WHAT HAPPENS AT THE INTERSECTION OF CONCEPTUAL ART & TEACHING ?

Edited by Jorge Lucero and
Catalina Hernández-Cabal

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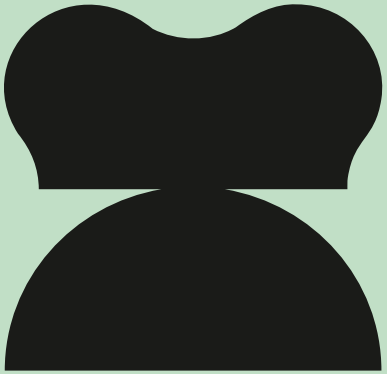
What Happens at the Intersection of Conceptual Art and Teaching?



Jorge Lucero &
Catalina Hernández-Cabal

Books are my favorite form.
—Lucy Lippard, 2022

We didn't want to make a book, we wanted to make an artwork; and yes—we attempted the conceptualist's mental calisthenic to make it *not a book*—but here we are: sequential pages, written words, composed—mostly linear—ideas; commissioned design and illustrations, paper and ink considerations, print (both the thing and the action), a title, noted contributors, distribution, editing and citational conventions, and two introductions!

This *is* a book. You'll hear us call it that.

You can read it since, as we concede, its form inescapably suggests it, but more than anything you should own it.

Put it on your bookshelf,
display it,
look at it.
Lend it to others.
Lose it.
Take its picture.
Say that you have it.
#ConceptualArtAndTeaching it.
Think about it only occasionally.
Take up the title's question for yourself,
even if you never open the book.

In the academy we publish while suppressing an anxiety about whether anyone will ever read what we write. With the right amount of amplification, a university or museum-backed writer might have their words read, even cited, interpreted, and responded to. Still, for the most part, academic writing is momentarily celebrated when it is published, then it is subsequently relegated to "the literature", where it might be occasionally glanced at by a relatively small, field-specific, readership. In the end, even some of the more noted published academic works sit, unengaged with, sleeping. Contrary to how it sounds, we are trying to be descriptive here, not depressing. Conceptual art gives us the permissions, within which we can come to terms with the reality of a minimal, precarious, and often non-existent or not-born-yet audience.

Published academic writing doesn't exist in the world in the same way that most popular writing does. Popular writing gets read; academic writing gets archived

(a fact that is highlighted with this very publication's eventual release as a perpetually downloadable PDF). In this way, academic publishing exists more like conceptual art and teaching. These three forms—conceptual art, academic publishing, and teaching share a paradox. They are simultaneously colossal and invisible; voluminous and impossible. Like nature, they can be hard to perceive because of the way they endlessly expand—seemingly wild—beyond space and time. Unlike nature though, conceptual art, teaching, and academic publishing haven't been coded with majesty, so, their wildness and illegibility frequently read as more esoteric, boring, and off-putting than awesome[1]. To those who dare, engaging with these three forms requires searching *and* searching again; recollection and retrieval; a proactive suspension of personal taste; and disciplined staying (meaning slowness). On top of that, whoever chooses to stay with these forms must adopt an elastic comfort with their own ignorance, and this is not just *not knowing* at the moment; it is potentially *never knowing*.

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Conceptual Art & Teaching is a project where we're actively pointing to conceptual art's permissions and postures in relation to school and teaching. This is prefaced by our position that the school is *in and of itself* a pliable

1 It may seem that teaching doesn't fit into this trio because there is a popular and romantic—albeit flattened—consensus of what teaching is and does, but *true* teaching with all its minutia, everydayness, durationality, relational-centricity, and constant ephemerality situates it in a realm that is far more invisible and unwieldly than both publishing and conceptual art. Teaching is the wildest and most ungraspable of the three.

material akin to most other conventionally understood artistic medias. Thinking through the permissions of conceptual art, a *teacher-as-conceptual-artist* (Lucero, 2013) actively tests the pliability of the school's forms, dynamisms, and indeterminacies for the sake of making creative works that are simultaneously the occupation of schooling, the art of good pedagogy, and sophisticated contemporary art discourse. The possibilities become most provocative for a teaching-as-conceptual-art-practice when the school's aversion to absurdity, difference, and change inevitably reveal themselves. This is when we're really getting to know the material. As is demonstrated by countless conceptual artists testing of their chosen materials' pliability; when the point of resistance is reached, that's usually when newness and significance begin to emerge.

We gain permissions through conceptual art by giving permission, first to ourselves and then to whatever is trying to give us permission. We have to allow things to teach us. A *permission* is something that another thing, say a conceptual artwork, presents to the imagination of a teacher-as-conceptual-artist who is willing to recognize it and accepts it as a possibility for their own blended practice. For example, we didn't know that we could reframe the copious clerical labor that we do as teachers when keeping track of our students' attendance or measuring their "progress". We didn't know that the minutia of keeping minutes during a meeting or filling out grant-application paperwork, could be understood as pliable and therefore—potentially—art. But then we saw the accumulated ledger-art of Hanne Darboven, and the amassed calendar work of On Kawara, and the time-anchored works of Tehching Hsieh; and our imagination was broadened. The

materiality of school presented itself. The proposal here is that the more things we look at while suspending our personal taste and slowing down our process, the more gestures, strategies, and combinations we can imagine ourselves enacting (regardless if we ever actually enact any of those gestures).

In many ways, posture is also a permission, but it has less to do with the potential for something to be made and more to do with a stance, attitude, perspective, or way of being in relation to the world. Perhaps a posture precedes a permission because it's an approach to things that present themselves to us. The posture is the permission to be open to permissions, wherever they may come from.

We're doing this for the sake of both contemporary art and teaching practices. It is out of the paradoxical complexity described above that the germinating essence and aliveness of the three forms emerges. When the invisibility and immeasurability of the forms is humbling rather than numbing; when the apparent esotericism is taken for unique life rather than a menacing difference; when we move ourselves aside enough to uncover what our taste prevented us from experiencing; when we trust that "some things happen which one can *only* perceive with slow thinking" (Goulish, 2000, p.82) and when we have *ignorance-comfort* (meaning diminishing anxiety around not-knowing). Then, conceptual art, teaching, and academic publishing reveal themselves to have a profound potential for transcendence. We know this—maybe—more about teaching than the other two, but this is why we brought a lot of people together to investigate the intersection of conceptual art and teaching through an object that appears to be a work of academic publishing.

We're hinting at two things here. The first is that through this book's form, as well as its content, we take up the question: What happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching? The second is that—through the permissions of conceptual art and teaching themselves—we don't answer the question in any one way, rather we use the excuse of assembling this book as a set of brackets meant to give permissions and enable generative postures. This *bookwork*—a label we're borrowing from the Mexican artist Ulises Carrión (1980)—is a constructed frame for a dynamic vista, an *in-flux* aggregate of approximately forty-one frayed contributions that float near each other. Not *the* answer to the question *What happens at the intersection of Conceptual Art and Teaching?*; rather, a set of modular/collaged options that sometimes contradict, sometimes synchronize and sometimes echo each other. We're presenting them to you the way we first encountered them, as a marathon, a line of interchangeable ideas that you can skip from one part to another, back and forth.

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When we went into lockdown in March of 2020, most of us who were somehow connected to schools, finished that academic year virtually and then bellyflopped into summer break. We were at the beginning of some serious, prolonged, trauma. In this frantic moment between April and August, we were being asked by our institutions to figure out a way to teach other human beings remotely in the upcoming academic year, through virtual meeting platforms that we were minimally familiar with, yet already sick of. Even though artists and teachers throughout time and geography have taken up

the challenge to test the pliability of even the most impossible—even distasteful—mediums, the introduction of Zoom into a conversation amongst teachers was consistently met with eye-rolling lamentations and longings for the "normal" way things used to be. Contrary to all our science fiction fantasies about the future, we didn't want to only see each other through the television. The difficulty and sadness of Zoom as a medium then became the genesis of the *What Happens at the Intersection of Conceptual Art and Teaching*? marathon *zoomposium,* which was held on August 15, 2020.

There's something obvious about how the *zoomposium* and this book came to be. We proposed a question and invited more than fifty people to respond to it. We made it clear that we were not interested in right answers or complete resolutions to the query. No white papers. We were just curious about the variety of responses that could emerge given the multitude of perspectives represented by the invitees: artists, researchers, and teachers at every level and kind of institution (many of them identifying as hybridized practitioners, uneasy with concretized labels). Representatives from Poland, Canada, Korea, Mexico, Colombia, Sweden and fourteen US states (UT, MN, NY, IL, CA, TN, MO, GA, OH, AZ, NC, IN, MA, and CO). Some people started big and got specific. Others took up definitions, both contextualized in history or composed as "working" guides for their particular response. Yes. Many did this with the layered constructs of teaching and/or conceptual art; still others took up "intersections", "happens", or the pliability of the question-answer sequence that we presupposed with our prompt. It was all fair game. The question was not a boundary. It was something to push off of. We encouraged it.

Thirty-nine people took up our prompt and committed themselves to deliver it to us in both the public forum of the *zoomposium* and a publishable document. This is the edited version of those documents (most of the zoomposium videos are archived on YouTube). We have assembled the responses and after two years of trying to find a publisher who would—not only release this compilation as a book—but more importantly understand the eventuality of the book form as the truest way that this art gesture can operate in the world, we are happy to dive back into the contributions, their juxtaposition, and the resonance a previous moment in time can have in the *right now*.

Acknowledgements

Some final *thank yous* are in order, before we let you go. At the zoomposium in August of 2020, the musician Slow News was ready to play interlude songs in-between the presentations. For whatever reason, even though we allowed for transition time, there were no gaps in between the presentations and therefore Slow News found themselves patiently waiting to play for six plus hours. Finally, their chance came at the end of the zoomposium with what can only be described as the Conceptual Art and Teaching jingle. We're grateful for the contribution. On the day of the zoomposium, Texas art teacher Alicia De León served as a spotter and technical troubleshooter in case anything went wrong behind the scenes. Thanks Alicia, for helping us make an event that ran smoothly despite the ambitiousness of it all! Your invisible labor was essential. We thank Sanne Kersten and the Amsterdam University of the Arts for publishing the book. As we neared to the manuscript's conclusion, artist Lydia Ahn took all 100 images contributed for this book and turned them into a singular artwork. Her graphite reinterpretations of each author's "figures" serve as a vertebral column for our project. The drawings, along with the magnificent design of Meeusontwerpt carry this bookwork into that very realm where it might live up to our aspiration of registering primarily as a conceptual artwork in and of itself. Thank you for helping us take it there! A special shout out goes to all the Conceptual Art & Teaching research assistants as well, Tim Abel, Catalina Hernández-Cabal, Natalia Espinel, and Juliana Brandano. Although having worked on this particular project only to varying degrees, the research assistants of CA&T are creative interlocutors that make the project's heartbeat. None of this work is possible without them. Generous funding for this project was provided by the University of Illinois' College of Fine and Applied Arts, the School of Art & Design, and the Humanities Research Institute. We thank our colleagues and administrators at UIUC for championing our idiosyncrasies and the pliability of the institution. Thank you of course to every artist/scholar/teacher contributor to this project. We expected you to behave the way you did; still it was all a glorious surprise! Thanks for radiating the way you all do. We are enlivened by everything you are. Finally, Emiel Heijnen and Mellissa Bremmer (also from the University of the Arts)—longtime friends and collaborators of Conceptual Art & Teaching—have enthusiastically written for this book. We are together in these investigations and experiments. Thank you for your love and friendship, which we are discovering might be—in the end—what this is all about.

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INTRODUCTION 2
Caution: You are Entering a Conceptual Playground[1]

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1 The contributions of Melissa Bremmer and Emiel Heijnen to this article were equal. We rotate order of authorship in our writing. All illustrations by Emiel Heijnen, 2020.

This book is a brave attempt to investigate the experimental space between conceptual art and teaching. It delves into complex and exciting themes, projects, and artworks at the intersection of education and contemporary art. We feel these writings, images, and fresh perspectives provide insights into the innovative practices and ideas of contemporary art educators.

We do wonder, however, whether other arts educators can play around with conceptual practices, too, if we do not first establish a playground for them to play in. Shouldn't we address conceptual thinking and making more explicitly if we want to pave the way towards a more conceptual and diverse art curriculum in schools? Shouldn't we define and teach the playing rules of conceptual art, even before pupils, students, and their teachers actually start engaging in contemporary artmaking?

The way we see it, is that many arts curricula in schools typically continue to focus on rusty principles like self-expression and formal aesthetics, often at the expense of conceptual or socially engaged art. Of course, the pupils are not to blame for their Modernist artworks. We believe that the frail position of art in school curricula, traditional art textbooks, and teachers clinging on to a narrow definition of art seem more likely to be the culprits.

Looking more mildly at the role of teachers, one truly wonders... have they learned enough about conceptual art as an artistic *strategy*, let alone about translating its notions to primary and secondary education (Bremmer, Heijnen, & Kersten, 2020)? In our own teacher training college, we have observed that our students are introduced to conceptual art as a historical movement during art history classes in their third year. In contrast, their studio art teachers implicitly expect them to develop conceptual work in their first year. Presented as two different worlds, a connection between theory and practice is sorely missed.

Furthermore, we see student teachers making a stark division between their own creative practice—and what they teach in schools. This is illustrated by a student teacher who created highly conceptual video installations in college, and, without batting an eyelid, taught pupils to draw still-lifes on computer paper with an HB pencil. Such conflicts between art and teaching practice seem to be part of a socializing "feedback loop" that starting teachers are caught up in (Heijnen, Bremmer, Koelink, & Groenendijk, 2020): their conceptions of teaching art tend to be more influenced by how they were taught art as pupils—in all likelihood in a Modernist way—than by what they learned during their teacher education (Stofflett & Stoddart, 1994).

What we should do, therefore, is list some of the ground principles of conceptual art which permeate this book and still largely determine the "playground" on which contemporary artists operate. What's more: we would love to see the playing rules (or mantras if you like) communicated in schools via posters, T-shirts, bumper stickers, mugs, or buttons. May these playing rules and this book challenge more art teachers to enter the conceptual art and teaching playground!

It might come as a shock to the colleagues in the physics department, or your pupils in fourth grade, but since conceptual art's emergence, we cannot say with certainty what an artwork is or, even more horrifying, what is not an artwork. Rosenberg (1972, p. 12) noted that 'painting, sculpture, drama, music, have been undergoing a process of de-definition. Where an art object is still present [...] it is what I have called an anxious object: it does not know whether it is a masterpiece or junk.'

Although for schools, teachers, and pupils, the lack of an art definition might seem an unsettling idea, we could challenge them to embrace its elusiveness as a liberating idea. Why? Using (or assuming) simplified definitions of art implies a traditional or fixed conception of art, 'thus placing limitations on the artist who would be reluctant to make art that goes beyond the limitations' (Lewitt, 1969, p. 3). Accepting a definition of art that is open to constant debate, can be fundamental to setting the scene for new ways of artistic production, in and beyond the classroom, by artists, students, and pupils alike. It can help art teachers move beyond Modernist art and take a gentle stroll towards the busy and messy intersection of conceptual art and teaching.

Marcel Duchamp once noted that he made art for the mind, prioritizing concept over aesthetics, thus laying the ground for conceptual art. Duchamp criticized the art world of his time as a place of "retinal art"; art that should mainly appeal to the eye. His goal was to put art 'in the service of the mind' (Arnason & Prather, 1998, p. 274). Acting against the notion that art should be beautiful, Duchamp (1961) chose everyday objects as artworks 'based on a reaction of visual indifference, with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste…'

We think that a frantic quest for the aesthetic hinders conceptual development. For instance, Dutch art teachers Wicher Hupkes and Jacques Blommestijn observed that their high school pupils were often so addicted to aesthetics that their most interesting works were not the ones they handed in as their final products, but those they threw away in the preceding process (Baken, 2017). Lewitt (1969, p. 5) already noted that 'banal ideas cannot be rescued by beautiful execution.' Conversely, Hupkes' and Blommestijn's art shows consisting of their pupils' "unintended art" prove that good ideas can be rescued from the school's

trash can. Especially for pupils, the notion that art can be meaningful without having to be beautiful, can give them so much more freedom in making art. This point is clearly underlined in this book by assignments that urge students to rethink "the visual" or "the aesthetic", like Clark Goldsberry's photograph of nothing (p. 60) and Sue Uhlig's collecting as creative practice (p. 98).

'I don't like art classes because I can't draw'—is a sentence that we've heard over and over again from pupils. In our view, art teachers, too, tend to overemphasize the "artisan" aspects of art production in schools. Like the overpriced Neapolitan woodstove pizza you buy at the supermarket, art in school has to look handcrafted and "homemade". Again, Duchamp, whose readymades were based on functional, mass-produced objects (Smith, 1994), comes to mind. Lippard, too, saw conceptual art as a way to de-emphasize material aspects like 'uniqueness, permanence, decorative attractiveness' (1997, p. 5). In an era when every citizen is able to (re)produce, publish, and distribute worldwide, and where appropriation-artists like Andy Warhol, Barbara Kruger, and Jeff Koons are part of every art textbook, why should we limit art education to the handicraft skills of centuries ago? Similar to allowing students to embrace "ugliness", the use of existing objects and images in art class allows for more conceptual forms of art production. We also adhere to Daniel T. Barney's call (p. 5) to challenge students to misuse existing tools or create new tools for artistic production. The (mis)use of new technologies and materials enriches art educational practice, and more importantly, invites pupils and students to go beyond the role of a passive consumer of new technologies (Heijnen, et al., 2020).

In an interview for Belgian television in 1966, Duchamp was asked what his greatest achievement was, and answered: 'Trying to make my life into a work of art itself, instead of spending my life creating works of art in the form of paintings or sculptures. I now believe that you can quite readily treat your life, the way you breathe, act, interact with other people, as a picture, a tableau vivant or a film scene, so to speak' (Baas, 2019, p. 307). Duchamp's words opened up the possibility to start imagining art as a process, and it was only a few years later that Lewitt (1971) noted that simply the idea of an artwork itself—even if not made visual—could be as much a work of art as any finished product. This view of artistic production has since allowed for (social) processes to be valued alongside the production of final products. Although this social turn in the arts seems to be fully accepted and known, many of our art student teachers in the third year of a four-year Bachelor feel uncomfortable when they have to initiate a social project or intervention. We should never underestimate how persistent the romantic image of an

individualistic, studio-based artist is as the sole model of artistic practice. Luckily, in this book, both Nathan Schackleford's (p. 36) belief that "hobbies" and creative rituals, integrated into one's life, are artistic practices and Ellen Mueller's (p. 11) essay on walking as an artistic practice, are a testimony to the idea of art as a (social) process. They provide (prospective) teachers with inspiring examples of how (social) processes in daily life can be transformed into art. What's more, we should teach our student teachers that schools, by nature, are social places, brimming with activity, which—through a conceptual lens—can be material for artistic processes.

'Since no form is intrinsically superior to another, the artist may use any form, from an expression of words (written or spoken), to physical reality, equally' (Lewitt, 1969, p. 4). With statements like this, conceptual art caused a small earthquake when it shifted the attention from a discipline to a concept as the main focus point. By taking a concept or theme, the artist could now shamelessly use any form, discipline, or medium to express an idea. In education, we believe that freeing students from the chains of one certain discipline, stimulates conceptual thinking, the exploration of different

displines, and playing around with different forms and formats that could match an idea. Of course, to be creative—let's say with a trumpet—medium-specific knowledge and technique are beneficial, although Lewitt warns us that too overtly skilled artists make 'slick art' (1969, p. 5).

In our teachers' college, we often noticed that prospective teachers identifying strongly as "medium experts", have difficulty operating in more conceptual or interdisciplinary projects. These students either disqualify themselves as being creative beyond their discipline, or worse: they are simply not receptive to artistic forms outside their discipline. We observed the latter when we visited the Istanbul Biennial with a mixed group of student teachers (music, dance, art, theater). Even though the art show included sound and music installations, some student music teachers still felt the show did not represent their discipline, disappointingly noting 'this is not for us'.

Turning to this book, we are given examples of how one can play around with disciplines to express concepts

and ideas. Brian Black and Ryan Bulis (p. 33) take ideas and explore them through multiple artforms, creating anything ranging from a Cross-Walk-a-Thon, Sound-collection Helmets to Bubble Boy Ping Pong. Kaleb Ostraff (p. 105) challenged his pupils with instructions, assignments, prompts, and propositions in which photography, writing, dance, and video making were combined. As such, this book inspires teachers and pupils to go beyond the disciplines they know and to discover a world of endless possibilities.

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Something Between Nothing at all and Something Possibly Dangerous and Potentially Transformative

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What happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching? The answer probably ranges from "nothing at all" to "something possibly dangerous and potentially transformative." There are those who believe concepts don't do much, but concepts create systems and forms that have long term impacts.

For instance, I hear art teachers talking about how students need to know foundational skills to be able to create anything of their own choosing. These educators state that students need to know how to use the tools correctly before breaking any guidelines or rules. I include myself as having said these statements more than once. However, there is power in misusing a tool or creating new tools from the very outset of a project. I have written elsewhere (see Barney & Graham, 2014) that even the concept of a *foundations* in art, for instance, largely determines what forms are generated within such an imagining. A foundation is well-suited in constructing a solid, immovable building for instance; however, it is a terrible beginning for a boat or spaceship. The concept of a foundation makes perfect sense until it doesn't.

And then there is context, beyond the conceptual framework in which a work is conceived. Allan deSouza (2018) explains, "Where and how we encounter artworks are crucial to how they are activated. The studio, the exhibition space, and the accompanying catalogue (and the museum and the monograph) become archives of artworks whose contextualized and context-specific displays profoundly affect and inf(l)ect how we engage with individual works and their interrelations, aesthetically, temporally, materially, and socially. However, we are just as if not more likely to encounter artworks online, where the work might be removed from any initial artistic or curatorial framing, or be entirely recontextualized and dehistoricized" (p. 29). The very Zoomposium and subsequent book for which this musing was created are cases in point.

Returning to the discussion concerning the teaching of tools within a particular conceptual frame, I ask, what if tools are thought of as props, props that are used to create propositions for example? This speculation perhaps relates to deSouza's (2018) statement, "...shifts from what artworks *are* to what artworks *do*, and how they come in to being (doing), have major repercussions on how contemporary viewers—or rather, interactors or enactors—engage with, assess, and continue to think and act upon these works" (p. 29). The tools or props would be inextricably connected to the conceptual propositions in which they are entangled. I recently challenged my students to misuse a tool to go on a walk. I took on the same propositional experiment using my otoscope, a medical device that is designed to look into one's ears, as a video camera that turned me into a documentary filmmaker of sorts, a filmmaker with a very small camera. I got to know my own body, creating

in intimate *coming to know oneself portrait*. I filmed the pores of my skin, my hair follicles, inside my nostrils, mouth, and ears, afterwhich, I filmed this micro video in relation to one particular ant, the insect, as it went on its own walk through the neighborhood in which we both reside.

Getting to know my body intimately and crawling through my neighborhood on hands and knees while following an ant for an hour certainly wasn't a comfortable proposition. Megan Boler argues however, (as cited by Julietta Singh, 2018), "...that a 'pedagogy of discomfort' (1999, 196) may in fact be not only desirable but ethically imperative. For Boler, pedagogies of discomfort emphasize the bodies and materialities that both make life possible and differentiate (often radically) some lives from others. Practicing and teaching our discomforts can become acts of learning to live with the ambiguities and uncertainties of our complex ethical entanglements. Teaching discomfort, then, is an act of uprooting our deeply felt—but often deeply buried—discomforts. It is a way, in other words, of making discomfort conscious to those who embody it, as well as to those entangled with it in more and less complex ways" (p. 152). Crawling through one's environment with a prop as a sort of tool that teaches through discomfort is highlighted by artists like William Pope.L who has been crawling through various sites using props such as a stuffed animal, a brown suit, a superman costume, a potted plant, or a skateboard strapped to his back in a series of performances he began in the late 1970s called *Crawls*. His performances are both public and embody a pedagogy of discomfort as they are a doing for all those who, as he calls it, have "lost 'verticality'—a term that he uses to describe being wealthy enough, or healthy

enough, to remain upright and in motion. This social geometry is Pope.L's way of exploring inequalities that are often obscured by layers of complicity, guilt, inaction, and a sense of inevitability" (Pemberton, 2019, paragraph 3 downloaded from www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/crawling-through-new-york-city-with-the-artist-pope-l on August 13, 2020). Certainly, *Crawls* are both dangerous to perform and simultaneously potentially transformative in a number of ways.

Challenging our students, at any age, to misuse tools or to even create their own tools in order to propose alternative or more expansive structures and forms also asks students to transgress public spaces. This is indeed a pedagogy of discomfort but it is what artists do. The artist, Mike Kelley, in an interview with Ralph Rugoff (1991) said, "As an artist, you actually live in a very public environment. That's your job. That's why the myth of the artist as somebody who lives alone in some garret is absolutely ridiculous. Artists are some of the most public people there are" (p. 372). We create as artists and we make those creations public. Our artworks are a type of PROPosition where the prop is reimagined anew, used or misused, to generate a different kind of foundation, a potentially transformative foundation that might not be a foundation as we know it at all.

So, is birthing an alternative to a foundation or expanding or flexing or folding a structure or system a consequence worth taking? Is it too dangerous to abandon or adjust our tried and true tools, structures, systems, foundations, and gestures? The artist, Patricia Piccini, proposes a different query when she states, "I am particularly fascinated by the unexpected consequences,

the stuff we don't want but must somehow accommodate. There is no question as to whether there will be undesired outcomes; my interest is in whether we will be able to love them" (p. 290). Do we care and love what our artwork does or becomes as we give birth to it in ethical terms, even if it produces undesired outcomes?

In 2003, Klara Lidén, performed "a vivid dance in a Stockhom underground train. She flings herself around in the coach, using seats, poles and the dirty floor as her supports. Gradually she sheds her clothes..." (p. 335) to a country music soundtrack. Daniel Birnbaum (2015) explains, "Choreographing her dance to the layout of a commuter train, Lidén has attempted to re-appropriate public or privatized urban space. Besides the political undercurrent—an underground carriage provides the livelihood, and sometimes the home, for a small proportion of inhabitants of major cities in terms of busking and begging—the dance was energized by an antimodern and even utopian wish to make things improper.

But the *coup de grâce* of this ecstatic underground ballet, an apt example of the young Swedish artist's ferocious, contentious and urgent practice, is its prescient reminder of what tends to happen when one attempts to reorient accepted codes of behaviour in a pseudo-public space: nothing at all" (p. 335).

