving feedback without giving judgment, I found very instructive. I am inclined to give my verdict on something quickly. I am also often too quick in giving my opinion about which way a presentation could be improved... If you know that you're not allowed to give judgment, you listen better to the others.

5.1.3 Summary

Students reflecting on the didactic program set out by Schut identified both personal and artistic discoveries. Under personal discoveries, they described his social-learning environment as both playful and safe and that it had encouraged their own participation. Students wrote copiously and positively about being challenged by his series of physical and sensory exercises, recognizing that their personal skills were being tapped and further developed. The in-class reflection discussions following those exercises created a working relationship with each other which valued multi-perspective feedback. The Sensitivity Meter gave them a tool to reflect on their own qualities. As artistic discoveries, students experienced Schut's stories as both instructive and reflective and wrote repeatedly how his personal observations and professional stories not only gave them insight into his own artistic thinking, problem-solving strategies, but had also, sometimes, inspired their own research questions. Many were surprised at how practicing objective observation had expanded their skill repertoire during investigations.

5.2 DISCOVERIES RELATED TO COLLABORATION

5.2.1 Collaboration skills in small and autonomous groups

From their variety of experiences with collaborations over the two years, many students discovered that collaborative work was always different and specific to each situation. They found that successful collaborations depended upon both their partners as well as the development of the work processes. In terms of their partners, they experienced that collaborations worked

better when all of the partners felt that they could trust and be open with one another from the start, where they all could tune into each other and stay curious about the subject, and when all were prepared to embark on an investigative approach that might entail working out of one's comfort zone. Success factors in the work process depended upon the ability to formulate a collective plan, leaving the end result open, focusing on the material to direct the collaboration and experimenting by doing and reflecting.

As hindering factors in collaborations, the students again identified the partners as well as the processes. Specifically named were dominant group members and group size or dynamics that could inhibit participation from all partners, or a group not daring to share critical feedback. The students found that work processes couldn't get going if it took too long for a group to develop a common focus or if an assignment was unclear.

5.2.2 Collaborating in day registrations

The function of the student day registrations was one of both collaboration and reflection. For the day registrations, two to four students individually volunteered and then worked together as an autonomous group in their spare time to prepare a short presentation for the next class. For the makers of the day registrations, the students felt this offered them yet another work form in which they could collaborate by sharing and giving a new form to what they wanted to remember from the previous class and 'to think what this means for yourself and how to make the ideas your own.' The presentation of the day registrations at the start of each day was received by the entire class as an opportunity to look back at what was done the last time, but this time, as seen through the eyes of their classmates. One student wrote that she valued the day registrations as reflections

from different perspectives and 'how others experienced the day', as well as appreciating the unique presentation forms that each group had developed.

5.2.3 Collaboration experiment

Part of the cooperation in year 2, was the unexpected changing of group compositions. In the third, fourth, and fifth classes, Schut surprised the students by asking them to shuffle their work groups as an experiment to see whether they could develop their research questions further by sharing them in new group configurations. At first, the class found this an interesting process. But after a while, more and more students reported that they were losing sight of their own fascinations and the grip on their own research questions. One student expressed the frustration of many by writing: 'I thought at the end of the last class that we had come together, but now we will separate again. I don't know where I stand. Through the process of mixing the groups, I also feel that we cannot do enough in-depth research.' Schut responded to the frustration of the students by proposing that they return to and stay with their original groups in order to continue their research on their original questions.

5.2.4 Schut coaching autonomous groups

Instead of working toward an artistic product, the class had agreed to design their end-of-the-year presentations to present their research processes. On the suggestion of Schut and I, the class adopted the day-registration format as a means to involve the audience in their research. Schut visited the groups individually to give feedback and coordinated the intermittent class critical-reflection discussions in which the groups shared their progress and asked for feedback from the whole group. Individual students from the different groups remarked on the type of feedback their group had received from Schut. For

some, he questioned them about their research questions, helped them to better identify their theme, or encouraged them to take risks. Other students reported that he gave them concrete advice, such as a tip for new material or instructions about making specific choices and working more precisely. Many groups were given advice about planning with the audience in mind.

5.2.5. Collaborating in multidisciplinary teams

Multidisciplinary teamwork was described as a dialogue with colleagues from other arts disciplines which created for them 'a span of diversity with practitioners who are doers, thinkers, makers, abstract thinkers, spatial thinkers, and more result-directed makers.' Many students from one discipline were able to identify when and how the input of their partners from other disciplines were different from their own. This not only contributed positively to the work of the group, but also made them aware of being able to learn from each other. For example, reflecting from a single arts discipline, a dance student became aware of how her partners from visual arts worked from frameworks whereas she worked from improvisation. Although she struggled with this limitation at first, their orientation helped to narrow down the structure for their group presentation. On the other side, a student from visual arts in another group, found she had learned from her partners in theater how to experience the creation of work as a process instead of working from a complete image she had created in her mind. A student from music wrote that her partners from visual arts 'have an eye for the shaping of ideas'. Another music student saw that the students from theater 'work much more directly with the conveyance of the message.' A theater student was impressed that her partners from visual arts could stand back and look at their work as a

painting. She wrote that her 'own visual attention during the making process has expanded.'