And that is where my presentation ends. What happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching? Something between nothing at all and something potentially transformative.

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Classy of an Art Class

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The publication *Classy of an Art Class* comprises two sections, entitled *1. Navigations* and *2. Exercises* and shall be perceived as a single cohesive art project, as well as an amalgamation of autonomous works of art created over the span of over two years (2016-2018) that could've been brought together only in the form of a printed compendium which is a dialogue between the interviews and my past experience. *Exercises* originate from the things, contexts and activities in the public and studio space—a series of works revolving around the subjects addressed in *Navigations*. The book also features two essays offering valuable insight into the ways of seeing and a broader context for depictions of art works: *How artists are made?* by Karolina Majewska; and *How much training do you need?* by Karolina Sikorska.

Navigations outline the results of art-related research project, aimed at infiltrating the habitus of art education that I completed on the basis of interviews with professional artists. These artists decided to earn their money from time they can offer to people, gathered experiences and expertise by agreeing to engage in the exchange of those things with others, within the institutional framework. Selection criteria for the choice of my sources were random encounters, gut feeling and sincerity rather than art world's hierarchies and artist's biography and background, to offer an insight into the way artists teach art. My conversations with those artists were oriented towards deciphering the hallmarks and features of the habitus of art academies populated by artists-teachers, as well as inferring the role of art in education itself.

Part of *Navigations* is the critical dictionary of sorts, compiled from the proposed set of categories, which represent the milestones in our conversations. These categories include, for example:

1. *Autocorrect*: each and every person I spoke with considered self-improvement crucial to their own development not only as an artist, but also someone's teacher. Undoubtedly, you can't stimulate the progress of others unless you keep cultivating your own skills. On the other hand, there's a thin line between a certain level of self-discipline needed for one's artistic growth and self-destructive rigor.

2. *Against the current*: is associated with the alternatives to the pre-established and officially acknowledged mechanisms of the art world that the artist might choose to contest and defy, making the statement against their habitus and recommended means of expression.

3. *Agency*: meaning the driving force of oneself, sense of mission inscribed in the profession,

empowering students with self-agency—furnishing them with tools for institutional critique that raise their awareness of the habitus of art, its area and feasible alternation or deconstruction.

The artists who acceded to the interview agreed to partial anonymity. Right at the beginning, we set the terms of the conversation, which also applied to the editing process. On this account, we managed to avoid cliched affirmations, product placements and blatant advertising of one's place of employment. I interviewed dozens of artists. Ultimately, I selected those fragments that were particularly meaningful or indicative of the issues which weighted heavily on my own mind.

As time went by, certain matters came to the fore while other faded into a still relevant background. If you read between the lines of the tale of artists' unique methods, styles and practice, you will uncover some narrative gems—stories about the clash with environment, institution, expectations, self-promotion under duress or affirmative action.

The next section of the book contains illustrations, courtesy of the artists, that embody their own perspective on the habitus of art education, this time signed with their names. They were chosen to show their approach to teaching, conveyed impressions and connotations, diagrams and points of reference. I didn't expect them to create works of art. Nevertheless, I found those free associations deeply inspiring—learning from other artists provokes an utterly emotional and therefore stimulating response.

While conducting an investigation into the institutionalized process of "becoming an artist," one should bear in mind James Elkins' statement: "no one has a good account of *how* art should be taught, *why* it should be taught, *whether* it should be taught, or even *if* it should be

taught."[1] And yet artists teach art. What do artists know that no one else does? Why do we assume that the artist instead of non-artist is the man/woman for the job? What sort of knowledge have they grasped? If they are the teachers, then who should teach them? Proficiency in every stage of art production falls short of the demands of the era of faltering authority, social media, #metoo movement and the overall emancipation of the subject of "a scholar." Who teaches artists how to teach (and not just guide and reproduce)? Should we even draw on our own art practice in the learning process? Does consistency in this regard guarantee our authority? These are some of the questions that come to mind.

There is no objective definition of success and failure in art (failure of a clumsy teacher, failure of a poor artist). Consequently, the issue is penetrated with the feeling of discomfort and arbitrariness. The key and final stage of one's education (as graduate art project) marks the culmination of learning process as well as the first step towards its authorization. The jury is still out on the specific evaluation criteria and yet more and more art schools conduct evaluation surveys among their recent graduates.

The artists I spoke to emphasized a risky and ambiguous quality of such situations bordering on transgression. On the one hand, education (art education in particular) is equal to pushing the boundaries of an experience. On the other hand, such an uncomfortable position begs to question the power relation between a well-versed erudite figure and unsuspecting students not having tools needed for comprehending the school system and its rhetoric.

1 James Elkins, *What do artists know,* Penn State University Press, 2012, p. 2.

In this situation context might yield debatable results: does an artist/teacher enact a performance in front of an audience? Are the novice students in any way engaged in this performance? Do/can/should you treat your students like a vessel in the context of their learning process, taking into consideration the fact that according to one of my contributors sometimes it occurs to you that "your students are your artwork at that moment, and sometimes not at all". It's hard to know exactly where to draw the line. According to Paolo Freire, truly liberating emancipatory course of action in education is built on the principles of *humility, dialogue* and *critical thinking*. If we choose to adopt his maxim, then pedagogic activity must avoid any forms of psychological or mental dominance of one party over another.

Final chapters of my book resonate powerfully with doubt about accreditation, agency and verification of results achieved within the art education paradigm. The notions of success and failure were rendered utterly meaningless by the implications of conceptualism (viewed in the academic circles as an aesthetic, style even) for the historically determined production. Conceptual art practice could be applied to any medium whatsoever, bridging the divide between multiple art disciplines. Graduates could enter (and succeed in) a larger field of cultural production superseding a tight-knit ruthless art community. Whereas an omnipresence of social media has already shaken former career paths and hierarchies. Due to abundant post-graduate training opportunities and artist-in-residence programs, it is the students in fact (meaning cultural producers) who often boast about having much more impressive résumé than their mentors.

The area of my visual research focused not only on systematic educational solutions, but also on individual

approach to learning: some artists considered teaching as an art piece; others made no mention of their own practice during work hours.

Furthermore, I did research the architecture of art academies (their *feng shui*, which attracts or discourages one from pursuing and exchanging creative ideas), teaching materials, iconosphere of education and jargon used in learning and art creation.

At the final stage of the project, a singular line of narrative was extrapolated from the accumulated visual materials, photographs and records documenting my encounters with artists.

These captured moments and objects form academies, schools, cultural institutions, pedagogic archives, monuments, were usually designed either in line with the socialist, utopian aesthetic, or contrary to its principles. In this critical dictionary the themes resurfacing in various conversations were merged together, creating a polyphonic swirl of voices.

Walking as Artistic Practice

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Walking as artistic practice has been a niche topic with cyclical levels of interest in the art world over the past few decades. Meanwhile, author and artist Frencesco Careri traces this history back to the wandering hunters of the Paleolithic period. Such long-lasting interest, both inside and outside the art world, makes this a compelling topic for both personal artistic practice, as well as teaching.

I first encountered the idea of walking as artistic practice in 2008 from Rozalinda Borcilă who had subverted a course at the University of South Florida, entitled *Site/Performance,* to focus on walking as an activity which organizes our understanding of space. Thinking of myself somewhat narrowly as a performance artist at the time, I signed up for the class hoping to glean guidance in that realm. Delightfully, the course focused very little on performance and much more on the city of Tampa, Florida, as a lab that we used to explore how our environment could be understood, both as individuals and collectively as a community.

Since that time, I have kept an eye out for an opportunity to further indulge in this area of study. However, it seems to be a topic that is just fringe enough that it can be tough to find a fit for it in many curriculums. In that way, walking disrupts conventional notions of categorization, which is partly why I am drawn to it. Because of this, when I encountered the open call for class proposals at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design Continuing Education department, I knew it could be my chance to dive back into a subject that has sustained my own practice, something that I was eager to share with others.

I started small: I proposed to teach this conceptual class as more of a three-week workshop divided into focused chunks, which felt manageable for myself and reasonable for people (students and community members) taking time out of their relatively brief Minnesota summers. The first iteration occurred summer 2019 and was conducted in-person for three-hour sessions on three, consecutive Saturday afternoons.

The second iteration just concluded, summer 2020, in the shadow of a pandemic, using a remote online format. While it still took place for three hours on Saturday afternoons in Minnesota, it fell in any number of other timezones for our participants across the United States, and even one in Scotland. Thankfully, the versatility of walking as an everyday medium, and the fact that it is not necessarily location-dependant, allowed for this intriguing shift.

I mention these issues of time and place because, while walking might not be fully dependant on a particular location, time and place certainly have a significant impact on one's walking, especially considering any number of identity factors. It's been interesting to see

how careful my score-making (writing the assignment directions) has become with the remote iteration, which must consider a plurality of circumstances. Walking seems to be a practice of conceptual art-making that naturally reflects and feeds the teaching of itself.

I should further mention that unlike teaching to traditional undergraduate or graduate students, who might be in a course purely as a requirement, continuing education classes bring together groups of self-selecting motivated students who have wide-ranging backgrounds and interests in the course topic. Some are high-achieving masters and doctoral students seeking enrichment, others are professors themselves at other institutions, while others yet are simply walking enthusiasts who had never considered that walking could be an artistic practice until they saw the title of the class in a course catalog.

We start the course with a brief overview of selected historic examples to help trace the lineage of walking as artistic practice. While Careri starts his history in the Paleolithic period, I start a bit more recently with the idea of the flânerie in the 1800s, and trace our way to the present day. For those with some art history background, they may recognize a few references to dada, surrealism, the situationists, or land art.

From there, we follow with three topics—one for each day of the workshop. There is always overlap and a bit of repeating as topics intersect, but I try to pick three ideas that are somewhat distinct from each other in order to create variety and multiple points of entry for our widely-varying student body. We read about each topic, learn about specific practitioners, and do exercises and projects, followed by discussion. There is a distinct rhythm to our days, which almost echoes the meditative state of walking itself, and focuses our work together.

In the first year, we covered observational walking, looking at distinguishing between the observational practices of flânerie and the dérive, as well as specific artists such as, Fallen Fruit with their public fruit maps, and Hamish Fulton whose walks stress the importance of the experience itself over any archival material. Then we examined leading versus following, and reviewed walking tours by the dadaists and scores by Fluxus, while creating our own group walks and taking turns leading. We also covered using the body as a drawing instrument by looking at artists such as Rebecca Horn, Trisha Brown, and Janine Antoni, and executing our own group-version of Richard Long's "A Line Made by Walking" (1967), as well individual GPS drawings. Looking back, it was luck that we focused on a good number of group walking activities when we had the opportunity to be in physical proximity of each another.

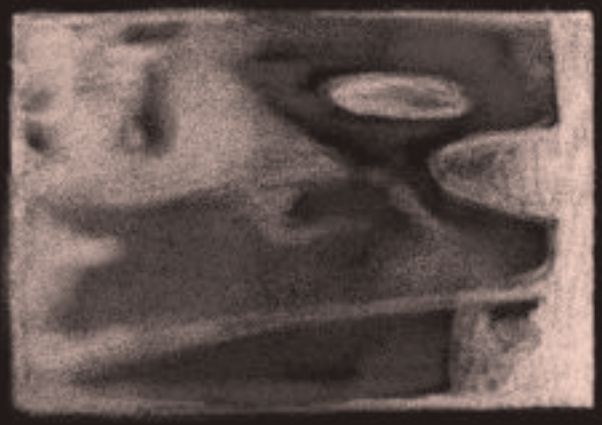
In the second year, we addressed archiving walks through issues of liveness and reprise, while looking at the work of artists such as Nancy Holt or Gabriel Orozco. We also spent time on the question, "Who gets to walk and where?" which led us to artists like Adrian Piper and William Pope L. Finally, we finished with the topic of walking as ritual, looking at processions, protests, and journeys among other ideas. We studied artists including Marina Abramović & Ulay and Francis Alÿs, which complimented our experiments constructing a variety of walking rituals.

Looking ahead to next summer, I'm interested in explicitly acknowledging the able-ist foundations of walking, and what walking has in common with other modes of moving through space. Beyond that, I still need to select two more topics, and my list of options is overwhelming because walking is such a sprawling field of study.

Currently, I am considering topics such as parades/processions, leisure and capitalism, mind-body connections, the importance of place/localness, getting lost/disorientation, walking with objects/props, making traces, mapping, subversion, protest, urban versus rural, walking together/group walks, retracing/reprising, play and games, memory/nostalgia, listening/sound, measuring time and space, improvisation/intuition (working with and without destinations), ecology connections, from traces to trails, social practice (intergenerational community-engaged walks), walking connections with the celestial, sensory investigations, pacing of movement through the world, tourism/tours, commuting, research methods, journeys and quests, issues of privilege and difference (gender, race, ability, age, etc.), indigenous/colonial issues, discovery/producing thoughts, rhythm and repetition, destinations and arriving, mark-making, ephemerality, endurance, public space, treadmills, intersections with technology, parks, land rights and access, anatomy, attire, the body as a unit of measurement, things we have to do alone, foraging, and poetic gestures.

Whatever I decide on, I'll be using these topics as foci for a book I am planning to write about walking as artistic practice for the higher ed classroom. I typically write books based on gaps in the existing literature, and this type of book is missing for me. After next summer, I will have nine units of content, which I will complement with a variety of resources and exercises for rounding out a full academic term.

Erotic Education



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Epigraphs

“Eu estou na minha fé.” (“I am in my faith.”)
—Paulo Freire

“I am my lover’s and my lover is mine, who grazes among the lilies.”
—Song of Songs, 6:3

Dedication

I sent a draft of this photo and poetry essay to Carl Leggo on Saturday, January 6, 2018, asking for his poetic criticism. I wrote to him from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He replied the next day from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Canada with a detailed critique. In reply, I wrote, “On the Feast of Epiphany you send me rich gifts from the East. I am no Christ child, but you are surely a poetic King.” Carl’s critique paid close attention to my technique and pointed out numerous inconsistencies. He was direct about my word choice. His notes of sympathy and understanding were, like my reply message, rooted in our common Christian faith, a faith into which Paulo Freire placed his existence and being. Carl passed away on March 7, 2019. I dedicate this essay to his memory.

Notes

This essay responds to the question "what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?" through seven untitled images woven into five titled poems. The images are both literally and analogically related to conceptual art and the poems are both literally and analogically related to teaching. One can then observe and imagine what is happening at the intersections of these images and poems as a phenomenology of what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching. As my title suggests, my claim throughout this essay is that erotic education is what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching. In other words, a phenomenology of what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching will yield, I claim, an erotic education, the eros of education, the education of eros itself. This claim might be worthwhile to suggest to any and every poetic teacher. After all, every teacher must be poetic in the basic sense of poiesis (which means "to make" in Greek), especially when the poetics of teaching comes into contact or intersects with art itself, conceptual or otherwise. This intersection may not be the meeting of two things external to one another. It might be best understood as a unity internal to art and teaching and even to the person. "I am in my faith." This internal unity is what I principally mean by erotic education: "I am my lover's and my lover is mine, who grazes among the lilies."

I. Martha María Diotima

The foolish sage taught only once
Only once did he recall his teacher
And her philosophy of love

She sits, I hurry round
There are chores, there is work, there is time
She sits still, staring, gazing, breathing

Does she love him? Why does he not tell her to
Help, get up, be responsible, love this floor and these dishes
She can listen as I am, holding fast to my jealousy

The love she taught him is not the one that divides us now
A mystagogue, he channelled her transmission
This love seeks beauty, not the proper portion of dust

Love me on the floor, in the grey shallow pool
Dream of her, next to him, overflowing from his cup
Grinding wheat with safari teeth, beautiful gored thigh
Before they drank, we prepared their dinner
Slaves do not lust for pedagogy
We listen and work too, no speeches or revelry

That great god cannot be spoken into being
She pierced the sage, he drank the dawn
His eros was crucified

II. Samuel's Psalm

Creation is your handiwork,
the stars, they shine your light.
You live inside my heart,
its dance is your delight.

Contradiction is your dwelling:
great, vast, and small.
You part the waters of the sea
and mark the sparrow's fall.

Your grace should be enough for me
but what about the rest?
Do not forsake the other parts
that I cannot confess.

Perhaps I'm speaking to myself,
superstitious, unaware.
Where two or more are gathered
you are surely there.

Evil, joy, and wickedness
you do not wash away.
My feet instead you bathe,
though they be of clay.

The world is broken by your love,
this you surely know.
You harvest from the seed
that you cannot sow.

“Among friends there’s no need for justice,”
Aristotle said.
The Son of Man has no place,
no place to rest his head.

III. How to Feed the Starving

Hold them
Weak and frail
Warmed cold
Cooled heat

Droplets
Intravenous
Living water
Flooded death

Weak soup
Body cramps
The cure
Can kill

Soap slides
Oils skin
Rest seeps
Dreams

Bloated belly
Hairless mutt
Muddy trash
Street relics

Rice hill
Salted beans
Filled
Content

Alone now
Bored
Pawing
The pain

IV. And the Bird Became Flesh

Reptilian singer
Trident feet
Natal orb

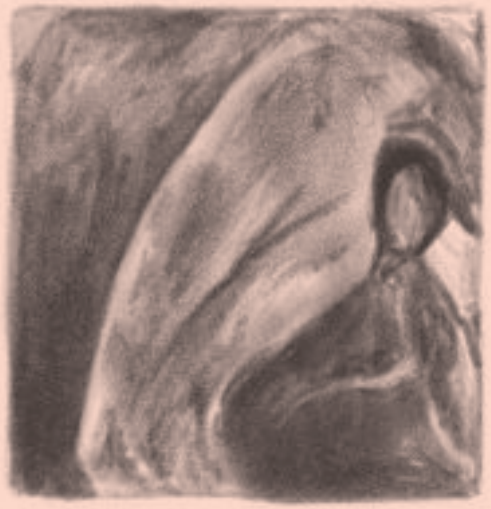
Ruach
Misa de gallo
Pastor sweat
Is there food?
No ghost
Body of Christ

Oil boils
Skin bursts
Spiced incense

Jungle calls
Sunflower shells
Chewing prison

Candelabra nest
Holy temple
Rainbow trout

Balding freedom
Raven dance
Quetzalcoatl



V. Prince of Whales

Look beyond the blubber
and novel tales.
We chase you, preserve you,
we applaud your majestic scarred side.
Your valiant rugby splashing
sells stocks and tours.
Hunting catching dead polar bears;
disfigured holiness.

Royal sea banquet:
a feast with no bread.
Oceanic bowel feelings,
lick and swallow my head.

Seasick otters vomit;
truth swells the vortex.
Lazy lions yawn and sneeze;
orca pods replace you.

Every reverence lathered
rebuilds the temple of maize.
A well fares dried poison better
than the wet seduction of an Age.

Incense ash of latter-day ancients:
Hand before heart before head.
Cartographer's map, mind's odyssey;
murderer of murderers, lover of my soul.

Riddled submerged tomb:
goodbye to God, adios.
The depths you dive, your vertical ascension,
a toast of living water.

Five Propositions On Participatory Pedagogy-based Contemporary Art

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My interest in the topic of the intersection of conceptual art and teaching (CA&T) is based on my personal trajectory in becoming an art educator. Having been trained in an art for art's sake fine arts education from attending specialized arts junior and high schools through my BFA and MFA in Korea, the beauty of human growth and the desire to communicate with a larger audience have led me to pursue art education as my life-long career. During my doctoral studies, I naturally gravitated toward hybrid forms of contemporary art and education, which motivated me to investigate participatory artworks relevant to the *educational turn* in contemporary art (Bishop, 2012; Finkelpearl, 2013; Helguera, 2011; Kalin, 2012, 2014; Lazar, 2013; Lucero, 2013; O'Neill & Wilson, 2010).

I eventually carried out a multiple case study, investigating artist-led participatory art projects that involved "teaching" in the form of employing educational formats and methods (e.g., workshops, discussions, group activities for knowledge exchange). I not only studied artists' pedagogical approaches and strategies but also attuned to the experiences of the participants and public audience members who engaged with works led by these artists.

Drawing on the findings from my dissertation study and by observing several art projects situated at this intersection of conceptual art and teaching, I have laid out five salient characteristics to describe the nature of this intersection. I hope the following propositions may resonate with the various presentations of the CA&T zoomposium.

1. "Making" as an embodied process of inquiry

I begin with the notion of *making* that underpins this intersecting of conceptual art and teaching. The essence of art is making. Making is not stagnant but implies the state of becoming. Making can take form in a physical action of *making something visible* through materials, but it can also refer to the state of our being as we are constantly *in the making* through the mind-body connection of our existence. Dewey's (1934) concept of mind-body refers to the totality and continuity of our being. He viewed this unity within and beyond the self as artful making. This aspect of making as being through mind-body also connects to the concept of *practice*, which implies continuity and consciousness that, in Dewey's words, we are "consciously present so that each instance is lived anew" (as cited in Jacob, 2018, p. 59).

Grounded in Dewey's philosophy, when art is manifested through conceptual inquiry (i.e., conceptual art) and intersects with pedagogy, making becomes an embodied process of inquiry, continuously generating new meaning.

2. Art practice that is relational and reciprocal.

When conceptual art engages with pedagogy, relationality—and more specifically reciprocity—becomes prominent. The meaning of the artwork emerges in the exchange between the artist and participants, ultimately affecting both identities.

In terms of value judgement, a conceptual artwork (presented in the context of the art world) is generally

evaluated by its innovative approach, its critiques or responses to existing art or institutions, or its embodiment of ideas. Collectively, these qualities would determine its value or reception in the art world. When conceptual art meets pedagogy, however, "the participant"—or the correspondent of the artist who engages with the artist's art of teaching—also contributes to the meaning-making of the art(work). As an art educator, I view this meaning-making process as where the artwork holds its pedagogical value; that is, value is intimately linked to the experiential impact that the artwork has on its participants. Thus, conceptual art that intersects with teaching takes on the responsibility to "care" for those it involves, which leads to the third aspect.

3. Art practice that emphasizes "care," acknowledging the creative potential of people

When an artist teaches through making, care is invested with the hope that something new can be achieved and that the outcome might have some worth. This approach to art acknowledges that everyone has creative potential within themselves and that education—which is "a deliberate process of drawing out learning" (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.) originating from the Latin word *ēdūcere*—encourages and gives time to discovery as an intentional act. This idea is well-reflected in Joseph Beuys' (1974) famous quote that "every living being is an artist" (as cited in Kuoni, 1990, p. 26). It is at the intersection of art and pedagogy where the greatest value of art lies, according to Beuys, who posited, "To be a teacher is the greatest work of art. The rest is the waste product, a demonstration" (as cited in Lippard,

1997, p. 121). As Beuys acknowledged that every human being—in their inherent creativity—is potentially an artist, he viewed the social organism as a work of art collectively created by each person as an artist. Thus, he advocated for art to be embodied in every subject and pleaded "for a gradual realization that there is no other way except that people should be artistically educated" (as cited in Harrison & Wood, 1992, p. 892).

In a similar vein of understanding art as a fundamental quality of life, Tibetan buddhist Chögyam Trungpa (1996) said that "the definition of art is to be able to see the uniqueness of everyday experience. This art in everyday life is enacted as we bring this way of being an artist into everything we do" (p. 27). Therefore, the intersection of art and pedagogy kindles an aesthetic awareness in our everyday lives.

4. Art practice that involves communication, dialogue

When pedagogy intersects with art, communication is often involved. Communication does not necessarily need to be in a verbal form, as art itself is a symbolic act that holds the potential for communication itself. However, oral language is often the major means of communication when the artist has the intention to teach through their artistic endeavors. In particular, dialogue has been one of the most commonly used methods for producing content in pedagogical art projects. With its origin traced to Russian literary critic and philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (Pechey, 1989), dialogue is not simply a verbal exchange but a philosophy of language and communication. It is the constituent factor of dynamic interrelations between the self and the other, which has also been greatly emphasized in critical

pedagogy to achieve democratic learning. This brings us to the fifth aspect.

5. Collective art practice that holds democratic potential

In pedagogy-based art projects, artists often promote hands-on ways of learning through making with their participants. They often combine literary activities such as discussions and dialogue with visual making, along with movement and theater exercises. Pedagogue and artist Adelita Husni-Bey particularly refers to Russian philosopher Peter Kropotkin's concept of "integral education" (as cited in Craycroft, 2015, p. 93) as a way to blur the distinction between manual and intellectual labor, which later developed into the concept of project-based learning. Based on my numerous interviews with and observations of participants involved in pedagogical art projects, participants often talked about how this type of multi-modal learning enabled multiple entry points into learning.

Moreover, artists frequently involve group activities of making as a way to encourage peer-to-peer learning and collaboration. Participants gain agency in the process of contributing to a larger collective beyond the self. Many participants spoke about the democratic aspect of learning this way and referred to this aspect as a major difference from their previous learning experiences in school. In particular, they shared about the conducive learning environment created by artists who encouraged a spirit of open-mindedness and a sense for exploration that allowed this type of learning to be fostered.

As I revisit these five themes gathered through my own empirical work, what emerges is the on-going

transformative growth of the artist and participants alike. This builds on the collectivity and relationality of the nature of these pedagogy-based art projects. In Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2005) words, "the learning self as an emergence—as a self and an intelligence... is always in the making"(p. 57). We act on embodied values as we make and what we make shapes the ethos of our lives.

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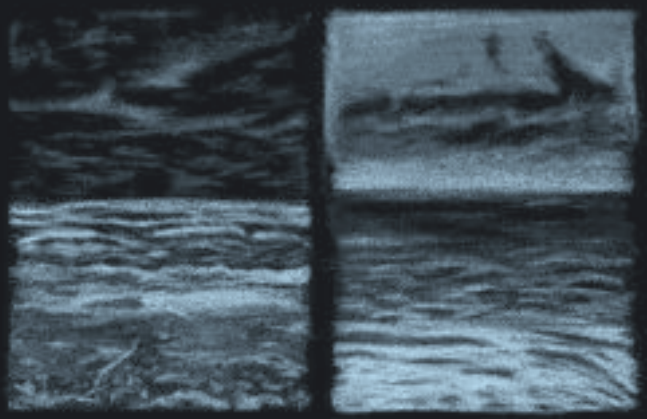
This is a Sky that Looks Different Every Day



Miriam Dolnick, Casey Murtaugh
Art Teachers, Nicholas Senn High School, Chicago, IL

As teachers, there is an expectation to conform to the structures of school that often do not fit us as artists. The pressure to not only engage with these structures but to believe in them as necessary for making schools work is real. In this moment of unprecedented change when it comes to school, there is a unique opportunity to re-center ourselves as artists. The space of school is shifting, it is no longer in a building, and the way we show up for it is new and undefined.

The constraints that have felt limiting to us as artists, grades, set schedules, surveillance, although not completely erased, have also shifted. When framed as a release, there's an opportunity to ground ourselves in relation to school in a new way. Instead of understanding school as a space to learn things one might need for the future, what happens when we approach it as precious, exciting material filled with possibility in its present moment. What if experiencing the space of school in and of itself was just enough to fill you up.

Hi P,

I just wanted to check in and see how you're doing. I hope you and your family are safe and healthy. I haven't heard yet from you since we've been out of school, so I wanted to reach out again and make sure you are doing alright and wanted to know if there's anything you need or if there is any support I can offer to you or your family. I know that this time is extremely overwhelming and there are a million good reasons to feel the need to tune out from school that I totally respect and understand. Even if you are unable to engage or participate in the work that is being posted, I would love to hear from you and know that you are alright. No other explanation needed! As you already know, I'm extremely flexible and you are invited to jump in at any time. Let's work together to find a way for us to stay connected. Are you still working at Devon Market?

I look for you every time I go.

Take care,
Ms. Dolnick

Hi all,

On Thursday, I'll be introducing a new set of ideas for us to dig around in. This will be a great time for those unable to participate thus far to jump in!! I know everyone is experiencing this current moment in their own way. Many of us

are struggling with loss of lives, jobs, homes, loss of any sense of normalcy. Some of us are taking care of our families by working longer hours, caring for our younger siblings, worrying about college applications…missing friends and relatives…the list continues on and on. Please know I understand the many roadblocks in the way of "getting your work done." The real work right now is to take care of yourself and your loved ones. I know for some of you, taking care of yourself means digging into your school work. I'll continue to invite you to participate in what I believe to be interesting experiments/experiences and always look forward to helping you move through them in meaningful ways. Please reach out whenever and always.

I miss you!
Ms. Murtaugh

What is community when we can't be together?
What is connection when we are separate?
How do we have a real conversation?
What does it mean to offer vs. teaching vs. inviting?
How can school be an invitation as opposed to a requirement?
What do students need to be able to accept it as an invitation?

What would we build from scratch? What would students build from scratch? What can we only build through our collaboration with students? What if the premise of school wasn't we are teaching and students are learning, but instead, what can happen when we come together? Just as we might create rules for

ourselves as a way of moving forward in our artmaking practices, what rules would we create to move forward in a way that would create the kind of meaning (within "school" and education") that we would like to see? What structures or spaces do we turn to as a way to start imagining.

This is a sky that looks different every day. This is where we spend as much of our time as possible. This is where we meet our neighbors. This is where we experience joy by ourselves and with our community. This is where we reflect. This is where we get ideas. Rule #1.

We live on a block in Rogers Park in Chicago that dead ends at the beach. It's a very special place to live. During the school year, we loop around to the end of our block to get a good look at the water before starting

our day. When we come home, we come back to the same spot, roll down the windows and listen to the waves. When quarantine began, the lines of school and not school began to blur and these previously separate spaces began to creep closer. Instead of leaving the beach behind every morning, it became a place to process our day while it was still happening, it became a space for us to meet when we could no longer meet in each other's apartments. We began to reflect on school at the beach—the two spaces started to merge for us in a new way.

What if school was a space where you could feel sun and wind on your body?
Where you could float? Where you could dig?
Experience joy with yourself and others?
Confronted with surprise? Where you could feel fulfilled by just experiencing a place?

In August 2020, we are surrounded by conversations, every day, about what school is going to be. In this moment of reimagining what school is going to look like now, what can we do to fight for the flexibility to prioritize the things that we believe to be most important. Challenging ourselves to work from scratch and start from a space where recognition of each other, connection, care, collaboration and joy comes first. Rule #2.

In this moment where school isn't actually anywhere, we want to task ourselves and others to collect/document/search for the most joy filled, awe inspiring, playful, beautiful spaces and moments that we have access to in other parts of our lives and use them as a starting place for reimagining the material of school. What happens when we start over, develop new spaces to start from, and embrace the blurriness/murkiness of this moment as freedom to serve our students and ourselves in a way that is more genuine to thinking and learning and making. Rule #3.

Proximity. We get to watch kids play freely. We get to see families enjoy each other. We get to see storms roll in and out. We get to swim and ride the waves. We get to have meals there. Coffee. We host friends. We get to witness strangers entertaining themselves. We get to be lost in time. We get to read books. It is always different. We never know who will be there and who we might talk to. We show up when we're awake and leave

when we've had enough. What does your list sound like? What do our student's lists sound like? What is a space or a moment that you return to and what would it look like if we built school entirely around it? Rule #4: Make it personal.

While we know that school might not ever = beach, even in a conceptual way, there is usefulness in being able to describe our spaces of joy as a starting place in order to change the spaces that have never worked for everyone. What would it be like if everyone was as excited to be at school as we were to be on the water or at the movies or at a bbq? Or wherever that space is for you?

If we as teachers have anything to offer/teach our students, it's being transparent in our process of learning how to find/recognize joy and bring that into our work with each other. How to find ways to live there, and to work from there. What do we have to offer if we're not actively collecting/researching/observing/asking questions/getting dirty and then starting all over again

in regards to what we want the space of school to look like and be?

In asking students to join us in this process, how can we make ourselves vulnerable enough for it to be a true collaboration that is dependent on all of us bringing our most genuine selves forward. How does this become a continued practice, not just for the pandemic but for always?

School should be reimagined by whoever is there, always, everyday. We must remember that it is flexible, malleable, ready, and waiting for us to play. We must remember. Rule # 5.

Awakening in Ourselves, Awakening in our Students: A Willingness to Play, Break Rules, and Take Risks

Brian Black* & Ryan Bulis**

*Crawford High School in San Diego, CA

**Director of the Boehm Gallery and Teacher at Palomar College in San Marcos, CA & Associate Faculty, Mira Costa College

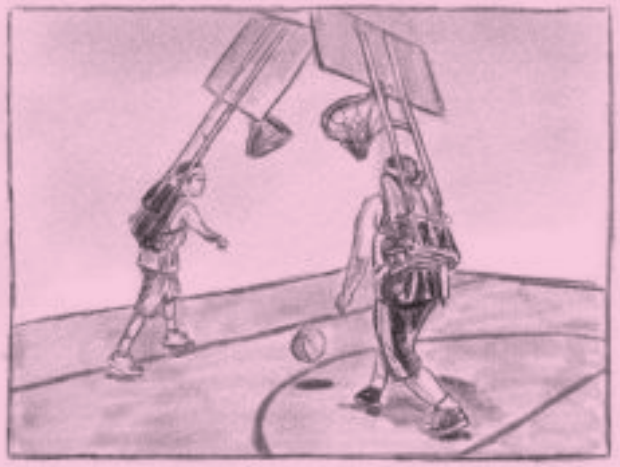
BRIAN Hi everyone. I am Brian Black.

RYAN And I am Ryan Bulis

BRIAN Together we make up the team Brian & Ryan.
RYAN We are presenting: Awakening in ourselves, Awakening in our students
BRIAN *A Willingness to play, Break Rules and Take Risks*

RYAN Inherent in our collaboration is a journey into the unknown. Elements of our performances are agreed upon in advance, but there are always unanticipated developments.

For *Basketball Backpack*, we designed the backpacks knowing it would restructure the game, but I could not have anticipated how lost I would get in the competition. I never identified myself as an aggressive person, but the inverted game separated my notion of "the athlete" from myself, the game player, and I was driven to win. In the first version of this work, I did not win. Brian is a more talented shooter, but the hunger to win gave me a profound pause, and I continued to reflect on my nature, and this led me to much of my own academic research on Blood Sport and Physiognomy. Also, I won the second time we performed this piece.



A large part of the Brian and Ryan persona is in the amplified rivalry and competitions. In a later work from 2016, we performed a series of competitions including the *Half-Pipe Ping Pong*. In this performance, I found that same glimpse into the darker side of competition. That need to win can make you lose yourself a little bit.

BRIAN *The Cross-Walk-A-Thon* **in 2009 is a transition away from the competitive works and a move away from a formal audience. This performance is purposely insular and does not rely on an institution or official audience. During the eight hour period, we continuously walked the four crosswalks in downtown San Diego only stopping to record the wear on the bottom of my shoes and on the soles of Ryan's feet. This documentation of the journey became one of the most significant aspects of the piece.**

While we were unnoticed by the passing traffic and pedestrians, there was a small unofficial audience including the homeless man on the corner questioning us every single time we passed him and the small group at the corner bar who took notice of our actions and even cheered for us. By commandeering that location and extending that moment in time, we gave ourselves the opportunity to reflect on the work in real time.

Bubble Boy Ping Pong **in 2010 would be the next piece that continued to explore a detachment from an audience. The thick plastic bubble combined with the blowing fans kept us separated from the people outside. Even so, moments arose when the audience attempted to connect with us. My most indelible memory is a young boy coming up to the bubble and pressing his hand against it in an attempt to make a physical connection with us.**

RYAN Based on what we learned from the insular nature of the *Bubble Boy Ping Pong* and the *Cross-Walk-A-Thon,* the *Sound Collection Helmets* were the next logical evolution in our work. But this time, we wanted to reverse this paradigm and engage the audience directly. Using the spectacle of the helmets to draw in audience participation, we asked people to talk about their city. These stories along with the ambient sound of that city become part of an ongoing audio anthology from across the country. The participants do not have

to understand the full scope of the project, just their shared part. This work is an attempt to awaken people's understanding of living in a location as they define that place through storytelling.

BRIAN *Tub Talk* in 2019 is one of our more current works. It altogether removes the two of us from the spectacle. The participants step into the erect bathtubs and are encouraged to communicate using the tube connecting the tubs. The installation is an empty vessel until the audience activates it. This situation allows an opportunity for the audience to experience the simplicity of acoustic sound amplification while drawing their own connections to the intimacy of person-to-person communication.

RYAN Our most pedagogical work is a piece from 2019; for *Eraser*, participants were given a large format list of graphite stenciled words, they were then asked to erase one word at a time until only one remained. This piece really highlights a shared teaching philosophy for both Brian and myself: we aim to give the audience (or student) an opportunity to have their own unique epiphany. To a great extent, the audience controls the meaning of this work. Likewise the goal in our respective classrooms is to offer a similar opportunity for the students to direct their own growth and have a meaningful classroom experience.

BRIAN This immiscible mixture of familiarity and uncertainty is what we look for in our collaboration, and we attempt to facilitate a similar discourse with our students.

During my 20 years of teaching art at Crawford High School in San Diego, my job is to help students develop technical skills, art appreciation, and visual literacy but my "self- appointed intent" is to awaken their ability to think divergently and take conceptual risks. If I successfully facilitate this awakening, they are able to look beyond the formal aspect of art making and begin to reassess, well, maybe everything.

During the shutdown, however, I faced a personal teaching crisis: could I trust my students to interpret an open-ended assignment in this new virtual learning format? How do I support them and give them feedback,

not to mention how do I assess this work? So, I started by having them do simple searches around their house to collect line, pattern, and color groupings. And I asked them to discuss what surprised them the most about their discoveries.

These lessons met with success, and I believed a conceptually-based lesson could work. So, I asked my students to discover, record, and present on a meaningful sound within their household. I took a teaching risk and left the parameters open-ended. Their work surpassed my expectations. They were becoming conscious (having an awakening) of the role sound plays in the dynamics of their household. And the discourse I was having with students as they developed their work became as important as the final products. They would send samples for approval, give me some written notes, even attended office hours, etc.

It was this dialogue with my students (similar to the dialogue that Ryan and I engage in) that I valued most. They showed a willingness to play and to discover. And

that helped to re-awaken my zeal for teaching even during this unprecedented crisis.

RYAN In my foundational courses at Palomar College, my objective is to introduce students to a conceptual approach grounded in the methods and materials of each foundational course. Although not all my projects give the total freedom for students to self-determine their own outcomes, I do however hope my students have an awakening with each project. If done right, they come out of my class with a greater awareness of the subtle wonders and beauty in their everyday environment.

During my intro drawing course one of my projects that is especially satisfying from a conceptual perspective is the Cheetos Still life. I aim to introduce my students to the fundamentals of drawing geometric forms while also updating the concepts of traditional still life. Each Cheeto, cheesy ball, Pringle and cheese curl offers a neon orange version of near geometric forms. The curved cylinder or sphere lay just below the powdered cheese surface of each snack food. Students select several chip forms and are then tasked to draw 100 studies in orange chalk pastel. We discuss the methods of drawing gesture and value through the work of Oldenburg and other landscape illustrators—Loose lines and block shapes with smudges of black and gray to define form and shadow.

The Still Life as a theme can be read through two symbolic lenses. The first read of the objects in the still life is to understand the culture of this Artist's time and place. Think of Frida Kahlo's last painting of two watermelons. We are given a sliver of insight into the produce

and culture of Kahlo's Mexico. The other symbolic read is the traditional still life from the Dutch Baroque. The artist attempts to arrest flowers and fruit in a permanent state of full bloom and ripeness—acting as a momento mori and attempts to mimic the promise of immortality. The irony of the Cheetos and the Cheetos drawings are that they achieve this kind of immortality through the artist's hand and the miracle of preservatives—Forever full, forever neon orange.

Once the dust settles, the students look down at their fingers covered in orange chalk dust and become conscious of the real and the artificial qualities of the Cheetos and their drawings.
Armed with this new awareness, I anticipate my students are able to leave my classroom better prepared to make their own conceptual choices.

Fragmentation and Education: Invisible Actions that Cause Transformation

Nathan Shackelford
St. Charles East High School, St. Charles, IL

Assertion: I believe that "hobbies" and creative rituals, that are integrated into one's life, are artistic practices. Patience, curiosity, passion, attention to nature, and ultimately optimism, are essential to my teaching practice and who I am as an artist-teacher. I am going to describe a couple practices that I find wonder-full and life-giving, and which have also been part of the rhythms of my life for quite some time. I find that as I nurture and encourage young artists, there are many parallels in the routines, mindsets, and extended timeframe that are embedded within educational practices.

Making naturally leavened bread

I make bread regularly, particularly naturally leavened (sourdough) bread. I'm not compelled to make bread in order to eat it (I mostly leave that to my family), I am more fascinated by what our world has given us in a few basic ingredients teamed up with mysteries of biology. In the air around us, and on most surfaces, there are all the microbes needed to create a balanced, symbiotic levain that will foster life, if given the chance. Yeast and lactic bacteria are all around us, but they thrive in a slurry of water and flour. They multiply, eat, and take over the whole mass in a short period of time. **They transform it. Fermentation transforms everything.** Hours after adding a culture to flour and water you can make fluffy bubbly pancakes with it. Flour's well-known gluten strands become balloons that hold the fermentation gases created by the yeast. These balloons are the holes and fluffy structure that we see in a beautiful loaf of bread. I've been making naturally leavened bread for 20 years and I still find magic and mystery in the process. I have tapped many resources over the years to accumulate knowledge about bread, but it's the "hands-in-the-dough" experience over time that is really important to understanding the process. **Recipes have many assumptions built into them (as do curriculums), and Nature doesn't always cooperate.** Recently, a friend living overseas didn't have access to commercial yeast and wanted me to share a recipe for baking with sourdough culture... I was ecstatic to share with her. I made videos of my starter culture, and tried to visually show how I work with it. In the end, the variables and undefinable parts of the work were too much. I think you have to love the mystery and be willing to learn through

trial and error, and paying close attention. I hadn't realized this until I was trying to share it. Here, I'm going to describe my process, but it's not a recipe as much as a rhythm that's integrated into my weekends.

My ritual starts on Saturday morning. I mix up flour and water and leave it for 3 hours to absorb and develop the gluten structure. At the same time I feed my starter, so that the activity of the culture will peak in 3 hours. The starter culture, or levain, is then added to the inert dough and mixed together around 9:30-10:00am. I put salt on top of the dough and let it rest for 30 min before mixing it in. Salt will stiffen up the gluten further, and also slow down the action of the yeast. After letting it rest for another 30 minutes, I start to stretch and fold the dough at 40 min. intervals. This ritual only takes a minute or two, so I briefly visit the dough and then go back to other activities. After 3-5 "stretch and folds", the dough has changed it's composition, and it has become more cohesive and taut. Now the dough can rest for another 4-6 hours as it rises to about double its original volume. It's alive, strong and jiggly. After dinner I divide the dough into 2 masses and gently stretch and fold it up a few different ways to create a compact package, while still being careful to keep the internal bubble structure in-tact. The loaves will be dropped into proofing baskets and into the fridge for a slow fermentation and final rise. In the morning, the oven will be heated wicked hot and each loaf will get a turn in a lidded dutch oven where the moisture from the dough creates a steamy environment, perfect for uninhibited expansion (or oven spring, as bakers call it). The bread pops into a sphere of stretching and expanding grain, and then after the lid is removed it bakes to a golden crackly crust, burnished brown, and full of tiny fermentation bubbles on the surface.

As the loaves cool on the counter I'm satisfied and happy to share this wonder with my family. The beauty of these ephemeral objects (perhaps like an art exhibition or a film festival) that must be consumed before it disappears is also mysterious. To be honest, I don't want to wait till next weekend, I want to start another batch tomorrow, but alas, supply and demand is a real thing.

Natural Cidermaking

Here's the wonder: We can find unwanted apples (for free) and then process them into an aromatic and refreshing liquid that will sustain my small community all year. Cidermaking is ancient and mysterious, but truly... cider makes itself. The natural yeasts responsible for sourdough bread are also up for the job in a home cidery as well. The cidermaker, just like the bread baker, merely creates an optimal environment for the natural process to take place. It's gardening with microbes. **Is the art classroom also creating an environment that is optimized for the natural processes of learning to happen?**

Every fall I check on the various trees on my apple foraging map. Some years they have a bumper crop, and other years it's sparse. Many apple trees are biennial, meaning- they bear heavy fruit every other year. The cider character varies along this pattern as well. By August, I know which trees will have crops, and I check to see when they will start dropping. Usually mid-September lots of the trees are ready...or close to ready. I start to forage apples, filling bins and storing them in my shady side-yard, along the house. I try to keep them cool and dry until pressing day. My car will smell like apples for weeks, and you will see a picker, bins and tarp in my backseat until we are done.

It's different every year, but lately I've been trying to press the apples only a few times and have marathon pressing days, with a few eager friends or brothers helping out. The last couple years this has meant foraging and pressing about 1000 pounds of apples in a weekend. We have stations set up with washing, grinding, and pressing. We end the day with 50-80 gallons of juice to be divided and taken home.

Most of this juice will be fermented. Since some of our apples are picked up off the ground, it's best to ferment the juice to create a safe beverage. Fermented cider is **really** the only use for these apples, besides feeding them to livestock. I place my carboys in a dark, cool place and allow the natural yeasts to take over. The cider will roil with foam and activity for a few weeks, sometimes overflowing the container if there's not enough headspace. If you shine a light into the glass container, you will see swirling and churning in the liquid. It's so alive, it's mesmerizing. Over time it will slow down and eventually taper off. During this time I like to keep the cider cool and allow this process to happen very slowly, if possible. The cider will retain more aromas and flavor if the ferment isn't too vigorous. When I pop the bread dough in the fridge overnight I'm slowing down the fermentation to build flavor. The same thing is happening with a slow fermented cider, but this time I'm trying to hang onto as much of the aromatic apple character as I can. Around New Years Day I should have most of my cider moved to new containers so that it can age without the exhausted yeast sediment in the mix. In the next few months I will tiptoe around the cellar, amongst the sleeping cider, and sample it using a turkey baster to slurp up a mouthful from each cask. I notice the aromas and flavors becoming more stable and discernable from batch to batch. I notice a crisp tartness in one, and

a floral aroma in another. I start to notice personalities from different pressings and the blend of apples that were used. Sometimes I take notes, and other times I just organically follow my process and act as an intuitive gardener in the cellar. I create blends of batches that compliment each other, and send them to kegs to be carbonated. In March or April about 100 gallons of cider is hitting peak, and we start to consume it and share it with family and friends. The cider being ready is a reason to celebrate and get people together. Cider always makes me smile and marvel... dropped apples picked up and nurtured through Nature's mysterious microbial alchemy emerge into the bright Spring days as a perfect flavor expression of the coming summer. Cider takes a whole year to make, and it starts with observing the apple blossoms in the spring as they give you a hint at the fruit that will follow.

These interests in gardening, fermenting, baking, orcharding, bike-building, coffee-roasting... have bubbled over into my teaching life and seem to show a pattern of how education and other creative practices are integrated and intertwined. I find that: in my life with students in the studio, I am at my best when I am curious, passionate, and optimistic... digging deeper. Likewise, as I pursue my creative interests outside the studio, I'm drawing on the same essential mindset. My students and I are all fermenting, growing, and being transformed by curiosity in the same ways. **May we all be transformed by our routines, rituals, and ongoing curiosity.**

A Course Proposal: Institutional Critique and the University

Heath Schultz
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Course Title: Institutional Critique and the University

Catalog Description: This course will generate "knowledge in the university—at the level of its form, content and practices—[that] tends towards the knowing degeneration, disorganization and disequilibrium of the university."[1] It will take as a starting point that a materialist analysis of the university is necessary;[2] that the incorporation of our collective practices into the university must be resisted;[3] and, finally, that discourses of art cannot escape violence.[4]
The course will consist of five projects.

1 Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, "The University: Last Words." Currently unpublished, the paper was circulated as part of the graduate student-led FUC series, led by Moten and Harney on July 9, 2020. Text available at: www.fuc-series.org

2 See The Edu-Factory Collective, eds., *Toward a Global Autonomous University* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2009); Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings* (Boston: MIT Press, 2009).

3 See Gerald Raunig and Gene Ray, eds., *Art and Contemporary Practice: Reinventing Institutional Critique* (London: Mayfly Books, 2006); Claire Fontaine, *The Human Strike Has Already Begun & Other Essays* (Berlin: Mute/PML Books, 2013); Eli Meyerhoff, *Beyond Education: Radical Studying for Another World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).

4 See John P. Bowles, *Adrian Piper: Race, Gender, and Embodiment* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Darby English, *To Describe a Life: Notes from the Intersection of Art and Race Terror,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019).

Project 1: Materialities and Virtualities of Debt

Overview: Students will review their financial aid, loan, and credit card statements and, using their current debt as a baseline, calculate anticipated debt to complete their degree. When the student has determined their forecasted debt*, they will design a "time-based performance" (a five-, ten-, or twenty-year plan, for instance) in which the student would have the hypothetical financial ability to repay their debts. The student's performance should account for an estimated time-to-repayment and any financial factors that will affect the duration of their performance.[5] Those factors might include: rent, car payments, computer payments, children, pets, cell phone bills, internet bills, netflix subscriptions, groceries, insurance, medical expenses, alcohol, marijuana, etc.

* If a student does not have any debt, that student may substitute this assignment for a close reading of Karl Marx's *Capital*.[6]

Supporting Documents (Artworks):
Joseph Kosuth, *One and Three Chairs* (1965)
Tehching Hsieh, *One Year Performance 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece)* (1980–1981)

Supporting Documents (Texts):
Christopher Newfield, *The Great Mistake: How We Wrecked Public Universities and How We Can Fix Them* (2016)
Abigail Boggs, Eli Meyerhoff, Nick Mitchell, and Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, "Abolitionist University Studies: An Invitation" (2019)

5 Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man*, trans. Joshua David Jordan (New York: Semiotext(e), 2012), 34–35.
6 Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of the Political Economy, Vol. 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1992).

Project 2: Materialities and Virtualities of University Resources

Overview: Students will thoroughly read the university's annual financial report, paying close attention to all new building and renovation projects over 10 million dollars. Students will tour every building on campus, including sites of planned construction. Students will note buildings that show signs of financial health and/or dilapidation as well as signage that might denote donors, honorary building names, or corporate sponsorships. Next, students will thoroughly research one location and design a tour of that building. Examples might include: the future site of a football stadium, a building named after a former slave owner, a tour of administrative offices with salary information, or a tour of the corporate-sponsored lab.

Supporting Documents (Artworks):
Mark Lombardi, various drawings
Andrea Fraser, *Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk* (1989)

Supporting Documents (Texts):
Marc Bousquet, *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation* (2008)
Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (2006)

Project 3: Materialities and Virtualities of University Real Estate

Overview: Students will research the history of the neighborhood where the University has recently expanded its footprint, paying close attention to the racial makeup and income level of its current and former residents. Students will visit the neighborhood, noting new buildings, types of cars, and the activity level of the police. Next, students will scrutinize University press releases regarding the opening of these buildings and create a revised press release containing their research on the neighborhood's history prior to the University's expansion.

Supporting Documents (Artworks):
Hans Haacke, *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* (1971)[7]
Adrian Piper, *Vanilla Nightmares* (1985–1989)

Supporting Documents (Texts):
Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership* (2019)
Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (2007)

7 It was rumored that the Board of Trustees for the Guggenheim, the original site of the installation, had a personal relationship with the real estate group. Haacke's exhibition was canceled by the Guggenheim.

Project 4: Materialities and Virtualities of the Entrepreneurial Spirit

Overview: Students will do a close reading of the mission statement and recruitment materials of the University's Entrepreneurship major alongside research on the Entrepreneurship major itself: its history, the context in which it was created, the "success" its graduates have had, etc. Students will repeat this process for majors within the Art Department.[8] Next, students will create annotated versions of the Entrepreneurship and Art Department's informational materials. The annotated materials should reveal marginalia as a deconstructive tool, position the occlusion of information as an ideological strategy of erasure, and critically read University-produced materials as propaganda.

Supporting Documents (Artworks):
Wendy Red Star, *1880 Crow Peace Delegation* (2014)
Latoya Ruby Fraser, *Campaign for Braddock Hospital (Save Our Community Hospital)* (2011)

Supporting documents (Texts):
Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007)
Brain Holmes, *Escape the Overcode* (2009)
Dylan Rodríguez, "The Political Logic of the Non-Profit Industrial Complex" (2007)

8 I'm grateful to David Court for the suggestion of a comparative reading.

Project 5: Materialities and Virtualities of Abolition

Overview: Students will begin by viewing Jayson Musson as Hennessy Youngman in his video *Art Thoughtz: Institutional Critique* (2011). In this video, Youngman sardonically states: "rather than talk about the theoretical aspects of Institutional Critique, I'm just going to go ahead and critique institutions... so I went ahead and created a list of the Top 5 institutions." He counts them down:

5) Rikers Island
4) ADX Supermax Prison
3) Abu Ghraib
2) Auschwitz
1) Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Youngman's critique is a debilitating blow to the tradition of Institutional Critique as a tautological practice unable to account for these "Top-5" institutions. For the final project, students will create a "time-based performance" (a five-, ten-, or twenty-year plan, for instance), wherein the student creates the conditions of study[9] to be able to articulate two questions: 1) How does the University play a role in supporting the following: Anti-Blackness and the Prison Regime (Rikers and ADX); Xenophobia, Islamophobia, and Imperialism (Abu Ghraib); Fascism, Genocide, Militarism, and Antisemitism (Auschwitz); and Anti-Blackness, Social Death, Racial Capitalism, and the reproduction of white supremacy (Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade)? 2) How has our

9 See Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, "Debt and Study," in *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Brooklyn: Minor Compositions, 2013), 58–70.

experimental course on Institutional Critique and the University failed?
This time-based performance might include reading lists, organizations to join, participation in imagined future uprisings, etc.