When writing about how these experiences could further impact their own work, one student reflected on how he worked with content. He felt that he had expanded his thinking strategies having worked with partners who approached the work differently than he. Another student reflected on the collaboration, realizing that 'I have developed my ability to collaborate. By taking more distance, I can connect better. A paradox, that helps me to connect and tune into the other(s).'

5.2.6 Summary

Collaborating in multidisciplinary teams of their own choosing was the norm. In their teams, the students valued the dialogue with practitioners from other disciplines as a way to learn new thinking and working strategies from each other. Each new multidisciplinary team created a new opportunity to share their fascinations, frame their collective research questions together, develop their own experiments and discover common structures that spanned all disciplines. While working on their presentations, students from one discipline were able to identify the contributions from their partners from other disciplines, and valued how their complementary skills contributed to the whole. Generally speaking, they discovered how practitioners from visual artists made observations, how dancers enjoyed working from improvisation, how practitioners in theater focused on the experience, and how the musicians were surprised to find how the other disciplines worked with breathing and with tempo. The contact and collaboration with each other in this way resulted in what they all saw as a broadening of their knowledge of other disciplines, an enriching of themselves artistically, and as complementary input for their group experiments.



End presentation in the form of a deconstructed, repeated scene by a group

6.

ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTION THREE:

Student Ideas Developed about Inter- disciplinary Artistic Research

Which ideas do the students develop about interdisciplinary artistic research?

It took me two lessons to realize that the lessons from Henk are about researching more than material. Besides researching the themes of space, time, sound, music, and light, it was also about researching collaboration. Partly because of the different backgrounds, the research became interdisciplinary.

6.1 EXPERIENCES OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH

This course afforded the students the opportunity to re-examine the creative process of artistic research. Based upon their experiences here, the students described it as an active, cyclical process with a beginning phase to identify the research question and an investigative phase for the purposes of 'going deeper' into the subject and 'peeling back the layers'. They found that an artistic research question begins with the individual, often speaking about it as 'arising out of a personal fascination'. During the investigative phase, the students discovered that an individual's attitude was just as important as the experiments themselves. Phrases such as, 'having an open mind', 'being willing to go outside your comfort zone', 'not being afraid to fail', and 'don't give up' were used to describe the attitude of the researcher. They identified the need for experimenting within 'a framework with restrictions' and the use of such skills in the process as 'making good observations' and 'making choices and formulating these into a composition'. Several students made the point that research results need to be translated into artistic forms 'to give it shape and make it visible. The visibility is important because then you give it a new meaning'. But they didn't see the artistic result necessarily as an end in itself. Rather, it could be 'only a temporary result out of which a new question or a new idea can arise'.

6.2 EXPERIENCE OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY

This course offered the students an experiential approach to interdisciplinary artistic research. Artistic investigations began with active experimentation, which allowed the students to reflect on their own practical and theoretical conclusions about the nature of artistic research from their own experiences in class and how that had worked for each of them individually during their collaborations. In describing interdisciplinarity, their comments fell into six categories:

- 1) The multidisciplinary composition of the class: Students found they had experienced interdisciplinarity from the class itself, composed of students who represented different arts disciplines;
- 2) The communication within the teams: Collaboration was achieved through open communication and cooperating on an equal basis through which they could share their thinking strategies and learn work processes from each other;
- 3) The starting points for collaboration: The importance of the starting point for their interdisciplinary investigations beginning with ‘not knowing’, creating a neutrality that was needed to develop common goals without any disciplinary hierarchy;
- 4) The work processes: The focus for their creative research together rested on the collectively framed questions which they investigated together. One student remarked, ‘What also helped is that we all limited our own disciplines [...] This limitation forces you to take the focus off the techniques from your own discipline and immediately come to the point, in the interdisciplinary story. All technical ballast was thrown overboard’;
- 5) The imbedding of reflection: The students also referred to the in-class reflection which supported the creative work processes, with everyone giving feedback to each other on concept, content, experience, and

execution. During the feedback, each one’s expertise also came through; and

- 6) The specific input from Schut: Finally, naming the input of Schut specifically, the students made reference to his safe working environment, the assignments and exercises which were focused on the research processes, and ‘the themes of space, time, sound, movement, and light which gave plenty of room for interdisciplinary artistic research. All disciplines could relate to these themes’.

Students shared the positive conclusion about the setting of this course in which multiple, multidisciplinary teams were working simultaneously on their own artistic research, each in their own ways. As a result of this simultaneous group work, a student explained, ‘you become conscious of the fact that there is not one way to do artistic research, but that there are multiple possibilities’. Working with each other, students looked for the best solutions to their own research questions and, in the process, discovered common ground. They found that ‘structures become exposed that can be valid for more (or all) disciplines’.

6.3 SUMMARY

Through their experiences in this course, students redefined their own descriptions of artistic research. Key for them was the recognition of an investigation as a cyclical process that is initiated from the curiosity of the individual wanting to delve deeper into a question. Essential for the researcher was an attitude that was diligent and open to discoveries and failures. Important research skills named were the imposition of restrictions and the use of objective observations. Some expressed the need to share research results in esthetic forms.

When explaining what they had experienced in this course as interdisciplinary, the student descriptions encompassed the multidisciplinary composition of the class, the open communication, working from neutrality without any disciplinary hierarchy, collectively framed research questions, and reflection based on objective observations. The students reported that starting with the collective exploration of themes with Schut had helped them to create common ground. Following the example of Schut's own artistic work processes, the students began their collective work by experimenting with concrete material instead of inventing ways to purposely combine their disciplines. The students 'found' each other as researchers through what they called working 'from their own fascinations' and letting their research questions evolve further from their experiments.



NEDERLAND	
PUBLIEKE RUIMTE	7,6 m
SOCIALE RUIMTE	3,6 m
PERSOONLIJKE RUIMTE	1,2 m
INTIEME RUIMTE	0,45 m

7.

ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR:

Students Connect the Role of this Course to the Master Program

How do the students describe and place the contributions of this two-year course in interdisciplinary, artistic research within the context of their overall professional development during the AHK Master of Education in Arts program?

7.1 CONNECTION TO OTHER COURSES IN THE MASTER

The master program consists of the courses Designing Art Education Lessons, Literature Study, and Project Bureau in the first year and Arts Education Project, and Empirical Research in the second year. In both years, the students also follow the course we have been discussing – Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration – and Philosophy of Art. After the first year, it became apparent that the students saw direct connections to Interdisciplinary Artistic Research when delving into arts education theory and sometimes drawing upon experiences with Schut to design their own lessons. But interestingly, the course Philosophy also received a large amount of comments where the students examined different streams of thought. The philosophical way of looking and experiencing the world was seen by the students as not unlike Schut sharing his stories about his work and his inspirations. For the courses Literature and Empirical Studies, the students discovered parallels and differences between both the content and the manner of scientific and artistic researching. For example, a student observed that ‘doing a literature study is also about looking at the minute details’.

Here is an example from a student making a direct comparison with her Arts Education Project:

The physical experiences with space, time, and sound gave me another perspective in other courses. I am more conscious of all the disciplines in art education and am more open to learning more about them... I think that I can see a link with what we experience with Henk and what we did in our project.

7.2 CONTRIBUTION TO THE MASTER PROGRAM

The students felt that this course contributed to their experience of the master program in four ways, personally, artistically, professionally, and by strengthening the group as a whole. Many wrote about the direct effect it had on their work relationships with each other throughout the master and it gave them new personal, artistic, and professional insights and skills. Related to the class itself, the students found that the course contributed to the general group dynamic and offered them other ways to collaborate, different from the other courses in the master. Personally, the students appreciated the sensory experiences, the challenges, and the active learning experiences. Some characterized the course as ‘fun’. Artistically, they valued the opportunities to work as artists and to re-examine what art is, and to sharpen their critical-thinking skills. Professionally, this course let them step into the shoes of ‘the learner’ giving them insight into the type of work they ask of their students. Finally, the students felt this course offered them a bridge between the theory and the practice in arts education that they were learning in the entire master program.

One student summed up her experience of this course as follows:

The most important contribution of this course was to be able to experience *for myself* what is involved in artistic research in collaboration with other group members from different arts disciplines. The master is a theoretically-based program which develops your thinking and analytical skills. But this course asks something different of you. Here, you literally step into the theoretical aspects of arts education

and experience for yourself the practice that you are learning about and researching during the master program (such as authentic arts education). This course also enriches the group-dynamic process within the master.

7.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A student reflected on what this course gave to her as a teacher in the arts:

Within the curriculum of the master, these days of investigation brought another dimension through which the physical, sensory perception and experience were the gateways for reflection, analysis, and insight. Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration, for me, is the basis, the center. It speaks to us as teachers in the arts and about our own artistry.

The master students reported being inspired by the input from the artist Schut and how they had worked with each other over the two years. Having stepped ‘into the shoes’ of students and experienced the effect of these practices themselves, apparently gave them the confidence to adapt these new work forms for their own students. Just as they had experienced with Schut, they also saw the value of sharing with their students more references to artists’ work as well as using their own artistic practice in the classroom. They wrote about wanting to try new approaches in their teaching, such as spending more time on the process and delaying work toward a product, starting the creative process from the unknown, and making use of unusual materials such as ‘treasures you simply come across’. They wrote about plans to give their students assignments differently, with clear

frameworks within which they would have more time to experiment and play, but also to fail. Some wanted to teach objective observation and feedback and felt they had new ideas for intervening and reflecting on the work processes of their students. Finally, aware that their own research and collaborative skills had been sharpened, some master students expressed more confidence about initiating interdisciplinary collaborations with their colleagues by ‘finding connections or reinforcing each other’s disciplines.’

7.4 ARTIST-TEACHER COMPETENCIES

Stepping back to look at the role of an artist-teacher in interdisciplinary artistic research, the master students were asked in their written end-of-the-year reflection to make a list of preferred competencies based upon how they had experienced the interaction between Schut and themselves in this course. Honing in on the direct interaction between the artist-teacher and the students, they wrote that it would be ideal if an artist-teacher could set up a learning environment that is freer from the usual time and other constraints to give students more freedom in which to work. S/he establishes an emotionally safe working climate, stimulates creativity, and creates opportunities to stretch personal and group boundaries. Using Schut’s example, the students also saw the artist-teacher helping the students to get started with their own artistic research by warming up the group, sharing his/her own fascinations and perspectives, sharing the work of artists for inspiration, and setting out clear frameworks and restrictions. Advice from one student stated: ‘Make sure that the students know how to formulate a research question about something which they are really curious. In doing so, the artistic research seems to run itself.’