Supporting Documents (Artwork):
None

Supporting Documents (Texts):
None

A Moving Pedagogy

Kira Hegeman
Saint Louis Art Museum

When I was a child, my brother and sister would watch the movie *Krull* on a regular basis. The movie takes place on the planet *Krull,* where a Beast with an army of "slayers" kidnaps a princess in order to marry her, as she is prophesied to choose a husband and rule the world with him. The Beast lives in a spaceship called the Black Fortress, which resembles a barren mountain face. Every day at sunrise, this mountain-spaceship teleports to a new location around the planet. Some days, the fortress resides in a desert, others it appears on a glacial slope or emerges in a sunlit field. Contemplating this paper, I found the image of the teleporting fortress returning to me from some childhood archive. It came as I was considering artistic interventions and the ways they might be moving, responsive sites of pedagogy.

I love the idea of interventions, or playful appropriations of public space. Like the Black Fortress, artful interventions embed themselves in a landscape temporarily, yet also stand oddly in contrast to their surroundings as they purposefully disrupt spaces by inviting unexpected encounters with materials, behaviors or provocations. In my own work, these interventions are participatory, seeking to engage passersby in creative or imaginative acts. They often unfold as experiments, driven by curiosity and wonder. Fueled by questions like, what would happen if we set up an outdoor classroom in a public park in a metropolitan area? What if we invite residents to participate in a 1.5 hour, free hand-building session and create small sculptures using local clay? What types of conversation might emerge as participants create together around a shared table and what ways might they continue to engage if we invite them to contribute their sculpture to a collaborative installation along the trails of a public recreation corridor? How might this installation change as participants visit, collect their pieces, or move them around? What awakenings or new paths might unfold from these conversations, provocations, or invitations?

In other instances, the projects are driven by a more a focused sense of purpose, like the Athens Home for Discarded Objects, a series of interventions on or near university campuses that sought to call attention to issues of waste and consumption by inviting participants to view a collection of discarded objects found in rivers and road ways, and then "adopt" one by giving it a name, place and date of birth, and writing its story. This series of interventions took the form of domestic spaces, utilizing furniture or other found items to juxtapose uncommon materials with the surrounding landscapes of outdoor corridors or institutional buildings.

With their strangeness, their visual contrast to the habitual landscape, there is hope that these interventions will invoke wonder and invite a moment of pause from quotidian movements through the space. These ideas are inspired by historical traditions of engaging in and playing with public spaces. Inspired by works like the Situationist's Dérive's—aimless walks around cities that challenged the steady flow of traffic from home to work and back again (Debord, 1956; Erickson, 1992). Or City Mine(d)'s, Ping Pong project: a network of plastic tubes installed throughout a London borough that enabled residents to shoot ping pong balls carrying written messages, thoughts, protests or other musings through the tubes to other residents (Loftus, 2009).

Interventions such as these are temporary challenges to the prescribed look and function of a space. Through a practice of bringing unexpected materials, activities and individuals together in a given space, they engage participants in acts that question, challenge or re-imagine perceived norms (Dawkins & Loftus, 2015; Loftus, 2009; Pinder, 2005; 2008; Richardson, 2010). Participatory interventions, in particular, invite individuals to actively play with space and ideas, utilizing everyday actions such as speaking, walking or consuming as creative fodder. By reworking the form and function of these spaces, participatory interventions may facilitate dialogue around things like value systems, relationships, public space or prescribed practices of being, which may inspire expanded ways of considering and relating to materials, environments and people.

The interventions I create exist both as works of art—my own art practice—and temporary, mobile sites of pedagogy. Like the Black Fortress, they move around to engage with new landscapes. As they move and intervene in these landscapes, they offer openings

to reach varied audiences, creating opportunities to engage participants in what Ellsworth (2005) describes as "unintentional, involuntary learning," recognizing that participants may not enter the experience with the intent of learning. These interventions challenge pedagogical concepts of knowledge and compliance, seeking instead to invoke disruptions in normative environments that encourage discovery and transformative experience. Learning emerges through interaction with the "other," with entities that are new, unknown or out of context.

In this way, they may "re-ignite the imaginative capacity," (Greene, 1995) or offer new ways for participants to think of and engage with their creative practice. In her discourse on pedagogy, Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) further advocates for experiences that awaken the senses and promote discovery, embracing an unknown trajectory for learning and allowing it to be revealed through interaction with the learning space. In the case of my own participatory interventions, a specific learning destination is not predetermined; rather, materials are purposefully put into spaces with open invitations to engage. The interventions become pedagogical through these invitations to explore, create, communicate and collaborate. They are born from a belief that, as Donal O'Donoghue (2015) describes, "participation activates a shift in the one who experiences at the moment of experiencing, with the result that one is made different or becomes other than one was prior to participation" (p. 104).

I see these acts as a type of *moving pedagogy*. Moving pedagogy shifts, bends, and morphs in response to new contexts and environments, engaging with an active flow of environmental and participant responses. The theme or underlying idea of each intervention may

remain the same—a work in a series—but the materials, presentation and discoveries reconfigure with each new installation. Moving from place to place, these interventionist acts may appropriate any space as a classroom and invite any participant to be a student. Integrating in and with spaces, the intervention reconfigures to be with bodies in their becoming, present with the moment and open to transformation in the course of learning, questioning or discovering.

As I explore these ideas in my own work, I also explore them with my students, wondering how the students might engage with similar practices, and how the act of creating an intervention might also be an opportunity for learning? I invite them to explore the local community, to engage with issues they find important, and to experiment with contemporary art. Together, we also explore how these acts might enter into more traditional educational spaces, and how they might extend the educational spaces, inviting students to become teachers while also learning from community participants.

I wonder what other ways these art practices and teaching practices may merge and overlap? I wonder, what it would be like to conceive of my classroom space as a site for an intervention, musing at the possibility of transforming the space overnight. What if the students came in and the entire room had been transfigured into a living room? Perhaps a fireplace would play on the projector rather than a PowerPoint; the whiteboard and display walls covered in vintage wallpaper, and the classroom furniture temporarily replaced with sofas, armchairs and comfortable reading furniture. A decorative rug could cover the institutional flooring and fresh brewed tea might be ready upon entry into the classroom. Perhaps the creation of this space would serve

as an invitation to read and explore historic literature, offering an opportunity to transport selves into different time periods or lives and connect with the histories of past teachers, scholars or artists. Or perhaps, the new landscape would serve as a backdrop for a creative exercise, such as exploring the stories of meaningful objects in our lives and inquiring into the collaborative potential of working together to create with these materials.

These musings lead me to wonder what other moments in our everyday lives we might interrupt or playfully appropriate as a means of transporting students and participants to imaginative places, new openings or expanded experiences of the world?

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At the Intersections of Conceptual Art, Politics, and Care: Exploring the Relevance of a Collage Esthetic for Women Art Teachers

Christina Hanawalt
University of Georgia

> The research was daily rather than delving into libraries—what's happening as reported in the newspapers, *High Country News*, locally.... Every now and then I get asked about my methodology, which I don't really have—I'm not an academic, and I always say my methodology is "one thing leads to another"—that's really the way I write, and the way I do everything. People are always saying, "So what's the thesis of this book?" and I go, "Thesis? It hasn't got one." It's just one thing leading to another. I love weaving things together, and finding strange juxtapositions—a sort of collage aesthetic.

~Lucy Lippard, 2014[1]

In one part of a 1977 essay titled "The Pink Glass Swan: Upward and Downward Mobility in the Art World," Lucy Lippard expressed her disappointment in the social achievements of Conceptual art. According to Lippard, while Conceptual art may have attempted to democratize art for the public through its ordinary, inexpensive media and its efforts to rail against the institutional structures of the art world, the art created was largely incomprehensible to the public due to its "neutral, elitist content and its patronizing approach" (Lippard, 1977/1984d, p.92). Beyond her concern that Conceptual art was seemingly revolutionary while not actually reaching the general public, Lippard often critiqued the restrictions of Conceptual art that forced artists to choose between art and politics (see, for example, Lippard, 1984a, p. 115). Looking back on the movement, Lippard (2012) acknowledged that "Conceptual art in the broadest sense was a kind of laboratory for innovations in the rest of the century," while also admitting that the "works themselves look timid and disconnected in comparison to the political activism of the times and the activist art of the late 1970s and 1980s..." (p. xii).

1 See reference for Wallace, I. (2014).

For Lippard, many feminist artists of the time were situated within this sort of tension between Conceptual art and politics and in fact challenged the boundaries between the two. In particular, Lippard (1984a) often wrote about women artists who took up what she called a collage esthetic. These artists employed some of the strategies and methodologies of Conceptual art, such as provocative juxtapositions and a concern with concept over product, but used these tactics to provoke social and political concerns important to women—including matters of representation, subject-centered inquiry, and challenges to a private/public binary—largely foreclosed by the constraints of Conceptual art in its "purist" form. In describing a collage esthetic, Lippard (1981/1984c) referred to "...collage in the broadest sense, not pasted papers or any particular technique but the 'juxtaposition of unlike realities to create a new reality,'" which she aptly explained in an essay under the heading "This Up Against That" (p.169). As an example of collage, Lippard described the media performance *In Mourning and In Rage* by the group Ariadne (led by Suzanne Lacy and Leslie

Labowitz). As visual opposition to the sensationalized and demeaning news coverage of women victims of the Hillside Strangler in Los Angeles, the public performance at City Hall (covered by local and state news), expressed both grief for the victims and rage over violence against women. As Lippard explained, works like *In Mourning and In Rage* provided the public with information contrary to what it typically received, and they did so through provocative visual (and often textual or language-based) juxtapositions that aimed to prompt a reconsideration of "the truth" (p. 169).

Interestingly, Lippard (1980/1984b) suggested that such collage tactics may have been especially relevant for social feminists, whose identities could themselves be described as a "collage of disparate, not yet fully compatible parts" (p.144). I would argue that, even today, women positioned within various, and often intersecting, social, personal, and professional contexts—take, for example, women who teach art in public schools—could find resonance with Lippard's description of an identity composed of "disparate, not yet fully compatible parts"

In current K-12 school contexts in the United States, care—as both disposition and practice (Tronto, 1993), and as embodied, affective, and emotional (Zembylas et al., 2014)—goes largely under-recognized and under-theorized within a pervasive culture of accountability shaped by neoliberalism.

Wendy Lutrell (2019) describes the effects of a neo-liberal accountability culture that has "erased the humanity and personal integrity of all that happens in school settings" in favor of quantitative assessments (p. 564).

In school contexts, teachers and students are conditioned to govern themselves according to the standards of "economic ambition and competition" (Atkinson, 2018) and to demonstrate their worth through individual performance, assessments, progress, and achievement—all of which are quantifiable.

Within this climate, Lutrell explains that "Practices of care defy simple categorization and cannot be rendered as neutral 'data points'" (p. 564).

Call her bluff, she just wants a free paycheck to stay home

17h Like Reply

Massachusetts school district gets rid of art, music and PE teachers for coming school year

(p.144). Women who teach art in schools are situated within multiple discursive tensions that might be embodied or felt as incompatible parts—are they artists (a male-dominated field) or teachers (a female dominated field)? Professionals worthy of respect or servants and child care providers for the tax-paying public? Workers to be held accountable by quantifiable measures regardless of context, or compassionate nurturers for each unique child in their care?

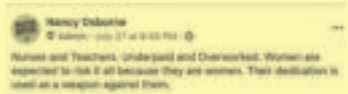
Schools aren't that risky, and teachers are essential workers. We must reopen.

"Students' lives are more important to me than the art that they make" "...overwhelmingly it's about the fact that emotionally my job is really draining because I'm constantly worrying about my kids and about their lives and about what happens to them when they go home ...but the positive outweighs the negative—or you have to make it."

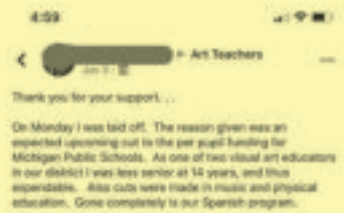
Casey (personal communication, April 25, 2015)

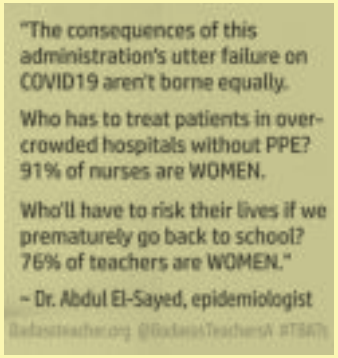
Given the complexity of these competing discourses, I propose that just as collage tactics offered a valuable mode of experimentation and provocation for social feminists, they have generative potential for women art teachers as well. Therefore, in this short paper-as-collage, I have taken up Lippard's (1978/1984e) premise that a collage esthetic, grounded in the tactics of conceptual art, can be employed as a "kind of positive fragmentation" (p. 103) that "use[s] political consciousness as a glue with which to get the pieces into some sort of new order (though not necessarily as a new *whole,* since there is no single way out...)..." (Lippard, 1980/1984b, p.144). Following this premise, this paper-as-collage explores, in particular, the concept of care as it is produced in the experiences of women art teachers (See Hanawalt, 2020). The fragments I have re-ordered include artifacts and dialogue from my research with early career art teachers, writing around the concept of care in teaching, and current social media discourses related to women and teaching that have appeared during the COVID-19 global pandemic in August 2020. My aim is to follow

The neoliberal condition of schools assumes teachers and students as autonomous individuals, free from the complexities of context and circumstance, needing only to be concerned about themselves and the results they can produce.



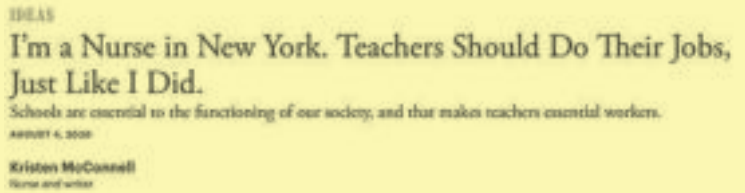
Nurses and Teachers. Underpaid and Overworked. Women are expected to risk it all because they are women. Their dedication is used as a weapon against them.





And yet, paradoxically, while there seems to be no room for care to matter within these prevailing conditions, dominant stereotypes also construct teachers as the ultimate, selfless care-givers.

For women teachers in particular, "good teachers" are also expected to possess the qualities of the "good woman"—"self-sacrificing, kind, overworked, underpaid, and holding an unlimited reservoir of patience" (Britzman, 2003, p. 29).


IDEAS

I'm a Nurse in New York. Teachers Should Do Their Jobs, Just Like I Did.

Schools are essential to the functioning of our society, and that makes teachers essential workers.

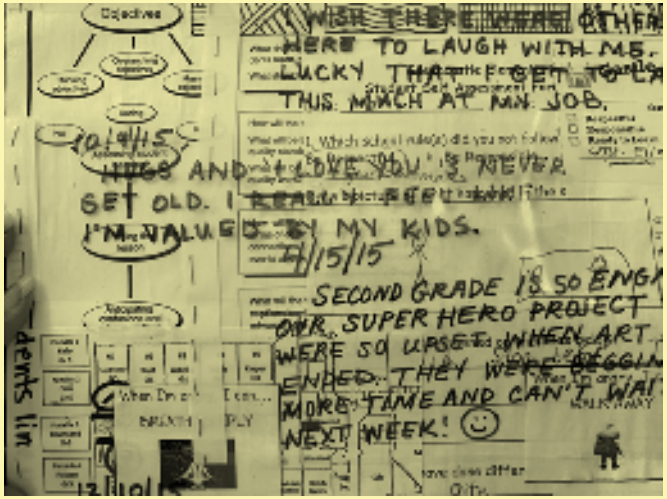
AUGUST 6, 2020

Kristen McConnell

Nurse and writer

what Lippard (1980/1984b) calls the "healing instinct" (p. 144) of collage, to put these fragments in a new sort of order—one that does not create a new whole, but that prompts a reconsideration of the "truth" of care work as it pertains to women and the teaching of art in K-12 schools.

The form of this paper-as-collage was inspired by both Lippard's own books-as-collage, such as *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (1973/1997), and Mary Kelly's feminist multipartite series *Post-Partum Document*, which took place in phases from 1973 to 1979. In *Post-Partum Document*, Kelly documented her time with her young son through small-scale framed collages made out of, for example, stained diapers, folded undershirts, her son's mark-making, objects he collected as a toddler, and quotes of things he said and what she said in response (Lippard, 1980/1984b).



In addition, Kelly imposed her own analysis of these mother-child experiences through a Lacanian psychoanalytic lens, explaining that there were two levels to the work— "my lived experience as a mother and my analysis as feminist of that experience" (Iverson, 1981-1982, p.78). Similarly, the collage formed by this paper juxtaposes a feminist analysis of care as it relates to teaching, with material documentation of the experiences of early career women art teachers and pervasive social media discourses. How might care be reconsidered? How might care be political?

In her discussions about the foundational aspects and contributions of the Women's Movements

Lauren: I find that I'm teaching kids more than I'm teaching art *to* kids... Art is secondary to the teaching in my practice. I try to teach *through* art—is [sic] always how I've thought of it. I don't necessarily teach art, but I'm teaching through art.

Researcher: What would you say you're teaching?

Lauren: I think I teach a lot of character development kind of stuff, and personal goal-setting and problem-solving, and things like that through art. And...also teaching social [skills] and how to be a progressive person and honest person in today's world.

"What undergraduate courses don't teach is how to care for kids" (Lauren, personal communication, January 18, 2015).

This is the contradictory context in which women teachers find themselves: they are expected to be ambitious, autonomous achievers as evidenced through quantifiable data and performance measures, and, at the same, time self-sacrificing care-givers despite the fact that care is ultimately not valued as a measurable achievement.

Joan Tronto (1993) makes the point that care, which has long been associated with women's morality, does not fit the goals of a capitalist society focused on rationality, individual accomplishment, and autonomy and thus continues to be dismissed as ultimately insignificant.

and feminist art that was happening alongside Conceptual art, Lippard (1980/1984f) highlighted art-making that was cooperative, collaborative, collective. While Conceptual artists may have seen themselves as cultural *critics* who were, according to Lippard, largely disconnected from the general public, feminist artists saw themselves as "cultural *workers* supporting and responding to their constituencies" [emphasis added] (p. 154), often through collaborative art-making. A parallel might be drawn then, between feminist artists' reliance on collaboration and collective pursuits, and recent conceptualizations of care by feminist authors like Joan Tronto (1993; 2015) and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), who foreground interconnectedness and interdependency over individualism. Prior feminist conceptualizations of care in what is often termed relational feminism (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 2002) focused on care as an individual virtue expressed through dyadic relationships between a care-giver and a care-receiver, such as a mother and child or teacher and student. However, both Tronto and Puig de la Bellacasa suggest a move away from such individual or dyadic theories of care and toward an understanding of care as "a 'species activity' with ethical, social, political, and cultural


America's Teachers Are Expendable

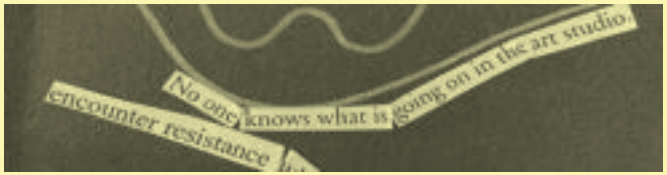
How the undervalued, overworked profession drives aspiring teachers like me away

Mollie Gray Follow

Aug 11 · 7 min read

implications" (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017, p. 3). These authors emphasize the fundamental interdependency of human and non-human relations and therefore suggest that care *must* be present in the web of life in order for living to be possible. In this way, care is no longer the responsibility of the individual, but is rather a collective activity that is crucial if we are to live in our world "as well as possible" (Tronto & Fisher, 1990, p. 40). By centering care as a collective endeavor that is required for living, Tronto and co-author Fisher (1990) also draw attention to the fact that care is not innocuous or a something to be ignored—rather, care is defined culturally, and functions socially and politically with regards to how care gets distributed and by whom. Care is political.

The collage I've offered here is political...and also conceptual, and collaborative—leaving space for those who engage with it to bring their own experiences into the gaps between fragments and to contribute to a reconsideration of the "truth" regarding the role of care in the experiences of women art teachers. A collage aesthetic carries the potential for all of these effects. What will you add?



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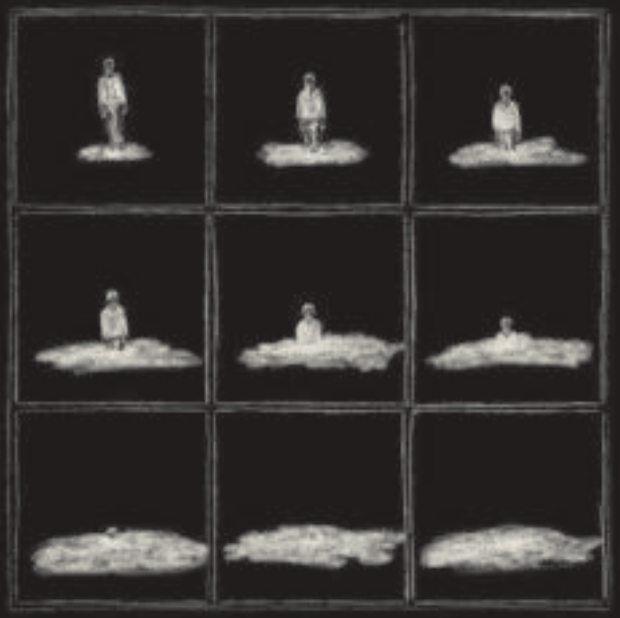
Of Nothing: The Affordances of Conceptual Art in Teaching Photography



Clark Goldsberry
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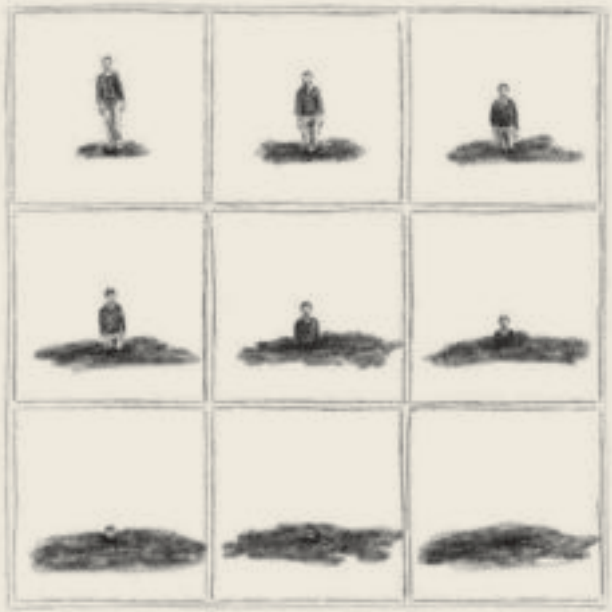
Abstract

Some art historians tell a story of conceptual art that is "preoccupied with nonexistence" (Liang, 2020, p. 190) and dematerialization (Lippard & Chandler, 1968/1999, p. 50). This essay contemplates what happens at the intersections of conceptual art praxis and art pedagogy, and in particular seeks the affordances of exploring nonexistence and nothingness in a photography class. Nine modalities (or prompts, provocations, and propositions) for creating photographs *of nothing* are offered.

Keywords: Conceptual art, Photography, Dematerialization, Nothing

There are many ways to frame the conceptual art movement. For my purposes: the conceptual art threads that have stirred my recent thinking are the concepts of dematerialization and invisibility—or in a word, nothingness.



The British art critic Olivia Laing (2020) observed that conceptual art is "preoccupied with non-existence, haunted by disappearances and vanishing acts of all kinds... [It is] invested in retraction and omission" (p. 190).

Some art historians sketch a history that has been moving, all along, toward the ether—toward non-existence, retraction, and omission. Through time, they note a shifting emphasis from material to dematerial, from

emphasis on craft, to emphasis on concept. Ultimately, this trajectory leads to what Joseph Schillinger (1948) called the "post-aesthetic disintegration of art," and the "abstraction and liberation of the idea" (p. 17). In this framework, art can "only truly exist in the viewer's mental participation" (Godfrey, 1998, p.4).

In the late 1960's, art critics Lucy Lippard and John Chandler (1968/1999) pondered, "Has an ultimate zero point been arrived at with black paintings, white paintings, light beams, transparent film, silent concerts, [or] invisible sculpture? It hardly seems likely... We still do not know how much less 'nothing' can be." (p.50).

I am an adjunct professor and a high school photography teacher—and this invitation to think about the relationship between conceptual art praxis and art education keeps leading me back to the notion of nothingness—and in particular one key question:

What could it mean to photograph nothing? To capture nothing, to seize nothing?

The work of Robert Barry might provide some insights into what it could mean to "photograph nothing." He has been making dematerialized works of art using invisible media since the mid 1960's. In his piece "Outdoor nylon monofilament installation" (1968; cited in Meyer, 1972, pp. 34-41; Godfrey, 1998, p. 201), he stretched thin nylon strings between a matrix of trees. He photographed the installation, but the transparent strings were completely imperceptible in the final image. Ironically, even though this piece is accounted for in the literature, I couldn't find his photograph from this installation. But the MoMA archives did have a hand-drawn diagram (Barry, 1968). In his "Inert Gas Series" from 1969 (cited in Meyer, 1972, pp. 34-41; Godfrey, 1998, p. 201), he released small amounts of Krypton, Argon, Xenon, and Helium into the atmosphere from large metal canisters partially buried in the ground. The resulting images show barren-looking desert landscapes with metal cylinders in the foreground, and it is presumed the gases are hovering somewhere in or around the frame, but they cannot be seen. Charles Garoian (2013) writes that what puzzles him most about this piece is Robert Barry's adjoining text, "Indefinite Expansion." Garoian wrote:

> While contemplating his image/text disjunction, my inability to find any tangible, material evidence of indefinite expansion within the frame of the photograph roused curiosity that delayed any quick understanding or explanation on my part... Contextual movements occurred during my lingering between and among Barry's disjunctive concepts; slippages of understanding and mis-understanding from which emerged a realization that the photograph of the supposed inert gas, its visual representation of an invisible lived action, the fact of its gaseous materiality expanding indefinitely,

> suggested the possibility that I had embodied and was actually living and breathing the Helium while viewing its photographic representation almost a decade after its release into the atmosphere; that I am breathing it in during this writing three decades later; that others will breathe it in during subsequent readings of this volume; and beyond... Hence, [the inert gas] continues to exist [even] in its absence. (p. 6)

Garoian builds a case for a more radical sense of nothing, where even the unseen may yet have sway. Perhaps there is resonance here with Deleuze (1990) and Derrida's (1997) careful undoing of binary concepts like absence and presence. Through their work, even absence can be viewed as a form of presence, and vice versa. This is more than word play. Robert Barry said that, "Nothing seems to me the most potent thing in the world" (Lippard, 1974, p. 40).