Once their students started their creative work, they saw the artist-teacher functioning as a facilitator of the students’ research. S/he does this by instigating and supporting an active, investigative approach with the focus on process over product. They found it extremely important that an artist-teacher take on a supportive role and let the research question and work processes evolve from the students ‘to help the students discover their own fascinations’, warning that being directive instead of facilitative can devalue their ownership and motivation. As a coach, the artist-teacher can further motivate the students with short exercises and surprising interventions ‘by prodding and provoking the students to step away from the standard routes and conventions’, and by supporting them along the way by asking reflection questions about their discoveries.

7.5 SUMMARY

The students reported that this course contributed to developing new insights and skills in four major ways: 1) as a group; 2) personally; 3) artistically; and 4) professionally. As a group, they wrote that it strengthened their work relationships with each other throughout the entire master and gave them other ways in which to collaborate. Personally, they were positively challenged by physical, sensory, and skill exercises. Artistically, they valued the opportunity to work as artists, to (re)discover artistic qualities in themselves and to sharpen their critical-thinking skills. They described the professional stories from Schut as didactic input which gave them insight into the thinking and working strategies of an artist. Most notably, due to its experiential orientation, the students saw this course as a bridge between the theory and practice in arts education they were learning in the

other courses of the master. By experiencing artistic research first-hand, it enabled the students to rethink their ideas about the conducive learning environment and the role of the artist-teacher in support of interdisciplinary collaboration. This resulted in a list of recommended competencies for an artist-teacher. Professionally, the students looked forward to trying new ideas from their experiences in the course in their own work in arts education. Having stepped 'into the shoes' of the learner and experienced the effect of these practices themselves, this gave them more confidence to adapt these new work forms for their own students. There were ideas to follow the lead of Schut and share their own artistic work and those of other artists, to try new approaches to interdisciplinary investigations, and experiment with new ways to intervene and reflect with students. Some saw themselves taking the initiative to collaborate with colleagues.

Throughout their two-year master program, the students made connections from this course to the other courses. The courses Designing Arts Education Lessons with its focus on teaching practice and Philosophy of Art with its examination of streams of thought were mentioned the most. The two research courses, Literature and Empirical, gave the students the opportunity to compare research strategies between social-scientific methods with those of artistic investigation. Sometimes, the students found ways to transfer directly what they had learned about physical and sensory observation and the audience experience from this course to their projects in others.



Blindfold sound walk by one of the groups of Henk Schut in the NDSM building

8.

Conclusion

Under the leadership of artist-teacher Henk Schut, the course Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration became a platform in which both artistic research and collaboration could be explicitly investigated by master students from different arts education disciplines. Meeting not weekly, but on eight full days throughout each school year, Schut took the location of the course off-campus to the creative and historical environment that also housed his studio which became a source of investigation and inspiration within his program. His collegial attitude and collaborative planning with the students created a basis of trust within the group and created the forum for their interdisciplinary collaborations. He translated his own work processes as an artist into an experiential program for the master students, which involved a scaffolding of research skills, the development of collective research questions and experimentation, and critical reflection. Working as a collective, the group carried out and reflected on its collaborative investigations to share skills and develop new insights with and from each other. This inductive approach left room for the students to make their own discoveries, relate their own experiences to theoretical frameworks, and incorporate their new insights into their own professional practices as teachers in arts education.

The students reported that this course complemented their professional development in arts education in a way that was not found in the other courses of the master. In the others, they worked as educators, arts education researchers, project managers, and philosophers. Here, they worked together as artists with a professional artist as their guide. They experienced this course as a bridge between the theories they were exploring there and the practice of the arts they were experiencing here. This course gave them the opportunity to step into the

shoes of the learner and experience for themselves the type of artistic work they often ask of their own students. The multidisciplinary make-up and the class working as a collective created for them an interdisciplinary setting. As representatives of the disciplines of visual arts, dance, music, drama, and museum studies, they gained new insights and skills and not only from their contact with the artist-teacher. They discovered that by collaborating with each other in multidisciplinary teams, they themselves created a rich learning environment where they learned more about the thinking and work strategies of the disciplines from each other as practitioners and worked collectively to develop, investigate, and reflect on their own research questions.

Throughout the two years, the students responded in reflection questions that they had learned as much from each other as from the input from Schut. In this course, both the content of artistic research and the experiences of collaboration received equal attention. To do this, the approach of Schut made the students the central focus in which they were both the subject and the object of their investigations. Schut set the tone for this person-centered pedagogy by making it clear to the students that it mattered what they were experiencing individually and together, what questions they were raising, what insights they were having, and how they were working together, and built numerous opportunities into the program for the students to share these discoveries. The class described their experiences together as interdisciplinary. As Schut said, 'the interdisciplinarity is between us and I am the facilitator of that process'. This is what he set out to achieve and that is how the students perceived it.

8.1. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ARTIST-TEACHER APPROACH TO THE STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Two questions were asked in this study: 1) What is the approach of artist-teacher Henk Schut when teaching interdisciplinary, artistic research to master students in arts education from different artistic disciplines? and 2) What are the student perceptions of their own learning in relation to his approach?

In the separate chapters, the approach of the artist-teacher and the perceptions of the students of their own learning are described. Below in Figure 6, the two are brought together, the input of the artist-teacher and the perceptions of the students. Four central strategies from the artist-teacher are compared directly with the student perceptions: 1) The use of themes to develop the group into a working collective; 2) The practice of collaboration with partners from different arts disciplines; 3) The practice of research skills equal to that of an artist in studio work; and 4) the development of critical thinking as part of the research process.

STRATEGIES	ARTIST-TEACHER APPROACH	STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR OWN LEARNING
The Collective	Schut developed the group into a working collective by centering investigations around themes and concrete material and using exercises which created new and common experiences for the group.	The students from different arts (education) disciplines found each could relate to the themes in their own ways and it gave them neutral and collective starting points for working together. As a group, they chose to collectively investigate the processes of artistic research rather than working toward producing a creative product.
Collaboration	Schut presented the students from different arts disciplines with many opportunities to form their own groups. The guided work and short assignments in year 1 slowly transitioned into autonomous teamwork in year 2.	Students repeatedly chose to work with partners from different arts (education) disciplines. They saw working with various partners itself as an exercise in collaboration from multidisciplinary perspectives. The students experienced their collaborations as interdisciplinary.
Artistic Research Skills	Schut deconstructed the process of artistic research to practice with the students the skills he himself uses in his own studio work. Using themes, he narrowed the artistic focus using restrictions in order to experiment, identify research questions, and to reflect on both the experiences and the artistic material. This created a repertoire of approaches to artistic researching with and for the group.	The student groups developed their own research questions together and devised their own ways to experiment. They drew on the thematic and skill repertoire they had experienced together to fit their investigative needs.
Critical Thinking	Schut trained the students in critical thinking and feedback with the goal of stimulating them to use these skills in collaborative discussions and independent work. He realized this shift by structuring the classes in year 1 to progress from less to more in-class reflection discussion and critical analysis.	Students absorbed Schut's reflection skills into their own repertoire and implemented them at their own discretion during their collaborations. In year 1, they shared and reflected upon experiments with each other. In year 2, they brought artistic problems from their autonomous groups for discussion and feedback with the whole group.

Figure 6: Relationship of artist-teacher approach to student perceptions of their own learning.

8.2 AUTHENTIC ARTS EDUCATION

The students commented that this course gave them the opportunity to experience for themselves the theory of authentic arts education they were learning about in other courses of the master. Authentic Arts Education was introduced in 2001 in the Netherlands by Professor Folkert Haanstra. It is characterized by:

1. Active learning that is aimed at the culture of the student, taking into account their prior knowledge, and making space for their contributions, needs, and interests;
2. Learning that it is relevant to situations outside of school and that the tasks reflect the actual work of professionals;
3. Knowledge that is constructed in meaningful, complex learning tasks for students. The assignments give scope for students' initiatives and multiple solutions. The productive environment is also aimed at the students' metacognitive processes such as articulation, reflection, and taking responsibility;
4. Cooperative planning, execution, and peer exchanges within and across groups which play a vital role in the learning process. Student consultation and self/peer-evaluations are built into the process. (Haanstra, 2001; Heijnen, 2015)

What is interesting is that Schut did not develop his approach to this course with any theory in mind but rather from his studio practice. This suggests two things. First, that when an artist translates his/her own studio practice into a didactic approach, it can align with the characteristics of authentic arts education. This supports the assertion from Hoekstra (2015) that artists bring their

first-hand, authentic knowledge of creative practice into educational settings. Secondly, the choice of this artist to teach this course within the master was a good fit. Not only did Schut's approach take the master students on a collective journey as artists to explore artistic research and interdisciplinary collaboration but it also 'unintentionally' became an experience in authentic arts education which is a core principle taught throughout this master program.



Research into personal boundaries

9. Discussions

9.1 THE VISION

The course seeks to develop the following competencies: 1) To develop the student's creative capacities within an interdisciplinary setting; 2) To develop the student's powers of critical reflection related to artistic processes; and 3) To stimulate the application of the student's artistic skills beyond the course. Whereas the goals of the course within the master program are written, the approach is not. That means that this course takes its shape exclusively from the person or persons who are teaching it. This can be seen as both a strength and a weakness. It was a choice to give the development of this course to an artist and then to this artist, Henk Schut. The approach is inextricably tied to his vision just as, later, the development of the self-reflection and assessment materials are inextricably tied to me. When we are no longer responsible for the course, it will need to be re-examined which, if any, of the elements from this approach to keep, or whether to begin anew with a new vision. Even so, Schut's approach cannot be transferred to another artist because it is authentically based and implemented from his own work as an artist.