It is also worth noting that the medium of photography has a complicated relationship with notions like absence and presence. Roland Barthes (1980) wrote, "What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially... it is the absolute Particular" (p. 4). While a photograph may represent something real, it was a moment in time that will never be again, and thus each image becomes stuck in between presence and absence—somewhere between something and nothing, testing "aesthetic and epistemological boundaries" (Smith, 2013, p. 90). Barthes also made an observation about photography that feels similar to Garoian's rumination about inert gases. He wrote (1980), "The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there,

proceed radiations which literally touch me, who am here... the photograph of the missing being will touch me like the delayed rays of a star" (pp. 80-81). All that said, Barthes may argue that every photograph is a photo of nothing. But that nothing still has a strange influence. A photo can doubt and certify, negate as well as indicate (Smith, 2013).

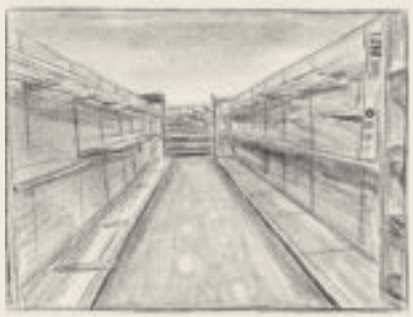
Other conceptual artists exploring notions of nothingness can provide additional insights about how we might "photograph nothing." Richard Long (1967) paced in a field of grass until a line was matted down, Keith Arnatt (1969) buried himself entirely, and Tom Friedman (1992) hired a witch to curse an 11-inch sphere floating 11 inches above a pedestal, yet each artist used photography as a tool to underscore and preserve elements of their work—even while portions of their labor remained entirely unseen. In the midst of reducing their material footprints and working toward an "ultimate zero-point" (Lippard & Chandler, 1968/1999, p. 50), their cameras became co-conspirators and tools for the

documentation of nothing. Despite their aims at dematerialization, these artists relied heavily on the material and materiality of photography (Diack, 2020, p. 23).

In another way, artists use the affordances of conceptual art to lean into nothingness, and then document whatever emerges. I recently interviewed the artist Nina Katchadourian (for a project that will investigate how artists have adapted their practices in response to the Covid-19 pandemic). As a self-prescribed rule, she plays with available space and materials within the confines of very strict limitations. For example, she will lock herself in an airplane lavatory and try to make something with only materials on hand. In our interview, she said that one of her personal mantras has become: "What can I do even when I think I can't do anything? What can I do with nothing?" She inhabits spaces and situations that seem vapid, and attempts to re-imagine

what else they could be. She activates nothingness, and photographs the results.

As an experiment, I would like to play with the structure of this Zoomposium. I have a proposition for anyone who might be listening. From where you are sitting right now, use a camera phone and try and create your own photographs of nothing. In the few minutes between this moment and the next presenter, see how many "photographs of nothing" you can generate. I will provide a hashtag at the end of this presentation for anyone inclined to post their responses online.



As you work, I'll read 9 different prompts, provocations, and propositions. You could also think of these as 9 modalities for creating imagery of nothing. I explored these questions with my high school photography students after our classes went fully online this past spring, and their images will accompany each modality.

1. Remember the French poet Paul Verlaine's (1882) treatise for "nuance, only nuance." Empty your frame. Dismiss any prominent features. Treat this as an exercise in subtraction and deletion (Smith, 2013).

2. Create a photograph that is not a photograph of by strategically outwitting or fortuitously failing the medium. Exclude the subject, the camera, the negative, and so on. Assign light a performative instead of an interpretive function (Smith, 2013).
3. Disorient your viewer. Omit horizon lines and anything that could give the viewer their bearings. Lean into ambiguity.
4. Enclose yourself in a small, bland space. Step into nothingness, and create imagery inside.
5. Blatantly violate camera protocol. Overexpose or underexpose, miss the focus, damage the negative or corrupt the digital file. Instead of an image that says, "This!" make an image that says, "Not this!" (Smith, 2013)
6. Embrace decay. Let photos become nothing. Treat photographic prints as sculptural objects that are meant to be destroyed. Allow your prints to be folded, faded, soaked, dissolved, crushed, torn, buried, etc.
7. Photograph something that cannot be seen.
8. Photograph something that only you know is there.
9. Photograph something you hope is there.

When you've created a few images, from wherever you happen to be sitting, feel free to post them on Instagram with the hashtag #photographingnothing.

In closing, the affordances of conceptual art can reframe our relationship with photography, and they can open up complex visual dialogues with our students. Through grappling with the concept of nothingness, we may come to believe, with Robert Barry, that nothing is "the most potent thing in the world" (Lippard, 1974, p. 40). Further, perhaps we will be sensitized to more

radical forms of dematerialization. Perhaps by attempting to photograph nothing, we will learn to capture less. Perhaps by underscoring these conceptual conversations about nothingness, we, along with our students, will begin to notice the unseen, give heed to the invisible, and accommodate the undocumented. Perhaps we will emphasize our selves less and move more freely into the ether. Perhaps, in time, we will be more content with being *less nothing* (Lucero, 2020, p. 33).

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An Interweaving of Conversations

Paulina Camacho Valencia
University of Arkansas

With: Alejandro Colunga Jr. and Silvia Morales

In thinking through a response to the question, "what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?" I reached out to two former students and asked them for their input. Alejandro Colunga Jr., Silvia Morales, and I met during their freshman year of high school. I had the opportunity to be their visual arts instructor during both their freshman and junior years. I have continued to work with both of them outside of a school environment and very much appreciate their input and ideas.

Alejandro (Alex): I never... I think what really messed with me was that outside of the classroom, outside of that space, I didn't really have anyone to follow up with on those conversations. Because even some of my peers in that classroom who had that same experience wouldn't talk about it. It was weird, we just walked inside the classroom for like an hour, doing walking, just walking and we never talked about it afterwards. Which was kind of weird, like why didn't we just talk about why we did that? I had follow ups with you of course, and Silvia, maybe not at the time but in college we had those conversations.

Silvia: After the fact.

Alex: Yeah, but in high school I didn't really have that, and so it was kind of hard for me, even if I wanted to talk about any of those experiences it was hard to even strike up that conversation because it was, "meh just something we did today in class."

Silvia: But after the fact it could exist, it could have not. This might just be a really repressed dream we all had that no one remembers, you know. But no, seriously. I like to think about things in layers, you think about how wild the world is and you're just like, "wow, I'm existing right now, having this conversation with these two people who mean the world to me right now that I met in high school that I wasn't planning to go to." And then you go back and back and back and back and you're just like, "dude, this exists all together right now." And that's why I think the existence of a teaching practice is a form of conceptual art. Because easily none of

it could exist. Or even if it didn't, who would even question it? Like Alex said, who's going to question anything about it? Who's going to ask these questions? What are the questions to ask?

I think the concept of conceptual art and teaching is having something exist for the moment and then taking it for what you will, rooting it wherever you want to root it. I'm thinking of ourselves as these gardens of ever growing things. In that activity to walk around you gave us some lavender plants and said, "alright, do what you want!" And some people chose to put it in the back of their minds, and Alex now is thinking about it like, "that was weird, we just did that." Or if you mention it to some of our peers they're like, "they don't remember, what are you talking about? Ms. Camacho's class was just a blur. I don't even remember anything. What did she teach us?" That's where my mind goes.

Paulina: Does anything linger and/or remain? If so, how do you describe it?

Silvia: I think the impulsive sense of just doing anything is left with me. Like I said earlier about teaching students to not be scared, you know, just do it, why not? Why? There are no limits right now. If you mess up, you mess up. No one is going to scold you, no one is going to do anything, you just start over. Do it, do it because you can.

Alex: It was a confidence builder in a weird way

Another way to approach this question was through conversation with Angela Inez Baldus. Here you will find an excerpt from our text message exchange.

Angela
Hey I have a question for you, you got a minute?
I was wondering if you could help me think about a question...

Paulina
Hi, yes! What's up?

Angela
I was hoping you could help me answer the question "What happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?"

Paulina
Yes! Is this for the CA&T zoomposium? I'm also thinking about this question, I've been trying to write through this, but I mostly have a bunch of fragments.

Angela
Yeah, maybe we can start small.

Paulina
That would help.
Where should we begin?

Angela
I think we should begin with the question, "what is conceptual art?"

I was reading Jorge's book[1] the other day and he makes a claim about this.
It's something about less nothing

Paulina
Are you referring to the *Teacher as Artist-In-Residence: The most radical form of expression to ever exist*?[2]

Angela
Yup that's it
It's on page 30[3]
Bottom of the page is where I think it gets pretty interesting

Paulina
Yeah, what do you think? How do you define conceptual art or understand it either in relationship to Jorge's claim, or from your own experience/understanding?

Angela
Well I'm thinking that we can and maybe have to take into consideration of the "big C" Conceptual Art

Paulina
That's also a big A

Angela
Yeah that too

1 Lucero, J. (2020). *Teacher as artist-in-residence: The most radical form of expression to ever exist.*
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., p. 30

Paulina

What do you think about this whole business about the tension between art and life?
I struggle with the tension between the visible and the invisible

Angela

Those are both really important ideas and I think when he compares art and teaching to living in this way I start to imagine what's possible with more enthusiasm if not more clarity

Paulina

The Lippard and Chandler quote about "how much less nothing can be..."[4] had me thinking during my walk last week

Angela

I wonder about this idea of pointing
Is the pointing what makes it something
And no longer less nothing

Paulina

Pointing to the nothing?

Angela

But it is never nothing, right?

Paulina

My gut response to "what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?" Is EVERYTHING and NOTHING
It's never nothing

4 Ibid., p. 31.

The nothing is full
Always full

Angela

What is it full of?

Paulina

And simultaneously vacant
Stuff...
The living, the breathing, the moving, the making
The moments of pause

Angela

But what makes it art?

Paulina

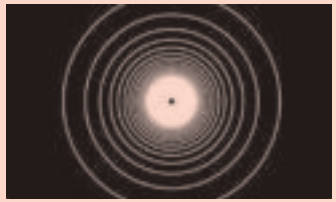
That's a whole lot for something that's supposed to be nothing
What is art?

Angela

And what makes it conceptual?

Paulina

[5]



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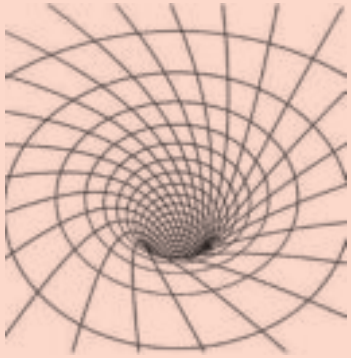

Is it better to talk it through?
Do you have a moment?

Angela

In Allan de Souza's book *How Art Can be Thought: A Handbook for Change*[7] he gives a bunch of definitions for things.

Paulina

What kinds of things?
Maybe we should just talk it through, cuz it's a Sunday night, and my old lady eyes might not be able to handle a text thread, zoom?

6 Gifycat via #images

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Addressing the Question: Abbreviated Transcription of Conversation between Paulina Camacho Valencia and Angela Inez Baldus

Angela Inez Baldus
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

0:26 processing gems
1:35 lists
25:41 texting
35:00 *this* bit of silent reading and writing to each other
48:33 here we talk about definitions
49:26 the other things that happened in parallel that didn't get counted
50:05 if we follow this concept, this idea that concept is thought in imagination, and if we follow Jorge's claim that, "put plainly conceptual art foregrounds the idea over the object or even in an artwork"[1] in understanding we go back to go forward

1 Jorge Lucero

Angela and Paulina

53:33 there's a difference between thought
56:12 it could be that we might experience something new
Or maybe we haven't conceived of it
1:00:32 imagination[2]
1:02:40 More people feel uncared for
1:03:28 poetry speaks beyond
It can bring those parts of us...[3]
Possibility is inherent[4]
1:05:00 Hope and living in the world
1:06:00 Maybe what you're getting at is felt
1:06:36 there's something exciting and hopeful and I mean why else do the work
1:09:13 the work of unlearning a very truncated fixed definition of teaching and teachers
1:11:55 The *pointing* makes it something, does it take away from the concept
1:12:38 I was thinking about...[5]
1:13:10 What was the point of all the invisibility
The visible and the invisible and the void
1:13:41 tension is really important

2 Maxine Greene
3 Adrienne Rich
4 Maxine Greene
5 Boris Groys

1:15:03 The thought concept
and then everything is conceptual art
1:15:47 ...what do we do with what happens? I was thinking
1:16:17 we are always teaching
1:19:40 How do you understand what your role or your responsibility is as a teacher
I struggle with that
The thing continues to unravel and grow.
Bits and Snippets. Slow Accumulation. What is my responsibility? It is not a sole responsibility.
Appreciation and getting to watch are fragments of the thing.
1:23:17 I think we are asking, what do we do with it?
And maybe it's not about the responsibility, it is maybe about the duration of the doing, maybe it's about the being okay with the not knowing, or being okay with the doing, or the relinquishing, or in what you are talking about with community, I think I want to go back to that. A sense of community possibilities of being informed by
Being seen and present and being in these spaces.
Points of conversation and points of engagement that can lead to other things.
1:29:00 It's a tangled web that doesn't make much sense until later, if ever
We pick up on various threads
Pointing and various points along the way, attunement, calibration of the paying attention
1:29:55 Maybe this is the point and maybe this is what Jorge's saying
In some ways you are pointing twice, you are

pointing to call it art, you are pointing to call it teaching, multiple gesture

1:30:50 It's hard because to answer the question b/c I just want to say the thing the Jorge already said.

The way I understand this is how you taught me to understand it through your teaching.

Through the way you talk about conceptual art.

Through the way that you practice both.

This is how I have come to understand what it can be.

Through what he has done. And then, in relationship to that, what we've done. And then in relationship to that, I don't know, what, I guess probably all these other people are doing.

1:31:55 There is that unifying point of cohesion at least for this, but not in general

1:32:08 It depends who is asking maybe.

1:32:35 Where does the nervousness around responsibility or role come from? Why is there an apprehension?

Is it in care, is it in these ideas of hope in the possibilities?

Is it fear of fucking up?

It can sometimes be really debilitating.

Yeah.

I mean even us, when we were trying to plan this, the doubt creeps in and almost halts the possibility of what this could be before we even give ourselves the opportunity to try it. if we fail, we fail.

Yeah.

You know and I think what you're saying is

that we trust one another and care about this work and care about, really care about these ideas, but also we care about the genealogy of these ideas and the ways we know and experience them.

Yeah.

And so maybe that fear of failure is rooted in the care and the love and the respect.

how do we shift to see failure not as a missed opportunity but rather an opening for something else.

How do we attune?

How do we shift that perspective? I don't know.

How do we notice?

1:35:00 I hope it comes from a place of caring, right?

I hope.

I don't want it to be coming from place of self-interest or something, you know, but there is always the risk that it is. That's we in education and other areas talk about things like self-reflexivity, um, I guess in feminist studies probably first. But I think it shifts the question a little bit to think about care.

In my heart what I want to happen at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching is, is for the practices of both teaching and making art to somehow be understood as a generative force, something that moves us.

Yeah.

For me its broad and specific to say that.

It is.

And maybe the think that makes it seem radical in the way that Jorge talks about

radical is that it is rooted in love and care. But I think that it would be really hard for me to think that and sit hear without talking about and know this because I have experienced it so many times before. I have experienced it in the teaching of Jorge[6], I have experienced it in the teaching of Sam[7], I've experienced it with Dr. Brown[8], and it experienced it with these people.
And Ryan.[9] Taking the Art and the Anthropocene with him, it was weird, the way that class happened there were all kinds of failures however there were these opportunities to understand art practices, art making, what is a graduate level class, what is that? That is a good example of what can happen at the intersection because there was a concept that Ryan conceived of and he went with it and he kept following it. Just like how Jorge will come up with a syllabus and we will just follow it and we might have to stray from it, but we do, and that is the same thing that is happening in this online course that I am taking with Sam. And maybe a lot of classes, but it usually doesn't get spoken of in these ways. Because it doesn't, we lose the opportunity to react to it as a material.

1:40:45 I like thinking of it as a material but also the way you said the generative force that

6 Jorge Lucero
7 Sam Rocha
8 Ruth Nicole Brown
9 Ryan Griffis

moves us. And that it is specific and broad at the same time. Because I really do think that is very, very broad, but also equally specific.

1:41:26 resistance informs

1:42:23 When you were saying attunement I was thinking of orientations[10]

1:43:31 Relationships that are built and continue to inform

1:44:54 Thinking about the wake and being in the constant wake[11]

1:45:30 What are the other extra sensorial waves that we also incorporate into this collective generative force
It's doing this thing, this little dance

1:48:15 Attunement, calibration, or orientation is not a fixed point, but rather a thing that we are constantly recalibrating. Tuning my ukulele, my mic, and other things that might open up other possibilities.

1:50:00 Focus in

1:52:00 We live with it

1:52:13 I can argue why some of the things I do are not art

1:53:00 How exhausting to point to everything

1:55:10 Doubt and those questions can lead to more questions. Other material for attunement, calibration, and orientation.

1:56:19 It's okay to say it is not art

2:00:00 We had to suspend the judgements to observe the work

2:03:27 We are multifaceted people and because we

10 Sara Ahmed, Dónal O'Donoghue, José Esteban Muñoz
11 Christina Sharpe

are people, we are inherently flawed. There is always going to be pointing.

2:05:46 showing, processing

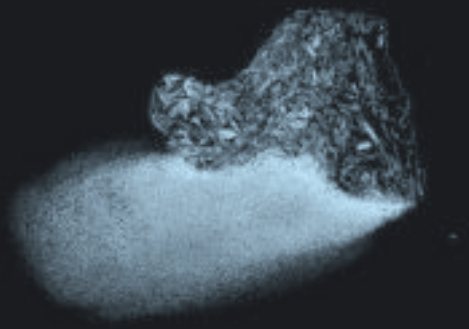
These notes present key points of our conversation and isolate them to form something new, revealing and concealing parts of our process. The full video may be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQ3qWHeTp-5k&t=1s or shared through email (please email Angela at angelainezbaldus@gmail.com).

Ken Morimoto's Response

The video includes responses from Alejandro Colunge, Silvia Morales, Ken Morimoto, Indyia Robinson, and Skylar Chism. Together we conclude, not a comprehensive answer to the question, but instead a kind of pointing towards some things that happen at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching.

Indyia Robinson's response

Three Pieces of Tinfoil



Allison Rowe
University of Iowa

They were all in the waiting room. I let the clock slide from 11:00 to 11:01 in the hope that the extra few seconds of non-teaching time would somehow make the difference between an hour of joyful art making and a seemingly endless 60-minutes of sad/bored/regretful small faces staring up at me through their individual boxes. Or worse, silence in the chat, a true indicator of youthful displeasure.

I had no one to blame but myself. The art program was my idea, a way to get free art supplies to kids, to give parents a break for a few hours each week, and to make space for creative play in the endless drudgery of the pandemic. I hadn't thought about how challenging it would be to support the kind of open-ended art I like to lead over video, nor did I consider how those videos would be further complicated by a limited set of materials that didn't afford much room for testing. Like my own approach to making, the children's programming I typically ran relied on a covert maximalism, wherein experimentation and intermedial explorations served as the necessary precursor to a finished product.

The Boys & Girls Club and I agreed that everything a child would require for a given session needed to be included in the materials bags they would pick up once a week. Scissors, glue, markers, paper, thread, tape, needle, brushes, whatever—it all had to be in the bags. Since new children would be able to join each session, we couldn't count on material carryover week-to-week. If an activity required scissors, every bag contained scissors. And if every bag contained $ci$$or$, then a limited amount of money was left for other supplies. I contended with this materials conundrum using an asymmetrical approach to the two sessions I led each week. One session used a couple expensive supplies and the other relied upon fewer, less costly materials. I theorized that this structure would allow us to keep the program going for as long as possible without running out of funds while simultaneously maintaining a level of intrigue and novelty for the participants.

Good morning everyone! Welcome to the Art Club! I'm Allison and I'm going to guide our art making session today. To start out could everyone say their name, how old you are, and a favourite animal. If you are using video you can introduce yourself that way, or if you are just on audio you can use the chat bar to say hi.

This week, things had gone sideways. The mail was delayed so the supplies were late. I didn't get a chance to do any tests before Katie, the lovely teenage girl who works the front desk put the materials bags together. My original supplies list indicated that each child would need LOTS OF TINFOIL but LOTS OF TINFOIL is a subjective, non-specific measurement. For Katie, LOTS OF TINFOIL meant 3 pieces, about 5-inches long and 12-inches wide. As far as I was concerned, this was VERY LITTLE TINFOIL, particularly since we were going to sculpt with it. When you squish VERY LITTLE

TINFOIL down so you can shape it, it becomes A TEENY TINY LITTLE TINFOIL.

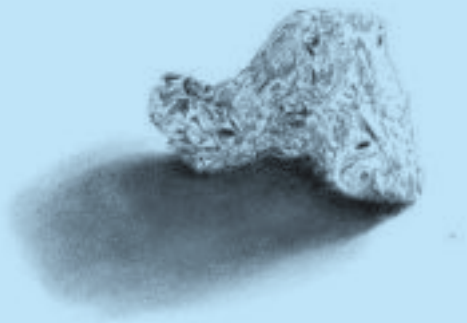


Fig 1. A TEENY TINY LITTLE TINFOIL

First, I want you to take all your materials out of your bag. You should have 3 sheets of tinfoil. Remove all of the sheets and place them in front of you. Great! The first thing we need to do is unfold our tinfoil sheets. As you open them up, I want you to smooth out any wrinkles you see. Run your finger along any bumps and try to make them flat. How does your tinfoil feel? Is the texture changing?

After picking up my materials bags the night before the session, I headed home, pulled out my family's box of tinfoil and ripped off a bunch of pieces approximately the same size as the rectangles distributed to the kids. I knew it would take a lot more than 3 sheets for me to come up with the brilliant art activity I aimed to deliver to the participants. After I had compiled a satisfying

stack, I began to test the tinfoil to see what it could do. First, I squished a piece rapidly in my hands. It made a ball. A very small ball.

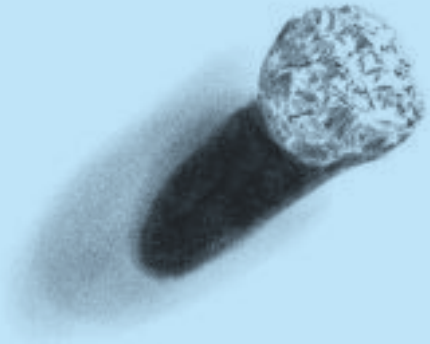


Fig 2. A very small ball

I want you to pick your tinfoil up and hold it near your ear while you continue smoothing out the wrinkles. What do you hear? How does the tinfoil feel when there is nothing behind it to support it? Try moving your fingers slowly and then quickly along the tinfoil. Do the different speeds make different sounds? What happens if you hold the top and bottom of the tinfoil and then wiggle it? What happens if you try flicking it with your finger? Does it move differently? Is the sound the same?

Agitated, I cast aside my very small ball. I thought about the tentacular, amorphous, made-up creatures I

had intended for us to create. I theorized that we could explore the possibilities of creature construction on a smaller scale. I tore one of my sheets of tinfoil into 4 smaller pieces. Using both my hands I rolled one “hot dog” oriented piece of tinfoil into a (little) long tube and then crushed it in my palms. I picked up the curious shape and moved lengthwise along it, pressing the metallic blob between my fingers, trying to make it as dense and tight as possible. I repeated this step again, getting it smaller still. Satisfied that it couldn’t get any more compact I began shaping the piece into the form of a wave and set it aside.

Fig 3. A Wave

I held my second ripped sheet of tinfoil loosely it in my hands. I placed it between my palms and slowly moved them closer together, mashing it into a rough, airy oval. I moved the form back and forth between my palms

crunching it again and again until the shape became a dispiritingly diminutive tinfoil cat poop.

Fig 4. Tinfoil cat poop

Discouraged but still optimistic, I attempted to wrap the long wave around the cat poop, crossing the tube in the front of the poop to hold it in place. The twisted loop created a pseudo-mandible effect that had promise. I set it down on my desk, glanced away and glanced back. I realized that rather than the emergent animal I had hoped to fabricate, I had made a form that looked exactly like a scrap of garbage, twisted off of a burrito and cast aside. I tried more tests, contorting tinfoil into rectangles, spheres, strips, and swirls and then affixing them to one another. Each time I would look away and then look back, only to discover I had again created another fast food refuse sculpture.

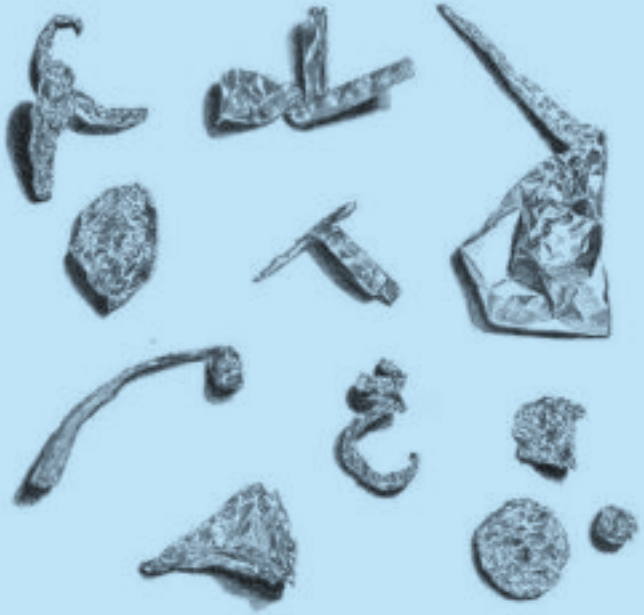


Fig 5. Fast food refuse sculptures

Since we've touched our tinfoil, listened to it and maybe discovered some unexpected things, let's try looking at it again. What do you see when you move the tinfoil very slowly in front of your face? What do you see if you hold it as far away as possible? Now flip it over. Does the other side look the same or different? How so? Which side do you like more? Why?

Resigned, I opened a web browser and entered "tinfoil crafts for kids" in the search bar and toggled to the images tab. Scrolling down the page I dismissed most of the projects immediately because they involved additional supplies. A third of the way down I discovered a promising looking elephant sculpture. Hoping that the

website might have tips on tinfoil sculpting I clicked on it. To my displeasure, the link took me to a Pinterest page. I tapped on the image I was trying to access again and found myself on a 2011 blog entry by a child named Perry in which he reviewed the movie *Born to Be Wild* (Chen, 2011). I scrolled down the entry, past an image of a chimp, and then past numerous pictures of Perry posing with various cast members at the documentary's premier. The last image on the page was the tinfoil elephant sculpture, with a small explanation from Perry that he made it and liked it.

Now that we know our tinfoil a little better, we're going to dive into our project for today. The first thing I need you to do is close your eyes and think back to what you experienced when you touched, listened, and looked at your tinfoil. When you were exploring your material did it bring anything to mind? Did it make you think of an animal, or a shape or a memory? If not, how did you feel when you were exploring it? Could you turn that feeling into a sculpture? Okay, open your eyes and let's begin.

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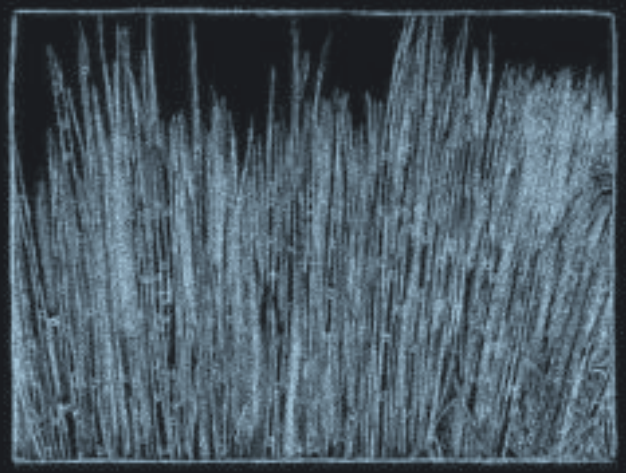
Ferns, Streams, and Studio Media



Lillian Lewis
Virginia Commonwealth University

The pattern of spacing of nodes in horsetail reeds, wherein those toward the apex of the shoot are increasingly close together, are said to have inspired John Napier to invent logarithms. Inspiration, in its literal sense, refers to the process of breathing in or inhaling. In the figurative sense, Thrash and Elliot (2003), state that inspiration is constructed of three common components: motivation or the energization and direction of behavior; evocation or an arising from an act of will or without apparent cause; and transcendence of the ordinary preoccupations or limitations of human agency.

On an afternoon in May, 2020, my daughter and I were taking our daily quarantine walk together at a local rails-to-trails hike near some wetlands in Niles, Ohio. During the walk, we were discussing her impending move to college and the plans she was making for her pre-engineering major and yet-to-be-determined minor. She commented she had decided, following a conversation with a fellow incoming freshman who was a mathematics major, she would not minor in mathematics, but she might minor in another area. When I asked her about her reasoning, she stated, "I realized that, for me, math is a tool to aid in the focused study of engineering rather than an area of study in and of itself." My daughter's statement revealed something to me about my own focused studies.

I am an artist. Having grown up in the rural southern U.S., art was not a subject of study in school. My artist genealogy began on the farm. I learned to sculpt by watching my father repurpose wire, wood, and other scraps to build fences, repair barns, divine water, and maintain his pastoral hobby on a frugal budget. I learned to love words, form abstract connections, and embrace divergence from my mother's poetry. My artistic practice draws heavily on this genealogy rather than traditional studio training. My work engages concepts and physical media as equal and interconnected tools. Ideas and the experiences of working with materials shape my research and making processes and vice versa. As an artist I am neither master of the art process, nor am I an autonomous actor. Rather, I am a member of the creative rhizome, a co-worker in the process becoming materials (Bergström, J., Clark, B., Frigo, A., Mazé, R., Redström, J., Vallgårda, A., 2010). I am an oblique thinker and I remain open to chance and coincidence. When chance ideas or discoveries intersect with my work,

tangents emerge and enrich conceptual development and refinement.

I am also an educator. I arrived at the profession by design rather than chance. My father was a history and government professor whose research and teaching was founded on oral history, folk life, and the preservation of subaltern histories. My mother was a reading specialist and ESL teacher with a heart for social justice and student-centered curriculum. My parents' pedagogies extended to many aspects of their lives and, as such, impacted how my siblings and I were raised, our love for learning, and my interest in teaching. My educational practice utilizes conceptually driven curriculum. This is paradoxically a pragmatic choice founded on the complex nature of contemporary art and society. My process for facilitating curriculum development with preservice teachers is metaconceptual. We engage in focused identification and analysis of our sociocultural and individual experiences and content knowledge in order to create conceptually robust curriculum. This process provides a balance between educator and student knowledge and the uncharted territory they will explore together. Curriculum, in this sense, is a wayfinding tool whose details emerge as it is co-navigated yet never becomes the territory in and of itself (Borges, 1999)

My daughter and I continue to walk together along the gravel path cutting through the riparian wetland. As we walk, I focus on the prehistoric plants lining the space between our path and the banks of the ponds. The horsetail reed, or snake grass, is neither a reed nor grass. It is an ancient fern given its modern named by Carl Linnaeus in 1753 (Christenhusz, M. J. M., Bangiolo, L., Chase, M. W., Fay, M. F., Husby, C., Witkus, M., Viruel, J., 2019). The horsetail reed is often used in landscaping because of its strict verticality and uniform

appearance. In this moment of focused walking, looking, and reflecting the plant evokes a new awareness. My daughter's insight regarding the utility of mathematics in relation to engineering has motivated me to consider my own focused study and an ancient plant evokes a new realization.

Concepts and media are both tools for my artistic process. My process for developing curriculum is informed by the embodiment of prior knowledge, conceptually driven questions, and an ample easement for learner exploration. Such curriculum can be described as a tool to navigate through unknown spaces in a process of materializing understanding. In this way, curriculum becomes an artistic media. Curriculum arises through creative practice and is simultaneously a tool to facilitate inquiry. When I develop curriculum or teach its development, I am shaped by concepts and media; tangents arise exponentially. I respond, refine, assess, and progress.

This is not to say that curriculum is merely a tool, just as oil paint is not merely pigment suspended in binder encased in a flexible metal tube. Quite the contrary. In both instances of oil paint and curriculum, the typical emphasis in considering a tool are simply its physical properties and utility. This has been my misunderstanding of curriculum. Curriculum was simply a series of ideas, instructions, aspirations, and assessments communicated through text bound to a plane—the physical properties and utility of curriculum. I have not been previously fully aware of all the ways curriculum causes my hands to move as I wedge the clay, bend the copper, rip the linen, roll the ink. Curriculum has been resistant, pliable, dangerous, and gentle at times. I pull the buttery curriculum across the raw canvas and inhale the linseed. Tools vary widely in their fit for

a process, and there is a multitude of variance in how they influence the maker's body, mind, process, and outcome. Pedagogy; the action, the method, the approach, the doing of curriculum, had hidden the artistic potential of curriculum from me all these years. Now I could see the complex relationship between curriculum as a studio medium and the role that medium plays in the conceptualization and execution of a work of art. My best curriculum has led to a multitude of finished and unfinished works of art. In the literal sense, my students are planning, researching, and creating works of art. They create works of beauty, and purpose, each unique and reflective of their makers engagement with the curriculum. I had not previously considered the implications of a figurative understanding of learning outcomes as works of art. It stands to reason that a convergence of meaningful psychomotor, affective, and cognitive experience is adjacent to Dewey's (1934) discussion of having an experience in the context of aesthetics. At this moment I recognize that a deeper analysis of the relationships between what is meant by meaningful experience, an experience, art, tools, and curriculum is necessary. I hope I can sort this out on another walk soon.

I walk along in silence, listening to my own breath and heartbeat, feeling warm bursts of the late afternoon sun brush my skin through the foliage. I was caught in a stream of thought, as James (1890) would say. Perhaps, I thought, these concepts were distorting reality rather than revealing it. I contemplate the layers of abstraction of thought as if I were sculpting with curriculum. Walking further, I was struck with the sudden fear that this moment of inspiration would be fleeting. Having no way to document the process myself, I asked my husband to photograph a patch of horsetail

reeds before the golden evening light faded. I wanted a mnemonic to acutely remember the conversation with my daughter in relation to the range of possibilities it held.

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Listen to the Smells of Distress

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In moments of stress and injury, plants emit an organic compound called Green Leaf Volatiles (or GLVs) as a warning signal to other nearby plants and insects. In her installation, "Signal to Nose," the artist, Lindsay French[1] used vaporizers to amplify plants' Green Leaf Volatiles as olfactory emissions throughout the gallery space. Aside the plant odors, youth climate activists' voices were broadcast as ambient sounds offering a verbal warning to visitors. I was enthralled by the idea of anxious plant smells as distress signals, immediately considering how the slow sensory experience of her show might benefit so many of us who live in perpetual anxiety. I wondered what other non-verbal affective responses go unnoticed or are misrecognized every day. What would mass distress smell like?

1 lindseyfrench.com/doc/signaltonose.html

In a typical conference setting, I would have introduced some of these odors to the room for us to collectively take in the bouquet of disturbances. But imagery, sound, and memory will have to suffice in our current distanced reality. Actually, memory is critical to the relationship between GLVs and affect. Their aromas, such as that of freshly mowed grass, become nostalgically lodged into our memory as, *at least for me*, that first signal that summer has arrived.

I began to consider how the work of Green Leaf Volatiles becomes a kind of affective labor exploited from nature. Affective labor is generally work that is intended to produce or change emotional experiences in people. Springgay and Truman (2018) identify it as the relationship between emotion and work, where "affective labour produces commodities of care and comfort that are not physical objects but still circulate and are consumed" (p. 53). Green Leaf Volatiles' emotion-producing function resides in the space of memory and a sense of well-being. Today, I am going to draw connections between our multispecies olfactory emissions, building a concept map as inquiry process and pedagogical gesture, imaginatively considering a threshold between biochemical assemblages and affective labor.

.....

How does your body signal anxiety? Is it visible? Does your chest turn red? Do your cheeks blush? I sweat when I'm nervous. I stopped wearing colorful clothes when I teach because it is so visible. And it smells. What does my odor say about me? What is it signaling? I am actually really attracted to body odor, but I know many other people aren't, so I try to mask it. Sweat is a biological response to temperature change. But stress

sweat is *different*. Normal sweat is made up of water, salt, and potassium, which does not necessarily have an odor. Stress sweat, on the other hand, is a thicker, milkier secretion made up of fatty acids and proteins that does not evaporate as quickly. It combines with bacteria on the skin to create an odor.

This biochemical process is similar to the production of the atmospheric smell after a rainfall. Rain mixes with glandular oils on the surface of plants, vitalized by electricity in the air and bacteria on the ground to create the smell before and after rain (often identified as petrichor). I wondered if the electrical charge created during a storm is similar to mammals' nervous energy, and if it strengthens the stress odor. The differences between rain, sweat, and GLV's point to a spectrum of intensity between disturbance and distress, as a biochemical assemblage versus a mode of communication. Rain is produced from an ecological disturbance, and the smell associated with it emerges from a biochemical assemblage of ecological elements; whereas, GLV scents are a form of multispecies communication. It seems that one is an effect and the other an affect. Jane Bennett (2020) explores this idea of electric and affective currents, suggesting that, "subliminal gravitational pulls and electric flows....are waves of underdetermined affect that do not tend toward the good or the evil. They form a realm of real incipience, vague affects, and protodesires or sensations, of not-quite-lived potentials of futurity" (p. 61). Bennett's articulation of future-oriented affect is important to the question of both mammalian anxiety and volatile compound signals as socio-biological processes rooted in anticipation of events yet-to-come.

Unlike the romanticized smell of rain, the odor created from stress sweat is unwelcome. I feel pressure

to mask my body's smells, as my biological responses become entangled with social pressure. That "musky" smell says too much—signaling that I'm unclean, uncivilized, or lacking composure. But why are these bodily signals undesirable? They often mean that I care about the people around me, or at least I care what they think. Why is that a sign of weakness? How else have we habituated our bodies to mute affection or mask compassion and connection? How has cultural pressure to silence affective responses diminished our capacity to take them up as incipient protodesires or potential futurity.

Here, we're enculturated to cover the smell of our bodily signals while we produce synthetic aromas of other life forms, such as petrichor, basil, and lavender. I have heard that basil is shocked before being packaged to activate the oil secretion, intensifying the distress to fulfill consumer desire. The extraction of affect as production is a multispecies phenomenon, often occurring in relationships built on persuasion. For instance, teaching is rooted in affective labor and production, where intensive currents produce effects that echo the complex biochemical assemblages of storms and GLV signals. Sometimes pedagogical disruption is idealized as vitality in the classroom or creating a shock to thought. Teachers exert affective influence, creating disturbances that generate desire and control behavior. At the same time, teaching is frequently rooted in distress, carrying the heavy weight of trauma as a mode of caring and nurturing students, while masking our emotional responses. Where does disruption in the service of learning, curiosity, and concern reach a threshold of distress?

Anxiety is a future-oriented emotion—one rooted in the anticipation of an unknown future. What potential futures do we eliminate by masking our distress signals? The distress of teaching is like that of the GLV, where

I signal a danger warning. It is a warning often brought on by caring too much, of carrying others' trauma, the weight of expectations, pain, and frustration. I signal the fear of unmet desire. Over time, my compassion receptors are diminished. A similar effect is happening to Green Leaf Volatiles, which are becoming muted and confused by environmental pollutants that create stress and induce excessive plant emissions, reducing their signaling effectiveness. This shared condition of incessant and accelerated environmental stimulants has exhausted our capacity to respond. I wonder how we find a way to resituate our receptors away from the noise, to hear our mutual interspecies signals of pain, stress, and fear.

As we sit across this screen from each other, you can't smell the affect your presence is having on me. The corporeal limitations of this conference are indicative of the many ways our more-than-human hormonal communication is hindered at this moment of societal isolation. What if our current inability could illuminate our potential to value that which is often exploited, overlooked, and erased? How might we create a different kind of socius—one that embraces a capacity to hear the underdetermined multispecies affects transmitted as a network of distress and anxiety, outside of a transactional capitalist logic of production and consumption; as one step in **not** "relinquish[ing] this atmospheric realm to the capitalists" (Bennett, 2020, p. 61). Or as Springgay and Truman (2018) suggested, we "dislodge affective labor from capitalism?" (p. 63). I am appealing to an attentiveness to underdetermined affects as more-that-human communication and compassion: Listening to the smells.

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You Are Not Here: An Invitation to Unmapping a Wild Correspondence

Mindi Rhoades* & Brooke Hofsess**
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**Appalachian State University

Read with https://youtu.be/2Eab8CzTF68

Dear intrepid adventurers,

We imagine you finding this letter at some point in your exploration of the question, *What happens at the intersection of conceptual art + teaching?* We, the authors, found each other at that very intersection, arriving by correspondence. We waited for you here. Wander with us as we retrace one possible pathway through our own evolving process using Jorge's question as a guide. Then we invite you to map your own pathway using our directions as suggestions, a starting point, an X. Your X.

We forged paths through word-y romps, marked by image-y stomps, connecting meandering video tromps. Scouting paths as not always roads, but as flows of images, floods of words, flashes of stories, flickers of listening. Paths formed by weather—like water, like rivers, like puddles escaping through gravel and loosened soil. Rain gathering itself together and following its own paths, slow and sweet, rushing, cascading and not giving a damn about boundaries. Paths formed, routed, re-routed, lightning illuminating them in flashing impressionistic bursts.

This correspondence follows the unpredictable and curious directions of weather paths, water paths, surprising paths of exchanges between us. We first share our process of unmapping a wild correspondence, whispering the way, waving. Then we enclose an invitation for your consideration, come seek us in forests, come find us through the trees. You, like us, are not here: all of us waiting for directions from the rain. From love, to love. From tracing our paths to your own plotting of courses.

Start here. Greet this crumpled map with curiosity.

To Mindi,

opening lessons

packaged into
tender gifts, unfolded with an
upbeat pulse

saffron petals torn, threaded
into a generous invitation

to take the slow, the sweet path,
the one that leads to water
to green blue horizons
painted on thick paper and in backyards

the making of a
book, map, box, chest—
a holding place;
a nest for scholartistic dreaming
a space for us/e at
handwritten speed

We want to revisit, perhaps to revise, the initial question, asking instead: What happens at the intersection of conceptual art + *learning*? We attune the initial question further to consider the matter of distance at this particular and strange moment in our lives. Conceptual art as exploring, as the imagining of long-distance unmappings that traverse a seamless landscape. Our response creates and unsettles this terrain—meandering to and with ideas, art, texts, meaning-making. We spin the daily threads of our existing—smoothing paths, and rivers, and alternate routes for navigating the field of art education. We set about tracing the relationships between pedagogy and attention, rather than pedagogy and curriculum. Pedagogy as the process of chasing an idea that may or may not ever materialize—the ensuing conversation, the thickening connections, the extending of invitations, the pulsing of attention. A rolling run down a hill and into the woods, not afraid of falling.

Paths we took:

To brooke,

breathing lessons

i am learning
to breathe

deeper
longer

to notice
the slightest sway of the frame
the minor breeze through the leaves of the trees

inhaling
exhaling

to feel
how I might catch and match it

watching
wondering
lingering

breathing

i am learning

to lengthen
the time
the space
the meaning

i am learning
to breathe

again

To Mindi,

floating lessons

it wasn't red carnations,
but paperwhite blossoms
not rushing, only patient bobbing
in green glass lakewater
no flowers growing around
this visible shore
yet ever present blooms

cheap plastic floats buoy us—
my mother, me.
last summer it was emergency rooms visits
the cruel return of cancer
this summer she wears no sunscreen
and a black swimdress
we eat plums and sandwiches until it is too hot
then jump back in

a cold water rhythm
holds me as the
wakes of other boats lift up,
toward strong blue sunlight like
memories held up by cardboard boxes

swell

swim
current

in the quiet lightness
i reflect how your words
letters and packages
do that same kind of lifting
a wake, waking, awaken
to possibilities

In this way, conceptual art unfolding—as conversation, mapping, correspondence—becomes our pedagogy; a landscape stretching endlessly, with room for more intensity and more wild academic abandon. We evoke adventure: questions, ideas, provocations, wonders. We enter the intersection of conceptual art + learning where language + images + ideas swirl in a whirlpool, pulling in + spinning out simultaneously. Centripetal. Centrifugal. Everything open, everything in tension, everything possible. Everything in conversation. With us. With our students—past, present, future.

Separated by distance—distance quickened by post offices, letters, email attachments, packages—we engage this exploration through immersive, multimedia/multimodal correspondence, an ongoing dialogic process of wonder-ing around, co-creating and co-curating dynamic learning instead of static knowledge. Conceptual art inspires temporary topographies, changing and shifting in our presence and with our passage. This recognition prompted us to invite others to chart, create, unmapping with us. We have no idea where we're going. Come along.

Take this as a conceptual map, a conversational opening, an invitation to correspond. Directions.

Start here.
Greet this crumpled map with curiosity.
Send loops of imagination.
Open in every direction.
Trace some of the strands in reply.
Address a micromoment of rupture.
Enclose how it feels.
Disclose the percolation.
Improvise receptivity.
Circulate missives on awe.
Dispatch wondering, since the last time we spoke.

Zip code: to love, from love.

Ask more of language.
Collage text-image fragments.
Envelope the residues.
Converse with distance.
Listen to whom it may concern.
Post the weather.
Write messages by hand.
Ink without words.
Document "what is not (yet)".
Sign-off with a postscript, refuse creative closure.

Always yes,
And...

Mindi and Brooke

P. S. If you get a chance, send replies here.

Finding our Minds: Expansive Thinking Through Touch and Process

Guen Montgomery
University of Illinois

I define conceptual art as demonstrated ideas: dematerialized practices that are social, responsive, and governed by concepts and themes instead of a medium or process. The Art 21 article *Getting Started with Contemporary Art: Contemporary Approaches to Teaching* suggests that to teach this kind of art we should 'push beyond a media-driven curricula'. In essence, to engage students with conceptual art, toss out Bauhaus in favor of concept-driven classes and projects.

I see the perennial media vs concept conversation as a false binary and a distraction. Instead, I advocate for a re-conception and re-consideration of the oppositionality between medium-driven and concept-driven pedagogies. I am more interested in a conversation about how divergent thinking could result from media and processes that rely on moving, touching, material-bound bodies. How do we encourage the kind of focused contemplative thinking that results in conceptual practices? Can we teach new ways of thinking through doing?

I think of myself as a maker-teacher. Teaching is one of the ways that my practice leaves my studio and enters the world. Material play, and material-bound processes are central to my art making. Material experimentation reconnects me to the physical world through touch, and the primacy of this interaction becomes compliment and antidote to a culture of secondary, screen-based experiences. Interactions with the material world pull me out of my head so that I can think.

In the Covid-era of working from home / living from work, I increasingly feel like one of the preserved heads kept in a museum of jars in the Matt Groening series *Futurama*. My head, removed from my body, now lives in a little zoom box. The screen focuses on the thinking and talking parts. The more time I spend in this space, the more disconnected I feel from the physical world. Early in the 2019 pandemic, I kept hurting myself after long days of remote computer work. I would unexpectedly bump into things, break dishes, and I messed up my knee just moving around in my house. I connect this decreased somatic awareness to transitioning from the flattened space of a computer screen back to the three-dimensional world. The effects are both physical and mental: the longer I experience life in virtual, flat snippets, the harder it becomes to concentrate.

Eventually it felt like my ideas became slow and rote. The early days of the pandemic were decentering for many reasons, but much of my difficulty related to how my experience of the world flattened out.

On an intuitive level, I knew I needed to be making things. The turning point for me was when I converted our guest bedroom into a sort of sewing studio. Engrossed in sewing a mask that would better fit my face—moving my hands with the sewing machine and experiencing the slide of a rotary cutter through layers of flat cotton—I felt inexplicably better. The touching and making quieted the anxious noise and allowed my mind to wander, I began to think through ideas for future studio projects, which my anxiety had pushed out. It felt like a return to myself.

The thinking that happens while engaged in process-based making reminds me a little of dream-thinking. It's a state reminiscent of the moment right before you fall asleep, where floating ideas come and go

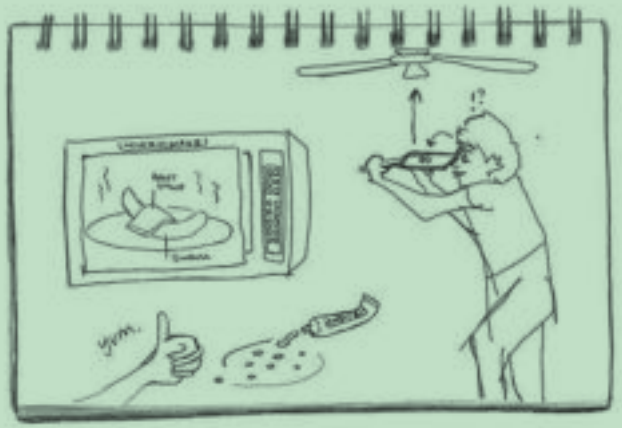
without effort. Apocryphally, Thomas Edison sought out this unconventional way of brainstorming. Edison would supposedly nap holding ball bearings in his hand, positioned above a metal bucket. When he drifted off towards sleep, the ball bearings would hit the metal and rouse him awake. This prevented Edison from falling so deeply asleep that he would forget his half-conscious epiphanies. I didn't have any particular epiphanies, sewing masks early in the pandemic. Instead, my hands lead my mind. Eventually my vigilant brain quieted enough to allow my contemplative brain through.

We ask our students to focus, create and invent. Meanwhile the world grows ever more chaotic and noisy in the background. How, in this decentered context, do we guide students towards deeply inventive art making, conceptual or material? The premise that moving might make cognition easier, and that somatic, haptic connections coax your brain to new places, is not new. There are multitudinous studies and think pieces to this effect, many of which have been drudged up recently in

service of pandemic reporting. I am excited by this topic because I see my recent experiences with mental ennui reflected in conversations about the body's role in cognition. I am interested in how we might teach abstract, conceptual thinking through material experiences that anchor us back into our bodies. I believe students will find spaces for more expansive thinking by engaging in processes that, through sequence and choreography, focus the analytical brain and lessen the noise.

Beyond moving to think, I also wonder how tuning into the haptic /somatic will reconnect us with states of play. How might embodied making reconnect us to this joyfully unselfconscious kind of divergent thinking that we are socialized to filter out?

I think I was probably a genius when I was a child, before the world sanded me back down to a normal person through a series of excel spread-sheets and to-do lists. (Don't we all think that of our idealized childhood selves? But bear with me.) As an only-child of older, divorced parents I was creatively unstoppable. I invented culinary delights, like the banana microwaved with a slice of kraft cheese on top, and cost-effective mints (dried dollops of tooth-paste.) I created a game where you hold a hand mirror under your eyes on top of your nose and walk around navigating the ceiling, stepping over door frames and striding across plains of popcorn texture. I mentally turned the architecture of my house into an intricate landscape for McDonalds figurines: the carpeted stairs were a treacherous waterfall, the couch cushions a mountain range full of caves, and the patch of concrete in the backyard a kind of limbo wasteland from which there was no return. I remember being excited to come home from school because it meant I could return to pretending my house was the world.



Once, in a store as a 13-year-old I began to yell "Lets pretend...!" to a friend down the aisle, who in response gave me a chilling glare for revealing to surrounding shoppers that we still played that way. Eventually I stopped pretending and now I don't really remember how. My childhood brain pretending was like a faucet of creativity that couldn't be turned off. As an adult, the closest thing I have to this state is the Edison moment—either right before I fall asleep, or when I am making something with my hands.