9.2 THE VALUE OF PERSONAL WRITTEN REFLECTIONS

In this course driven by in-class experiences and interaction, the personal written reflections were introduced for students to record their experiences and, sometimes elusive, insights from each day. Mandatory, end-of-the-year reflections were used as a means of self-assessment intended to help students connect their own learning to specific subjects related to the goals of the course, the master program, and the national competencies for

teachers in the arts. Interested to know how the students had experienced the written reflections, I asked them individually what value they had given to them. All students responded positively about capturing their in-class experiences on paper. It offered them the chance to revisit their own and the other's interactions and the input from Schut. By taking that distance, they could see more clearly the connection between the individual activities, or make sense of the struggles around their collaborative research, or identify what they had learned and put it in context. Some students said they used the written reflections to connect their work in class with theories about learning and/or the arts. Others used the reflections to develop or sharpen their own theories or vision about interdisciplinary artistic research. Taking into account the value the students attached to the written reflections, this suggests that personal written reflections in an experientially based course can make an important contribution to individual learning and, specifically in this master program in arts education, the development of professional practice.



Research about smell and memories

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End presentation in the form of a deconstructed, repeated scene by a group

11. Appendices

11.1 THE COURSE PROGRAM: INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTIC COLLABORATION

This course can be seen within the master program as a series of workshops in which students from different arts (education) disciplines work together as artists to investigate the creative process. While collaborating, the students have the opportunity to (re)discover characteristics of their own and each other's arts disciplines and to experiment with interdisciplinarity by 'doing'.

Professional development

The master is first and foremost a professional training program for teachers in the arts. The overarching goal of this course then, is for the master students to further enrich their professional teaching repertoire in the arts by making connections between their artistic experiences and their own teaching practices. Active and written reflection about the collaborative, creative process is imbedded in the course to help them record and order their insights for themselves, and then to translate them to their work with their own students and colleagues.

Didactic approach

During the two years of the course, the master students take the position and perspective of the learner instead of the teacher; they experience for themselves what they ask of their students and participants. An essential part of this process is that students do not work on their own. In year 1, artist Schut challenges the students to work collaboratively in order to investigate specific, physical material and locations. In year 2, Schut as a coach, asks the students to challenge each other with collaborative investigations of their own design. Through the use of active exercises and reflective discussions and

assignments, this course poses the following questions to the students.

- 1) Artistic research: What is artistic research? How can you go about it? Are there specific conditions necessary for doing artistic research? What is the relationship between researching and creating? How can you share your investigative process and/or product with the public?
- 2) Interdisciplinary collaboration: How do you frame an artistic research question collectively? How does working in a multidisciplinary, artistic team influence one another's thinking and/or approach to the creative research process? Are there differences in the way the different disciplines approach the same problem?
- 3) Personal, professional development: What are you learning from your collaborative investigations of the creation process? Which will you incorporate into your own work as a professional in arts education?

Location

The choice of the location for this course plays an integral part in the program. The course takes place outside the city center of Amsterdam in an environment quite different from the classroom settings of the other courses of the master. After the start of the course in the familiar school building, the course moves to the former NDSM-shipyard in Amsterdam North. There, in a warehouse, the artist has his own studio, one among many others of creative entrepreneurs. The old shipyard and warehouse is a known breeding ground and fringe location where not everything is planned, tidy, or has fixed rules. This environment provides the students with an unstructured location, one which is literally and figuratively still open to fill in with one's own imagination and interpretation.

11.2 APPENDIX 2: DATA COLLECTION QUESTIONS

A) Schut interview questions

- What were your expectations for the day?
- Did your plan achieve what you had hoped to achieve?
- What worked especially well? What didn't work so well?
- Is there anything specific that came out of today that you want to address in the next meeting?

B) Student written end-of-each-day student questions

As one of the educational requirements of this course, the students are given written-reflection questions after each of the course days in year 1. For the purposes of this study, the written reflection questions from year 1 were adapted to the needs of the study in three ways: 1) They were framed as open questions; 2) The questions were standardized; and 3) They were extended through year 2. To this end, the students were asked the same standard questions after nine of the sixteen classes (four classes in year 1 and 5 classes in year 2). This created a set of data in the form of ongoing written reflections. Below are the standardized written-reflection questions:

- Think back over the exercises and input from Henk today. Which two made the most impact on you? Please explain why.
- Were there moments during the day when the input from another student or students had an impact on you? Which moments were they and why was that?
- Do you feel that you (re)discovered something about artistic research today? If so, please explain.

C) Student written end-of-the-year student questions

Year 1 questions:

- Which of Henk's research themes appealed to you the most in terms of artistic knowledge and/or activities and why?
- What did the creation and sharing of your Day registration mean to you? What did the Day registrations from others mean to you?
- Think back on the most successful collaborations that you experienced during the NDSM days. What were the success factors for yourself and/or for your group? What were your least successful collaborations? Which factors played a role there?
- According to you, what is involved in artistic research?
- Based upon your own experiences in this course this past year, connect this course to at least one other course within the master program.

Year 2 questions:

- What sort of influence did working in multi-disciplinary teams have on you? (As opposed to working in single-discipline teams or working on your own?) Did you discover any new information about the disciplines themselves and/or the thinking and working processes of your partners?
- To what extent did you experience the type of work in this course as interdisciplinary?
- Which conditions in the learning environment do you feel need to be present for doing artistic research?
- Which personal qualities do you think are necessary in an artistic researcher?
- What sort of preparation and support should an

(arts)teacher give to his/her students for their artistic research?

- Based upon your own experiences in this course over the two years, connect this course to at least one other course within the master program.
- What was the contribution of this course for you in relation to the entire program of the master?
- What will you take with you from this course to your own work?
- What was the value of the ongoing written reflections for you?