As an artist I find I prioritize the kinds of making that are the closest to playing. This is material exploration, screwing around with stuff in my studio, but it's also engaging in process-based media like printmaking and ceramics. Through this kind of choreographed making/doing, I can access a play-like state, which facilitates playful thinking. Knowing this about myself, how can I share this with my students? How can I teach students, whose already fractured attention is increasingly threatened by concentration-ruining

anxiety, to access the spaces of conceptual play? I am excited by the premise that students could be taught to grow complex ideas out of process-guided making and somatic experiences. Can we lead students to radical conceptual innovation by designing classroom projects that are idea-driven but materially oriented? Materially-grounded performance artists with hybrid conceptual practices like Bea Camacho, Cassils, Mung Lar Lamm, and Willam Cobbing set a precedent for this kind of making. These artists use processes as metaphors for experience. I believe we could follow these practices to develop process-inclusive class assignments that use medium-driven making as an experiential framework on which to build mental play and contemplation. Perhaps we start by encouraging students to pay greater attention to how their mental states connect to their haptic and somatic experience of the world. I imagine allowing students to self-determine what facilitates a creative play-state for them, and then working with them to design projects that use media-driven processes as part of a larger open-ended conceptual goal. Perhaps the objective is to explore ideas through making, instead of creating a finished product. I believe the key to prioritizing conceptual play in otherwise material-heavy classes is to emphasize the meandering process over the end result.

In my studio practice I am also repeatedly drawn toward collaboration, perhaps it reminds me of saying "lets pretend" to another person. Collaboration is a process of conceptual exponential growth, constructing something new out of unexpected connections between someone else's divergent, playful brain and mine. In thinking about the Textiles and Soft Sculpture course I am teaching this fall in the larger context of the pandemic, I wonder about the possibilities for invention

that rely on a group, instead of a lone contemplative thinker. Fiber-based craft collaborations like quilting circles and craftivist stitch and bitch sessions immediately come to mind. Collaborative brainstorming is inherently part of this kind of collaborative making: minds move, mouths move, and hands move together. Multiple things are created: objects, personal connections, and ideas. Collaborative conversations teach us to 'yes and' other people's creative contributions, and the craft circle shows us how to make while we think. Perhaps this is a model for another way to facilitate conceptual creativity during this screen-mediated moment. Perhaps through similar co-making activities that draw out collaboratively generated ideas, we will anchor students haptically while still finding a way to joyfully connect them to each other.

To Generate: Collections, Teaching, and Learning as Verb Lists

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Lists are ways we can order the world around. According to Kirwin (2010), lists are familiar. Some lists are historical and public, others personal and private. Lists are comforting and set an agenda. Lists catalog, clarify, inventory, enumerate, and argue. Lists indicate what was done and what needs to happen. Lists are hopes and desires, struggles and labor. Some lists are processes, others outcomes, and some a combination of the two. Lists remember and reminisce. Lists can also promote play and experimentation, as seen in the work of Richard Serra.

In this paper, I use Richard Serra's *Verb List, 1967-68*, to experiment with my collections-based research, explore pedagogical connections, and consider what lies at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching. I use the list as a reference point to actions taken during the creation of a collections assemblage, actions associated with and possibly taken by the objects, places related to the objects, and my attributions in consideration of the objects.

My research is rooted in objects and thingness. I contemplate objects in layers of place, shared histories, and ephemeral connections with humans and non-humans. In order to consider differing ways of thinking about the role and interaction of objects when assembled into and dissembled from collections, I documented my experimentation of making and unmaking a small collection through making a short video on my iPhone (see Figure 1). As I looked at the objects in my dynamic collection, I reflected on a lecture by Ann Hamilton during which she said that text is like stitching—the act of unmaking is an act of making. This notion of making and unmaking and doing and undoing has shaped the way I see objects in collections and assemblages. In order to make a collection, something else must be unmade, such as the removal of an object from another context or possibly another collection. Collections are made, unmade, remade in assemblage after assemblage, recontextualizing the objects with each iteration.

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 1: Still from the video of A Making and Unmaking

I found making a list helpful to consider what collections are and can do. First, I made a list of what was being made and unmade when I arranged the objects in boxes and into groupings. I listed associations of what the collections do, where the objects in the collections were found, and who the collections reminded me of. A curiosity. A waterway. A domesticity.

After brainstorming a list of what is made and unmade, I riffed off of Richard Serra's *Verb List*. Serra created *Verb List, 1967-68*, as a series of provocations for the artistic process (see Figure 2). In this paper-based work, Serra wrote down 84 verbs, such as *to gather, to cut,* and *to spill,* and 24 contexts, such as *of tension, of grouping,* and *of mapping*. He wrote the list as "actions to relate to oneself, material, place and process" (Friedman, 2003). Serra states his verb list "allowed me to experiment without any preconceived idea about what I was going to make and not worry about the history of sculpture. I wasn't burdened by any prescripted definition of material, process, or end product" (McShine & Cooke, 2007, p. 27).

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2: Collections Verb List

Serra (2003) uses his *Verb List* as a way to balance accomplishing a task while remaining loyal to experimentation and play while doing it. Serra stresses the need for play and to remain deep in the moment of what happens during play. He commits to "make art a practice of affirmative play or conceptual experimentation.... Free from skepticism, play relinquishes control" (p. 31). One of the things he notes that is problematic in academic teaching is that play is repressed, thereby discouraging the freedom of experimentation. The importance of play is well noted elsewhere, particularly in early education. Similar to Serra's observation that play relinquishes control, psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) noted that play is the first indication of children's freedom from "situational constraints" (p. 99).

As I made my own verb list, I watched the video to reimagine myself playing with the materials, an attempt to free myself from my own situational constraints.

To make. To unmake. To separate. I watched the video documenting me making and unmaking a collection a few more times to identify any and all actions I employed to create the collection. While I listed dozens of actions, it is still an incomplete list as I made the list days after the collection was made and unmade, days after removing myself from the deep play of building the collection, and I was unable to fully understand all the actions I was taking, feeling, and thinking at the time. To skew. To imagine. To remember.

I returned to verb list creation during the process of writing a joint article for a special issue of Visual Arts Research during which my partner Dawn Stienecker and I traded materials to work with as part of our conversation. As I sifted through the materials I received from Dawn, I added my own materials of found objects and ephemera to merge our objects in a way that was meaningful to me. I again created a verb list to make sense of the objects, this time inscribing a list onto rainbow scratch art paper that was in the materials Dawn sent. Some of the words from the verb list are included in our resulting article (Stienecker & Uhlig, 2019) and punctuate the text. For me, the verb list was a way to insert myself into the dialog, to provide a different, direct voice. For the reader, the verb list acts as interruption and narration to provide sustained pauses between the dialog in *Play*. To re/collect. To abandon. To resolve.

One of the assignments I give my online art appreciation students is to consider the building of a collection as creative practice. Students are to assemble a collection, arrange it, photograph it, then describe the collection, particularly in how it relates to issues of power. Recently, I decided to fold in another prompt to the assignment in the creation of a verb list. Students were asked to identify at least ten verbs they employed while gathering their

collections. Responses were thoughtful and varied. One student collects Kodachrome and Ektachrome slides because "they are beautiful and show me a world that I have never experienced." To pose. To brighten. To imagine. Another student keeps all of his shoes as a collection, and he positioned the shoes on the staircase to reflect his position in life (see Figure 3). To dust. To shine. To climb. A third student saves her old test papers to signify knowledge, and arranging the papers gives her great satisfaction. To comfort. To remember. To pain. Another student has an owl collection that grew each summer during childhood camping trips with his family, and he arranged his owls to resemble a family portrait. To cage. To escape. To watch over. A last student saves broken pieces of decorations and jewelry to create something new and enjoys the process of destruction, deconstruction, and creation. To repair. To complement. To surround.

Figure 3: Student's shoes arranged on a staircase

The compilation of the students' verb list is impressive (see Figure 4). Out of 32 students, there are 188 unique words. Some overlap with Serra's list, but most verbs stem from their experiences, their experiments, their reflections, their play. To seek. To heal. To prosper.

Figure 4: Student Verb List Compilation

A bonus assignment in my course revisits Serra's original intent to use the verb list as provocation and instruction for experimentation and play. In this optional assignment, students are instructed to choose 3-5 words from any of the provided verb lists—Serra's, mine, or the student compilation—as provocations to explore artistic processes, then share the documentation of the product or process. While few students completed this optional assignment, those that did thought deeply and experimented with the process. One student made a drawing inspired by his selected verb list: To imagine. To contemplate. To curate. To release. To display.

The verb lists revealed in this paper so far reflected on collections and collecting practices and served as provocations for artistic experimentation and play. What happens when a verb list is generated for teaching? I reflected on my last semester of teaching and the actions I took with students, the learning management system, and myself, and I also thought about students' actions and reactions with and to me. I created an additional verb list for pedagogy, one which will be ongoing as I reflect on my pedagogical practice and add to it. I will use the list to reflect on possibilities of curriculum and pedagogy and to build new explorations of experimentation and play in my classes. To engage. To connect. To generate.

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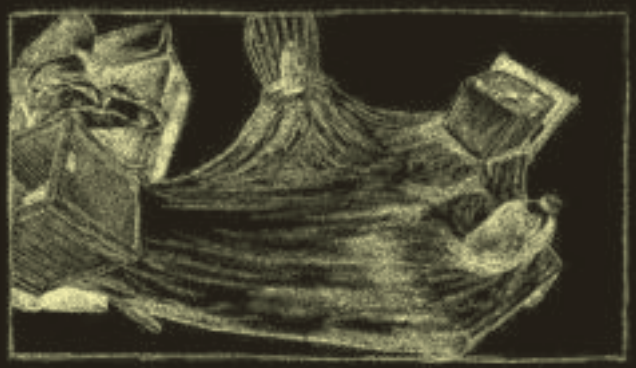
Instructions, Assignments, Prompts, and Propositions: Tools to Extend Presence and Create Influential Events



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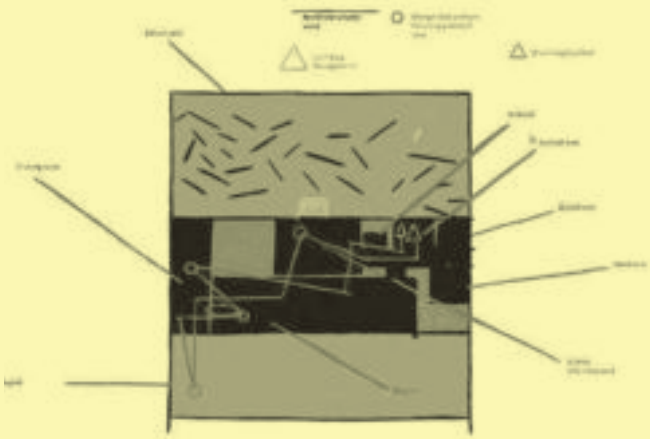
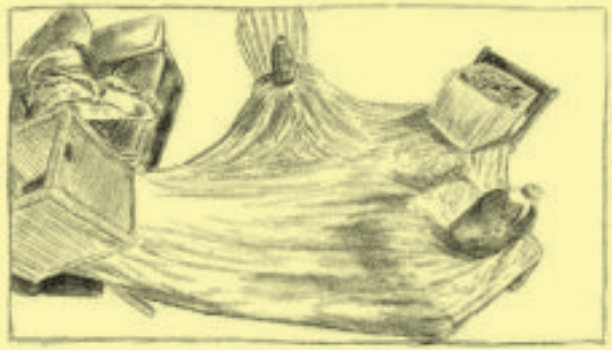
On Friday, March 13th of this year, all public schools in Utah closed to slow the spread of the Covid19 virus. On the following Monday, I received word from my district that I would be given two days to make the necessary plans to shift to remote methods of instruction for a two-week period, with the potential of extending to the end of the year. I worried the shift to remote instruction and not being in physical proximity, would negatively alter the learning experience of my students and my role and practices as a teacher. In response to these concerns, I adapted my teaching to embrace social art practices that engage participants in conversations and lived experiences, without the need for physical proximity.

In *A Conception of Teaching* (2009), Nathaniel Gage addresses the point that formal education is usually limited to the interactions and learning that occur when students are in the *presence* of a teacher. Gage clarifies presence to mean face-to-face interactions. However, Gage notes, teaching "can also occur when a teacher creates influential events, in which he or she does not participate" (pg. 2). I felt the success or failure of shifting to remote teaching would center on my ability to create *influential events* for my students and to extend my *presence* beyond physical proximity.



I began by brainstorming how to adapt my teaching to fit within remote methods. I realized trying to recreate a more traditional classroom art experience would prove difficult, because there was no way for me to know what kind of materials students had access to at home. Even more challenging was navigating the issue of student access to technology and internet. This led me to consider the art projects detailed in *Learning To Love You More* by Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July, Sol Lewitt's Wall Drawing series, Yoko Ono's book *Grapefruit: a book of instructions and drawings,* and the WalkingLab's Propositional Walking Project. I was intrigued by the way these artists used their art practices as a catalyst for social interaction, learning, and art making via long distance, in both virtual and non-virtual ways.

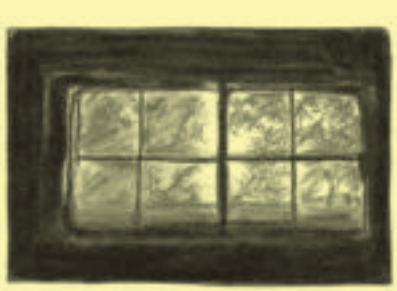
The unique and successful aspect of *Learning To Love You More* was the way Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July embraced the internet as an artistic medium to create an online-based art project. The project's website became an "activation point" or "conduit" to get people to do things they normally wouldn't do by completing the assignments that Fletcher and July regularly posted. The assignments were things like: take a picture of your parents kissing, recreate the moment after a crime, or draw a scene from a movie that made you cry. Along with the assignments, participants were invited to post their responses online to be viewed by others. By sharing, people all over the world connected and learned from each other.



Sol Lewitt similarly created sets of instructions for others to follow in order to create the drawings in his wall drawing series. Lewitt thought of himself as a "conductor" who used his instructions to direct the drawing process without being physically present (Baume, 2001). Although there was an element of control, Lewitt's conceptual process allowed and embraced the distortions, disruptions, and errors that naturally occurred because "each person draws a line differently and each person understands words differently" (Lewitt, 1971, p. 376.)

Yoko Ono's book, *Grapefruit: a book of instructions and drawings,* contains prompts for action. Ono said, "poetry is nouns or adjectives. This is verbs. And you have to do them. These are all instructions and when you just do it, then you start to understand it" (Tast., 2019). Ono provides readers with prompts or suggestions for action and through those words, interacts with readers in sharing things she believes worth considering.

Finally, the WalkingLab's Propositional Walking Project consisted of 20 different propositions from artists and scholars exploring walking as an artistic medium. Sarah Truman, curator of the project wrote, "Propositions differ from instructions; they are prompts at could be" (WalkingLab, n.d.). In this context, the propositions are a starting point or a suggestion to begin an inquiry and the individual is able to adapt and create their own experience.



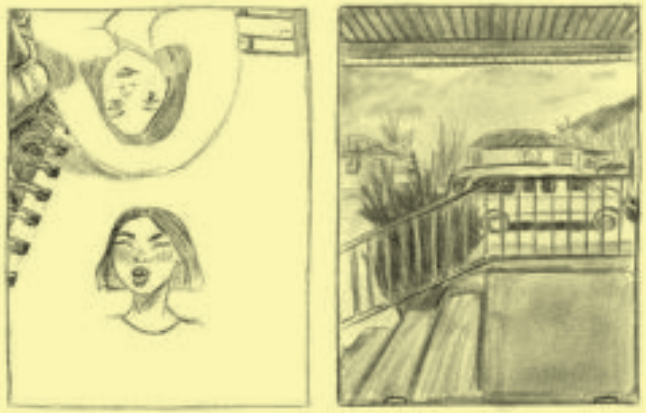
With these social art practices in mind, I curated a selection of prompts, assignments, propositions, and instructions designed to engage students in the experience of being quarantined at home. Some of the assignments included: climb to the highest point in your yard or house while being safe and document what you see. Take a photo out your window, try taking a photo with the blinds or curtains shut, try at different times of the day. Build a fort big enough for your family to all fit in or make a fort for you to escape from your family. Make a video of someone dancing. Create a field book for your backyard. Create a coronavirus survival guide. Each assignment was able to be completed at home using items students had on hand. Students selected two assignments per week and submitted corresponding documentation via our online class website or through email.

I was immediately mesmerized by the results. The documentation, mostly in the form of photographs, was authentic and rich with meaning. The responses felt fresh to me in comparison to the art that is normally made in middle school, which often feels cliché or fabricated. The student responses were different. It seemed that students were engaged in living, documenting

their experience, and enjoying it. I was particularly impressed by one student who created a stop motion animation using Legos which detailed all the ways her life had changed because of Covid19. Another student impressed me by creating and photographing elaborate scenes of things he wished he could be doing instead of being stuck at home. Each student response felt like a snapshot into their lives that was raw, real, intimate, and moving. As the school year progressed, students began to delve into assignments of their own creation, culminating in a series of artworks or propositions that represented the experience of being quarantined.

Not all students produced amazing work, some students invested minimal effort to receive a grade, while others chose not to participate at all in the remote activities. Informally, I observed when students genuinely engaged with the remote, prompt-based instruction, they seemed fully engaged and created art that was genuine and interesting. I was surprised that many of the students who traditionally struggled in on-site schooling excelled in this new format.

The beauty of the propositional or instruction-based curriculum, was that it allowed each student to respond, adapt, and interpret the assignments to their level of readiness and capability. Etienne Wenger (2009) said, "a perspective is not a recipe; it does not tell you just what to do. Rather, it acts as a guide about what to pay attention to, what difficulties to expect, and how to approach problems" (p. 215). In a similar way, the prompts were not meant to impose my beliefs on students or to control outcomes, but rather to give students a starting point or guide. Although the prompts were the same, the interpretation and responses varied with each student. At times, the responses illustrated the aspects of life we have in common with each other, and at other times, students' unique perspectives were highlighted. It reminded me of the conversation Pablo Helguera (2011) had with an educator at the Reggio Emilia school in Italy. The educator told Helguera, "to participate is not to create homogeneity; to participate is to generate vitality" (pg. xii). In Merriam-Webster's dictionary, *vitality* is defined as "the capacity to live and develop." As my students and I interacted remotely and engaged in art making that investigated our real-life experience of being quarantined, we embodied the definition of vitality and built a community of learning together.



Initially, I thought the pandemic quarantine was disruptive and the subsequent educational situations would be subpar to in-person interactions. Instead, I discovered that shifting the focus of our learning to real life spaces, adapting a curriculum that allowed students to respond in their own way, and using a remote platform of interaction created a community space to share and learn together. Etienne Wenger (2009) poses the question, "what if we adopted a different perspective, one that placed learning in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world?" (p. 209). In my experience, students shifted from being just students to being real participants, engaged in a conversation that led to meaningful art and a community being built, regardless of physical proximity to each other.

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The Conceptual Turn

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What happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?

When I began writing this essay, I had trouble separating the idea of teaching as a conceptual practice from teaching art—so I stopped trying—particularly as my own identity has become so immersed in the arts. I offer this as the subject position from which I considered this question.

First, what do we mean by conceptual art? I can still recall instances in which I heard people in museums and galleries refer to an artwork as 'conceptual' merely as a phrase for a work that was out of the ordinary, or otherwise not discernable from a more formal perspective. It seemed to be an excuse for not being willing or able to engage with the work.

The Tate museum defines conceptual art as "art for which the idea (or concept) behind the work is more important than the finished art object," referencing artists such as Joseph Kosuth, Terry Atkinson, John Baldessari, and Sol LeWitt. In an article written by LeWitt (1967), he described the idea or concept as the most important aspect of the work, and the actual execution as a "perfunctory affair" (p. 79).

LeWitt (1967) professed that ideas alone can be works of art, as several of his works were never given physical form. For example, *A wall divided vertically into fifteen equal parts, each with a different line direction and colour, and all combinations* (1970) consisted of instructions for creating a wall-drawing rather than creating the drawings himself. Much in the same way, in some performance art and other socially-engaged works, the artists surrender control thereby leaving the outcomes to chance based upon the active participation of the viewer. Significantly, this moves the conversation beyond an emphasis on the mastery of materials and technique, to a dialog on ideas and artistic practices that are not contingent upon form or function. Similar ideas and practices were manifest in the works of Fluxus and performance artists, as well as film and video, and social sculpture as artists explored new media, yet Marcel Duchamp is often credited with the first conceptual artwork (Tate).

Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) still stands as one of the most influential artworks of the 20th century. The significance of this work lies in the fact that Duchamp—quite intentionally—openly challenged the existing conventions of the artworld. Significantly, Duchamp's intent was to shift the focus of the work from physical craft to

intellectual interpretation (Roche, Wood, & Duchamp, 1917). As a 'readymade,' *Fountain* was not created by the artist's hands; rather, the urinal had been mass produced in a factory. What Duchamp accomplished, according to art critic Philip Hensher (2008), was to forever sever "the traditional link between the artist's labour and the merit of the work" (para 6).

While arguably the *Fountain* could still be critiqued on a more formal basis, Duchamp's choice of the urinal was intended to present a familiar object that was inherently grotesque as to question notions of aesthetic beauty. And by selecting an object rather than creating it, Duchamp was successful, as LeWitt (1967) described, in emphasizing the concept behind the work rather than the skills and techniques in making the object.

How does this translate to teaching [art]?

With such conceptual works, the viewer is often struck by such questions as "why is this art?" or "what does it mean?" clearly removed from considerations of how it was made. This 'conceptual turn' leads the artist (and thus the educator) down the path of focusing more on 'why we make art.' Yet this often lies in distinct contrast to how art is taught.

Admittedly, in my own artistic development, I experienced this 'turn' at a point when mastery of craft and technique became more instinctual—which allowed me to focus more on expressing concepts, and utilizing whatever materials and/or form were most appropriate for conveying my ideas. Perhaps ironically, this often led me to work with materials, techniques, and artistic practices I had never used before.

I shared this example from my own artistic development as a means to emphasize the significance of my formal training as an artist—but for me it served as a point of departure rather than as a means to an end. Consequently, my role as an artist shifted dramatically from my being a skilled worker to focusing upon the role that the audience played in creating—or completing—a work of art. Yet considering 'teaching as a conceptual art practice' extends beyond presenting increasingly diverse conceptions of practice. It becomes just as much about challenging one's attitudes and beliefs, and particularly the conventions that shape them.

My own attitudes and perceptions about art and education changed as I became more involved in Community Arts and Service-Learning, socially-engaged art, activism, and art for social justice, as they provided a focus for my emerging understanding of the intertwining aesthetic and social implications of arts practices. This shift in emphasis draws attention to what a work 'does,' and focuses on the "beliefs it embodies, the social roles it assumes, and its interactions with its audience" (Van Laar & Diepeveen, 1998, p. 10). As a result of deemphasizing the object and the outcome, teaching art as a conceptual practice becomes more about the thoughts it provokes, the ideas that are challenged, the relationships it engenders, and the disruption of the status quo. Such a philosophy suggests a new visual language through gestures that both form and inform. This involves not just providing new content, but new contexts as well.

It involves—both literally and figuratively—pushing the boundaries of what constitutes art, and where learning happens. Consequently, learning experiences can

be created for students so that they experience arts education not only as the creating of art, but on the generation of ideas that create a deeper understanding of themselves, a broader perspective of others, a greater awareness of social issues, and seeing their potential to make change (Cipolle, 2010). This requires the artist and the teacher (and thus the student) to actively engage with the outside world. This new terrain of consciousness refers to the intent of the artist shifting beyond a narrow focus on creative self-expression or conforming to the aesthetic demands of the marketplace, to emphasize the greater needs of others within a social context that gives such art its meaning beyond traditional aesthetics.

As a conceptual practice, teaching art becomes a way to make meaning, or to become more engaged with the community. It requires that we engage more deeply with the process—and less about where the process leads—while distancing one's self from more traditional and historical paradigms. The process revolves around solving problems, and engaging with the work conceptually as well as technically. One of the things that I love most about teaching art is that I can give all of my students the same problem to solve—and they'll all come up with unique answers.

The ways in which teaching as a conceptual art practice is realized in the classroom is through the incorporation of contemporary theories and practices that advocate the integration of broader perspectives such as contemporary art, multiculturalism, visual culture, and socially-engaged art and education. During a semester-long field experience working with inner-city children in conjunction with a after-school program, I had

students develop lessons and activities that focused on collaboration and community engagement. This was a challenge at first as many of them came from a more traditional fine arts background. One of my students wrote,

> *"After working freely as a studio artist for so long, I found myself searching for meaningful reasons to become a teacher beyond instructing students how to create works of art. I found it more important and helpful to begin answering questions of 'why' I wanted to teach art before thinking about 'how' I might teach it" (JM).*

This reflection reveals the personal and pedagogical beliefs, assumptions, and theoretical knowledge that indicate a reconsideration of the roles of both the artist and the teacher. Such a philosophy embraces an active public dimension as well as an intellectual one. This captures what I believe are the essential qualities of conceptual art and teaching, while addressing the complex, multifaceted, and situated nature of knowledge.

This essay provides an overview of alternative discourses in art and education—generated from within the field. What has emerged is a framework for careful (re)consideration of the practices of the artist and the teacher; one that articulates a sense of conceptual art as a teaching practice. The ideas behind conceptual art and teaching are not autonomous and separate, but rather appropriate, rework, and often subvert one another through a series of unique stylizations. Conceptual art as a teaching practice, I believe, is uniquely suited for this encounter in that it creates multiple perspectives and reference points from which

to make meaning of our experiences. As artists and teachers—much like Duchamp—we should continue to challenge the conventions that constrain artistic and teaching practice rather than limit the conceptions of what is possible.

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False Flag

Albert Stabler
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In 1990, the renowned Black artist David Hammons made a piece called *African-American Flag,* which is a fabric piece—a flag—which replaces the red, white, and blue of the American flag with the red, black, and green of the Pan-African unity flag made famous in the early 20th century by Black nationalist Marcus Garvey and his Afrocentric organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association. I own a reproduction of the piece that I bought at the gift shop of the Studio Museum in Harlem.

While it may remind art aficionados of Jasper Johns' earlier paintings of the flag, Hammons' piece came on the heels of two other controversial flag pieces. The first, from 1988, is by Hammons himself; *How You Like Me Now?* an enormous painting of Jesse Jackson as a white man with blue eyes and blonde hair, was attacked during its initial installation with sledgehammers by Black protestors. When the piece was finally installed, an American flag on a small pole was placed next to the painting, along with a row of sledgehammers. The second infamous flag was exhibited in 1989, when the young Black artist Dread Scott created an installation for his thesis show, entitled *What is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag?*. In this installation, viewers had to step on a U.S. flag that was laying on the floor in order to write in a guestbook that sat on a shelf below an image of deceased U.S. troops returning home in flag-draped coffins. Among many other detractors, this piece drew the public ire of none other than then-President George H. W. Bush.