11.3 APPENDIX 3: THE SENSITIVITY METER

NAME:

THE SENSITIVITY METER

Instructions: Score yourself on the following artistic qualities.

(less) 1-----5-----10 (more)

Where do you see yourself at this moment?

PLAYFULNESS

Additions from the group: lightness, openness, a relaxed attitude, being investigative, having no set goals, humor, can make associations, working without a prepared plan, not judgemental, having a degree of freedom

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

PERSPECTIVE

*Authentic Boys: seeing and appreciating multi-perspectives, can move between different sides of a subject, can see and respect a diversity of perspectives
Addition from the group: Being open to the contributions of others*

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

EMPATHY

Authentic Boys: to be able to see and feel from someone else's point of view

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

MOVEMENT

Authentic Boys: an appreciation of the process as a dynamic, creative/esthetic investigation

Additions from the group: wanting to investigate, breaking free from patterns, not limited by an end goal, prepared to go through different phases, letting things develop, using technical skills

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

COURAGE

Authentic Boys: daring to try

Additions from the group: prepared to take on the challenges presented by others, feeling safe in the working environment

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

CURIOSITY

Additions from the group: daring to investigate, focused on making discoveries

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

FAILURE/IMBALANCE

Authentic Boys: planning in and/or permitting risk-taking, open for things not under your own control, not always being strong, accepting and using failure as part of the process, and moving on

Addition from the group: the courage to be vulnerable

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

ENGAGEMENT & DIALOGUE

Authentic Boys: participating and communicating with yourself, with your immediate environment, with others

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

SHOCK

Authentic Boys: taking unexpected paths, opening yourself up for new things

Additions from the group: you surprise yourself, you are able to work outside of your comfort zone

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

'NERVE COSTUME'

Authentic Boys: using your head AND body that work as a complete system to experience the world

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

This is a suggestion from the group for a new sensitivity from the days with Henk.

'BEING HUMBLE':

Being open to the material, letting the material lead your creative process

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

A SHORT EXPLANATION OF YOUR CHOICES:

Which Sensitivity/Sensitivities do you feel have been most influenced by the days with Henk?

Could you explain how?

11.3.1 Sensitivity Meter Statistical Results-Matched Paired Samples / Test

The paired sample tests: There was a total of fifteen students ($N = 15$) who filled in both the pre- and post-tests. In Table A. below is the list of sensitivities with the mean score for each sensitivity from the pre- and post-tests from all fifteen students.

The pre-test means are around 6,39, the post-test means are around 7,63. Students considered themselves most competent in the beginning at Empathy and Curiosity, least competent at Failure/Imbalance and Nerve Costume. At the end, they considered themselves most competent at Movement and Curiosity, least competent in Failure/Imbalance and Shock.

Next, paired t-test was run comparing the pre-test and post-test scores. This was testing the null hypothesis which asserts that there will be no real difference between the two sets of sensitivity scores and that the difference is then simply a matter of chance.

Sensitivity	Pre-test			Post-test		Paired samples T-test
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Playful	15	6,03	1,69	7,67	,89	t(14)=-4.181, p=.001**
Perspectives	15	6,60	1,12	7,74	1,03	t(14)=-6,910, p=,000**
Empathy	15	7,30	1,30	7,71	,73	t(14)=-1,071 p=,302**
Movement	15	6.46	1,18	7,97	,86	t(14)=-5,048 p=,000**
Courage	15	6,50	1,61	7,9	,71	t(14)=-4,526 p=,000**
Curiosity	15	6,89	1,34	7,80	,86	t(14)=-2,908 p=,011**
Failure/ Imbalance	15	5,80	1,42	7,22	1,03	t(14)=-5,387 p=,000**
Dialogue	15	6,83	1,38	7,46	1,34	t(14)=-1,743 p=,103**
Shock	15	6,00	1,41	7,36	,71	t(14)=-3,861 p=,002**
Nerve Costume	15	5,60	1,58	7,50	1,22	t(14)=-6,300 p=,000**

Figure 7. Paired sample statistics of the ten sensitivities

Conclusion of the students' paired t-tests: When looking at the results for each sensitivity pair, the following sensitivities differ significantly between pre- and post-test: playfulness, perspectives, movement, courage, curiosity, failure/imbalance, shock, and nerve costume. Students consider themselves more competent at post-test than at pre-test. For Empathy and Dialogue there were no significant results which means that there was no difference between pre-test and post-test for these sensitivities. Did the students perceive any differences in their sensitivities between the beginning and the end of the two-year course? Yes. The students did perceive a difference in eight out of ten of the sensitivities.

Correlations between the different sensitivities were between $r=-0.23$ and $r=.716$ (pre-test) and between $r=-0.42$ and $r=.787$ (post-test). Mostly they were around .5 which means that the sensitivities are indeed distinct items which were considered as different qualities by the students. Reliability analysis shows, however, that the ten sensitivities together form a reliable and stable scale for a general 'artistic sensitivity', Cronbach's alpha pretest=.88 and Cronbach's alpha posttest = .87.

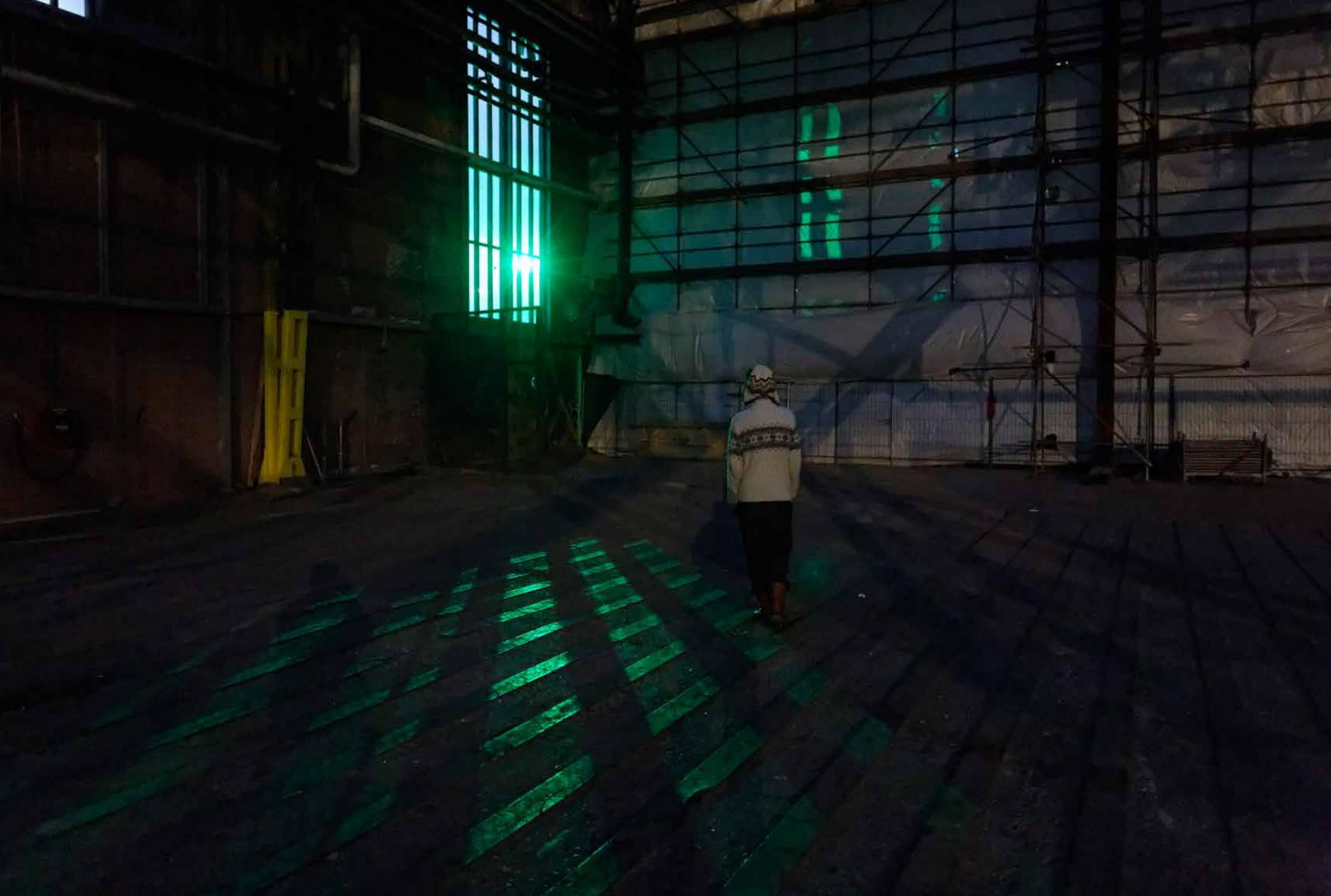
If we look at this scale as a whole, the mean score is 6.40 at pre-test (SD=1.06) and 7.64 (SD=.65) at post-test (correlation: $r=.745$, $p=.001^{**}$). A paired samples t-test reveals a significant difference between pre- and post-test ($t(14)=-6.673$, $p=.000^{**}$). This means that the students consider themselves more competent with regard to a general 'artistic sensitivity' at the end of the course.

11.3.2 Discussion

Curious as to how the students had found The Sensitivity Meter as a self-perception instrument, I asked for their feedback in their written reflections. Six of the students found it useful because the Meter only asked

them to judge themselves against themselves. Five students said that, as an instrument, it was a useful and concrete way to become aware of and to speak about these somewhat abstract qualities. It helped them to see one's own role within a collective process. One student called the instrument 'safe'. These reactions fall in line with the chosen Ipsative self-assessment method (Sluijsmans, 2008) for this course where one reflects on one's own growth only in relation to oneself.

When asked for critical feedback about the instrument itself, the students recommended writing more explanations about one's individual scores and holding class discussions about the sensitivities themselves. Two students independently offered the same, new idea, inviting a fellow student to also score them and then comparing and discussing the similarities and differences. (Comparing those two scores statistically with a matched pairs t- test could also determine if the difference between the two students' perceptions' were significant or not.) The sharing of personal perceptions would, however, first require discussion and agreements about the 'rules' of such an exchange.



End performance 'The Living Hourglass' by one of the students sharing an experience of time in the building

ON AIR



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