In this historical context, *African-American Flag* might be read as a lighthearted if pointed provocation. But a review of Hammons' *oeuvre*, at that time as well as now, reveals an artist expressing a far stronger interest in connecting to his Black community and Black history than with scoring points in the art world. He says, in a rare 1988 interview:

"The art audience is the worst audience in the world. It's overly educated, it's conservative, it's out to criticize not to understand, and it never has any fun. Why should I spend my time playing to that audience? That's like going into a lion's den. So I refuse to deal with that audience and I'll play with the street audience. That audience is more human and their opinion is from

the heart. They don't have any reason to play games, there's nothing gained or lost."

Taking account of these reflections, *African-American Flag* can now be read as a statement of pride or a claim of ownership, demanding the forty acres and a mule that were promised and never delivered, payment for the building of the American economy on the scarred backs of kidnapped generations that were never granted citizenship—payment on behalf of descendants still lacking the basic standing of citizenship, still unprotected by the laws and still awaiting some benefit from the financial and cultural wealth created by and stolen from their ancestors.

I want to compare Hammons' flag to another altered American flag: the thin blue line flag. In this symbol, a black-and-white version of the American flag is divided in the middle by one blue stripe. Initially created to honor fallen police officers, this flag has become a symbol of explicit white supremacy, as demonstrated with its appearance in the 2017 "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. It is commonly associated with those who endorse the slogan "Blue Lives Matter," as a retort to the ever-growing insistence, in the face of police violence against Black people, that Black lives matter. This flag could easily be seen as directly opposed to Hammons' flag, though there are certainly many political centrists, including Black supporters of police, that might believe them to be complementary.

Friedrich Engels, co-author of the *Communist Manifesto,* coined the term "false consciousness" in a letter in 1893. What it meant for him, and what it has come to identify, is the condition of people who don't

act in their own best interest, by acting against the interests of their social class. From a Marxist perspective, "false consciousness" could mean workers who oppose unions, or poor people opposing social services. Racism is often thought of in these terms by Marxists, as a distraction that keeps white and nonwhite elements of the working class from forming a unified front against the owners of capital. Nationalism is also thought of in these terms, as Marxism considers itself an international movement of the disenfranchised. So, from the perspective of false consciousness, what do we do with these flags? *African-American Flag,* the thin blue line flag, or the "real" American flag? Or the "real" American flag painted by Jasper Johns? Or even the Malaysian flag, whose display at an event in Kansas in 2017 resulted in some Americans trying to get a Malaysian man fired, because they thought it was an American flag altered to represent ISIS?

It's not hard to see the value of the concept of "false consciousness." It seems like a fine way to describe the invocation of "freedom" during a pandemic by primarily white people who want to ignore the most minimal public health measures and demand consumer services, usually provided by poor and often nonwhite "essential workers." Many of these "anti-maskers" are openly skeptical of credible medical science, and certainly seem to be acting on false information. We assume we know what the lives of retail workers, frontline nurses, and schoolteachers would be worth to them, if only they believed the science.

But I suspect that, provided with clear, incontrovertible, and understandable evidence to the contrary, there aren't many anti-maskers who are likely to change their minds on the matter of prioritizing public health,

at least not without losing a loved one. And the reason is that their consciousness is not false, nor is it true. "False consciousness" is an oxymoron. The concept of truth does not apply to consciousness, which is itself every bit as undeniable a fact of existence as a visible flag, which appears in consciousness as a piece of colorful fabric, or as an invisible virus, which appears in consciousness as the experience of watching the news, watching someone die, or gasping desperately for air, all of which apply equally to COVID and to the murder of George Floyd, and others killed by police.

However, even more than the average piece of art, a flag is perhaps an example of how all consciousness might be said to be false, insofar as it insists on truth. There is a "real" American flag, which is understood to symbolize something that does not need to be put into words, because it is an image. It can be widely recognized, with no need for literacy. A flag insists on symbolizing, more loudly than most any word or phrase or sentence. And then, since it also insists on interpretation, there are translations of the flag, like *African-American Flag,* the thin blue line flag, and the Jasper Johns flags. *African-American Flag* approximates a photo negative of the American flag, while evocatively applying the flesh, blood, and earth of the black, red, and green Black nationalist flag to a historic Black connection with American soil. It cleverly alters the literally majority-white flag in a way that is difficult to decry as desecration. Meanwhile, the thin blue line flag, in all of its blunt and facile visual design, announces that this is a country in which black and white must remain forever separated by the police. The Jasper Johns flag creates a representation that is indistinguishable from the thing it represents; a painting of a flag is effectively a flag.

African-American Flag could be a powerful Black aspiration, though, to a Marxist, it may represent identity politics coopted by the state. The thin blue line flag may well be a racist fantasy, but in separating black and white, and defining an arbitrary border with prison bars, it also describes exactly what the main function of policing has been since before the founding of the country. But, in its boneheaded affectation of stating the obvious, it also illustrates the function of all flags everywhere. The Jasper Johns flag might be a compelling collapse of form and object, signifier and signified, or it might be an anodyne crowd-pleasing one-liner whose physical superficiality hides its philosophical shallowness. Just like the original.

In teaching art, we deal with art, which is about consciousness, and we deal with teaching, which is about truth. Flags fly on schools and hang in classrooms in order to continually make us think we intuitively know how those things are supposed to come together, through intuitively knowing why we are in those places, with those people, doing those things. But flags are about feelings, not facts, and won't help us figure out what it is we're doing, consciously or otherwise. The good Marxist takeaway, then, is to never completely trust what seems intuitive. And the bad, slightly less Marxist takeaway is that every flag represents, if not outright malice, a high tolerance for arbitrary violence obscured by collective disavowal.

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Sixteen Artworks from Places I Used to Teach that I Keep in my Filing Cabinet

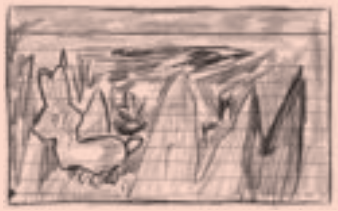
Alice Costas

Northside College Prep. High School, Chicago, IL

"When we remember what we've lost, we remember first with love. In institution mourning[1], this doesn't just mean love for a school or for the people in it. It can also mean love for ourselves within the school. In losing a school one loses a version of oneself—a self understood to be a member of a community, living, and learning in relation to other community members."
—Dr. Eve Ewing (pp. 131)

For years, I've been handed objects — small sculptures, notes, and paintings by the people who walk along my side. Institutions produce a profusion of material—this happens on a broad conceptual level, but I'm interested in the physical and personal. Some images lift the imagination, transfiguring the memory of the community and the space into the room of the mind. As the work generates its place of origin, it can also be generative of images—I've made small reproductions of these artworks on notecards—generations of images from students, through me, to you. What alchemy of distortion can images play on the timelines of our institutional pasts?

1 Dr. Ewing's book addresses a permanent and racially targeted loss of community. I'm interested in the concept of mourning the sense of self in the school as we experience a temporary and more diffuse loss of community as a result of COVID-19. I want to be clear that the gravity of loss Dr. Ewing speaks to is far more severe, and I do not wish to detract from this. It is our duty to fight against school closings.



A 12” x 18” (mostly) oil pastel folded into quarters. In the front are 3 giant acute green triangles reaching upwards. The background is primarily dark blue, although there is a purple shape behind jutting out, almost like if you were looking at a peninsula from further down a bay. On the left side of the bay holding to the peninsula, a blue road emerges. But the highlight of this piece is a large neon-pink rabbit with purple ears drawn in profile. It’s outlined in sharpie with the exception of four little feet that sit directly below it almost like duck-paddles. Its tail is beige. Its eye is outlined in pencil and left uncolored—a white circle, with a graphite iris at the center. On the back, only the pink oil has bled through so that you can see the shape of the bunny.

A black and white photographic print of an elderly man on a bus. Excellent balance of tone. The man looks straight into the camera, holding a coffee cup like he’s about to toast the photographer. The photographer was a kindred spirit, and I’m terrified of the image, which is a resin-based print, fading so it never sees the sun. To the left of the man is an out of focus person with dark black hair, and when it is viewed from the side in bright light, the darkness of the hair creates a black halo around it’s form where silver crystals gather.

The puppy does not have a nose. It has a large oval head, three freckles on each cheek, a crown and a collar with a tear-drop on it. I know it is a puppy because it says “I’m a PuPPy!” Above that text it reads “For: Ms. Alice From: C.[2]” I want to be very honest—I cannot remember in my teaching life ever going by “Ms. Alice.” I do not know what moved C. to label it so. Above and to the left of the text is a loose arrow pointing towards my puppy.

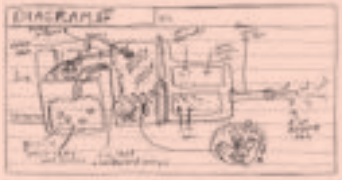
2 For privacy, all student names have been redacted to an initial.

A woman’s profile that transforms into a front-view painted in watercolor on a thick coarsely cut slab of illustration board. Her hair forms an abstracted animal print of India ink and jewel tones, almost like a bird on a David Attenborough show.

A pencil drawing on 9x11 manila paper, made while lying on the linoleum floor of an elementary school classroom.

A large oval face takes up most of the paper with two differently sized eyes, and pointy cats ears at the top of its head. The smile is a large wedge. It has a loose tangle of spots all over its face, and at the top it says “Mr. Chikenpox”

An oil-pastel drawing that says “J.” in the top right corner. Beneath that are a series of m-like black lines. Through the middle is a yellow tornado shape. At the bottom, black oil pastel builds a ground-line, and I stand on top of it, holding one end of a twisty-twirly jump rope. I am a small purple figure in a dress. A frowning creature jumps in the middle, with whiskers popping out of its cheeks, and 4 little black leg-lines. To the right, is J., much larger than me, frowning in a purple top and a long black skirt. J. was a five year old with an undercut, and most days wore a tu-tu to school.



An extensive diagram explaining how a car engine works ending with the truth that inside it is a fairy wearing a gas-mask.

A hammer given to me by P. made of a 1" cylinder of balsa wood, with a thinner 4" long dowel rod drilled into its center.

Two drawings of me when I was 23. I have cat-eye glasses, a round chin, and a smile in both images. Both are dusted with several different types of glitter. One brand of marker used has faded, while the other remains vibrant.

Both say "Bowie Alice." A student asked me to co-teach a David Bowie class which for him meant we listened to David Bowie for an hour, everyone face-painted Ziggy Stardust lightning bolts on their faces, and then we made and exchanged portraits of each other coated with glitter.

It looks like I have a baguette on my head, but I think it's meant to be a beret. I smile, and my tongue sticks up at the bottom of my mouth. On my chest is a heart and it says "Alisa."

It says "the Odd-ball in the room." in quotations in its upper-right hand corner. It was left behind at the end of the summer, and I took it home because it made my chest feel weird, full of ache and somehow uncontainable. Hair runs into a girl's huge eyes and eyebrows. It's drawn in ebony pencil—all the lines are heavy. She cries a chain of diamonds. A hand crosses with her face. You can see her nose through the hand, and what

is maybe a shirt sleeve, maybe snot. Her mouth looks like Nickelodeon cartoon-characters in the 90's. Lines pop out in her neck. It's a loose drawing—loose in a way that reminds me of how the Hairy Who might have drawn when they were 12.

A sculpture of a hot-dog made out of twisted pipe cleaners—a dark brown bun, a red sausage link, and then lines of ketchup, mustard, and tiny white and pink pipe-cleaners twisted together and cut up like onions.

A beautifully rendered gouache painting of a chicken-nugget, muddy blues and greens shining through the shadows, given to me by a dear friend who was my co-worker at the time.

A raccoon or cat on a piece of loose-leaf paper, arms askew, standing and grinning at the center of a desert the size of a small rectangular carpet. They hold a loose paint brush out to the side, the size of their arm. To their left is one tall and one short segmented cactus colored in green highlighter.

An orange block-print of a perfect building with 3 little smokestacks rising from it

Educational spaces sit on a trajectory of their inhabitants shuffling in and out—overlapping bars on a long timeline that no one quite keeps track of. Some institutions (like high school) might have a set time a student is expected to spend there, but all of us who live in high schools know the many permutations to that interval. Our timeline sits nestled into our own self-stories—sometimes, when gathering with old friends we begin to reconstruct and recall who else was there and when. They sit recorded in yearbooks, and municipal or school records offices usually parsed down to the level of the individual's record.

In her book, *Ghosts in the School Yard,* Eve Ewing (2018) unpacks the earth-shattering effects of what happens when the timeline of an entire school ends. Through her description of this mourning writ large, we also imagine the smaller endpoints that occur along the way—the exiting in and out of communities, the parts of self we lose in those moments. We hold gratitude for the parts of ourselves that are maintained by virtue of the fabric of the institution still existing.

Being an educator affords you a strange spot on that timeline. You float in a space that could expand or contract at any moment. Most of the time, you don't quite know it's ending until you are close, and once you have left, your length on the timeline is for the first time crystalized. Your broad view of those flowing in and out has become finite—you've known the students, teachers, custodians, and administrators, and now you will not know the *them* that continues to grow in that specific too-fast, too-slow hothouse. Sometimes, later you chase after each other, trying to keep track of the slippery fish of your mutual evolution outside the clasp

of the classroom. The objects left over are held with reverence, a beloved transitional device, resting in a cabinet waiting.

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Collaborating with and Overcoming Influence

—

The Co-creation of Self

Dennis Helsel
Blue Ridge Elementary,
Kansas City/Raytown, Missouri

You arrive at the intersection
Just in time to witness the collision
Between 2 high velocity bodies of knowledge
Hurtling into the future at speeds
Too extreme for the data to contain
When the vehicles collapse into one another
More than sparks and shrapnel fly

This metaphorical and conceptual impact exists beyond
    3 dimensions
It ripples out into the world with the energy to trans-
    form and reimagine
Individual and collective futures born in a symphony of
    collaboration

This is no accident or random act of chance
There is a rich history of intention beneath this interplay
    of forces
Something is always happening at this intersection
And yet—so much is yet to be discovered

Conceptual Art and Teaching have always been about much more than the classroom.These ideas are embodied within the very structure of our socially interdependent world. Whether you choose to realize it or not—there is art in the way you live your life.Your expression of, "The art that is You"—educates and informs the network of relationships we all operate within.

We are all, quite literally, walking artworks teaching one another how we wish for the world to be as we work toward creating the very fabric of our social world.

Seeing as how relationships are central to the question of conceptual art and teaching—we would be well advised to explore how influences operate within this process of social construction and identity formation.

In my lifetime endeavor to find my authentic creative voice—I have encountered the work of many poets, authors, artists and educators who have left their influential marks upon me. This is all well and good, but I don't aspire to be an entity simply derived from my influences. I wish to realize something of my own voice in the artwork that is my life. The following poems speak to a state of anxiety we all encounter when we attempt to step out of the shadows of our influences and become a creation of our own making.

THOUGHTS IN QUOTATION

I am excited to tell you—about this new—way of
thinking—borrowed entirely from life
Each line—each phrase—is a unit of time—a measure
of thought—a solid and complete thing

"Most people are other people. Their thoughts are
someone else's opinions"
"Their lives a mimicry, their passion a quotation"
Oscar Wilde—true to life observed—With that
particularly cutting English wit

Anais Nin—touched by the deepest desires spoken—
contemplates the wisdom of Proust
"If what Proust says is true, that happiness is the
absence of fever, then I will never know happiness. For I
am possessed by a fever for knowledge, experience and
creation."

Quotation—citation—reference—selection—
passage—allusion—extraction of essence

"How terrible it is that we have so many more desires
than opportunities"
Christopher Hitchens—never one for sentimentality—
nostalgic for life in the tragedy of passing
Its Ok—to give yourself a minute—the wait of
thought—is heavy with quotation

"I seem to have run in a great circle, and met myself
again at the starting line"
"The pursuit isn't all or nothing—it's all AND nothing"
Jeanette Winterson knows the depth to which I feel
Seldom has my mind—found another mind—more to love

I will leave it to Samuel Beckett to have the final word
on this matter
"All Of Old. Nothing Else Ever"
"Ever Tried. Ever Failed"
"No Matter. Try Again"
"Fail Again. Fail Better."

IN THE WORDS OF WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Oh humble doctor—poet of speech—pediatrician—
technician—master of the heart's craft
What a feast of wisdom—you have earned—over a
lifetime listening—passed on to share
Through recording—the pattern of spoken words—
professed in the everyday—flow of living

If I may be so bold
Let me capture a few remarks you once made
That have never ceased to haunt my thinking

"Would it disturb you if I said"
" You have no other speech than poetry"
"The undiscovered language of yourself"

How is it that those humble words
Are not profound enough
To transform our lives into living words

I am saddened by our lack of action
But you inspire me still
So again—I will boldly borrow—from phrases—spoken
from your lips

"We were speaking straight ahead about what
concerned us,
and if I could have overheard what I was saying then,
that would have given me a hint of how to phrase myself,
to say what I had to say.
Not after the establishment, but speaking straight
ahead.
I would have gladly traded what I have tried to say,
for what came off my tongue, naturally."

And there it is—the answer—is found—in honest
conversation
"Speaking Straight Ahead"
With the words—falling off our tongues—naturally

INSPIRATION & INFLUENCE

There is a vast body of work
And you
Are a part of it

No need to worship
Anyone
Or
Anything

Study what you will
And then
Take it

Out into the world

This is the way
Business
Is conducted

Take your seat at the table
Bring your own
If not invited

You belong
As much
As anyone

Here before you or after you

You know
More than and less than
The sum of
What you have been taught
This moment is yours—You are—The Meaning Maker
The question of influence is particularly important to me because I realize how the influence of countless mentors has acted upon me and how as an educator, I am sharing in this same vast well of influence that is the work of education itself. A crucial thing for me however, is wanting to see my students become realized in the fullness of who they are as much as I desire this for myself. Over the years, I have created several text based artworks which I have displayed throughout my classroom in order to speak to the concerns of finding your identity and becoming who you seek to be. A few of the phrases painted across the surface of old abstract paintings call out with an urgency to my students.

DREAM YOUR OWN DREAMS

YES! YOU ARE READY

YOU R THE MEANING MAKER

I WANT TO BE WHO I AM!

I WAS BORN TO DO THIS

Taking a step back from my own creative pursuits as an artist and educator, I focus upon the world of influence within the lives of my own children and how they are creating themselves each and every day amidst all the

culture that they consume. Whether it's my 5 year old daughter, Isla roleplaying with her Disney Princesses or my 10 year old son, Ian engaging in Fortnite battles and exploits, they are both creating a lens by which they will engage the world of their future selves. Recently, my son has expressed an interest in possibly becoming a game designer. One of the seeds of thought that I have planted within his mind is the idea that he needs to build his own cultural sandbox to play in. Rather than always being at the mercy of the things he consumes, I wish to see him take the initiative to produce something of his own which builds alongside the things which influence him. So much of what we consume is no more than a distraction. A distraction from us realizing what we ourselves could create and contribute to the world around us. Far more than entertainment, we hunger for meaningful education which will allow us to create something profound and lasting within ourselves and the communities we engage.

With that, I will close with a poem imagining the mind of the Guru—the ultimate archetype of the educator and all their questionable claims to authority.

THE GURU

Close your eyes

Take 3 deep breaths
Situate your awareness

Confront yourself
Within the open fields
Of your consciousness

Why have you come here?
What are you seeking?

Be still
With your inner turmoil
Rising up around you

Be still
Through the random
Winds of change

Be still
Amidst the fires
Of ambition and desire

Open your eyes

I have no answers
To give to you

Being and Becoming: The Curricular Objects of Music

Rachel L. S. Harper
DePaul University

Today is my 40th Birthday. I was born on August 15, 1980.

Turning 40 is lovely. It feels much like turning 10 and achieving the double-digits that make you officially big. There is an official bigness to 40, and it deserves some sorting through.

Is the pivot of a decade different from the pivot of a year, or the pivot of a minute, or the pivot from our lives into the time of this pandemic that keeps our bodies so far apart? Different, no; different, yes, and each one important, and each one a curriculum.

When I wonder what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching, I never wonder about pedagogy. I'm glad that others do, because that is where the magic is, after all: the performance. Instead, I wonder about the curriculum: the object, the sheet music, the calculated harmony, the progression, the structure. The years of choices, and the racing second guesses before the curtain goes up and everything gets turned over to spotlight blindness and muscle memory.

On March 20, 2020, my temple held virtual worship for the first time, and instead of even really saying hello, the service opened with a camera on the cantor. She played guitar. A familiar d minor to F Major progression I thought I recognized. Her visual image glitched and the audio phased artificially, a heightened reminder that we cannot be *here* and *there* simultaneously, like with all matters of the body and spirit, no matter how close. The cracks and disappointments of sound enhance productive longing and high pursuit of accepting the wild artifacts of simply *being*.

She began to sing the tender lilt of "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen, breaking the sabbath open, confusingly and perfectly, like a split monolith of the stone ways we had all been holding our breath for 10 days. There was a bigness to those 10 days, and the sound of her song dropped my shoulders far enough to let all of my tears fall out onto my shirt. She dug out long rivers for our true grief to pour through, connecting us to both to the Creator and to our simple, fragile, still—here bodies of primal hope, even with our still—here bodies so far apart. The song is a curriculum I am still following.

That moment flowing into this moment of marking 40 years, reminds me of a project my students and I designed for an Arts Integration course of folks planning to teach Elementary School one day. After some talks

about what education is like, we arrived at a theme of "Being and Becoming," and I asked them how we could use music to investigate what it means to be, and to become, two essential parts of any image of education.

A playlist, seems natural.

A playlist with, like, 22 tracks if you are 21 years old. A track for every year of your life, including the year before you turn One. Not your "favorite" song, but a song that sounds and means something purely symbolic of the full experience of being 4 or 12 or 16 or 40.

So, students created playlists, with one track for every year of their lives. Toward an image of *becoming*, listen to the piece from beginning to end; but the tracks may be listened to individually, towards an image of *being* at one point in time.

We looked at each other's lists. Some titles sing themselves out loud, while others sit essentially meaningless on the blinking screen. Memory around music has a special way of reaching out and attaching to the times in our lives it has served as an entirely nonlinear curriculum for us. Same will be true for you, reader, as you look at my list, here; some words will mean enough to make sounds and memories fire in some part of your brain that doesn't require your ears to hear, and some are less meaningful than even the words used to describe them.

I followed our curriculum to create this playlist, and this playlist is also a curriculum for me. It appears to represent a chronological progression from a beginning until now, and yet I am sure that you can imagine the ways that listening, uninterrupted, to the playlist you would create to symbolize each year of your life would not feel like a timeline, or a single line of any kind. It would feel, instead, like a curriculum, the only object we know of that is also alive. I may still be here for 40 more

years, and I plan to listen to this to learn about what I have been becoming, so that I know what to be:

00: Claude Debussy, “La Mer”
01: The Velvet Underground, “I’ll Be Your Mirror”
02: Elliott Smith, “Amity”
03: Ol’ Dirty Bastard, “Shimmy Shimmy Ya”
04: Imogen Heap, “Hide and Seek”
05: Massive Attack, “Paradise Circus”
06: Sia, “Chandelier”
07: Procol Harum, “A Whiter Shade of Pale”
08: Sinead O’Conner, “3 Babies”
09: Tori Amos, “The Waitress”
10: R.E.M., “Stand”
11: Tom Waits, “Clap Hands”
12: Of Montreal, “If I Faltered Slightly Twice”
13: Wu-Tang Clan, “Bring da Ruckus”
14: 4 Non Blondes, “What’s Up?”
15: Lou Reed, “Perfect Day”
16: David Bowie, “Outside”
17: Frederic Chopin, “Fantasie Impromptu”
18: Mates of State, “For the Actor”
19: Blondie, “Fade Away and Radiate”
20: Cat Power, “Nude as the News”
21: PJ Harvey, “The Word that Maketh Murder”
22: Toad the Wet Sprocket, “Begin”
23: The Cranberries, “Yeat’s Grave”
24: Mono, “Life in Mono”
25: Heart, “These Dreams”
26: Tracy Chapman, “The Promise”
27: Gillian Welch, “Annabelle”
28: Duran Duran, “Come Undone”
29: David Bowie, “Lazarus”
30: Joseph Arthur, “Vacancy”
31: Henry Purcell, “Dido’s Lament”

32: Cat Stevens, “How Can I Tell You”
33: Regina Spektor, “Samson”
34: Crosby, Stills & Nash, “Helplessly Hoping”
35: K-Ci & JoJo, “All My Life”
36: Nirvana, “Smells Like Teen Spirit”
37: Led Zeppelin, “D’yer Mak’er”
38: Talking Heads, “Psycho Killer”
39: Brandi Carlisle, “The Joke”
40: Leonard Cohen, “Hallelujah”

My Invisible Clown Suit: Intersections of Conceptual Art and Teaching

Elissa J. Rashkin
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I would like to begin this piece by thanking Jorge Lucero for the kind invitation to participate, for offering me the opportunity to learn from other participants and also for challenging me to reflect on possible conceptual and artistic ramifications of my teaching practice at the Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa, Mexico. While far from conclusive, I have sought to order my thoughts around the figure of the clown, a de-gendered, trans-disciplinary fixation submerged, however clandestinely, in other epistemological constructions.

In our master's program in cultural and communication studies, one class I am often assigned is a seminar on communication theory, the second of two required in this area. This class begins with theorists from the mid-twentieth century onward, and I like to anchor the syllabus in historical reflection, trans- and intercultural experience and, at the same time, bring it into the present as far as possible. The latter I have found to be a complex task, insofar as it is easy to get lost in provocative-seeming academic work that, sadly, turns out to be as ephemeral as the mediatic phenomena it tries to address; and even solid analyses of present-day media can seem outdated once the technological ecosystem changes and renders incomplete or even obsolete their object of study, as in the case of certain work on blogs or chat rooms, published before the advent and current reign of social networks like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, not to mention virtual "live" spaces like this Zoomposium and whatever is around the next bend.

The need for useful tools to confront a quickly changing environment is also conditioned, as I must point out in this US-based yet international forum, by a relative scarcity of resources common to the Global South, Third World, or as it is sometimes put in self-disparaging media terms, "Region 4",[1] bounded by paywalls set in place to digitally divide the respectable institutional internaut from the undesirable subaltern pirate or intruder. Though we cannot but react to events on a global scale, our own creative/investigative work takes place, more or less, in the margins.

1 Although Region 4 actually includes Mexico, South and Central America, Caribbean and Pacific islands, Australia and New Zealand, in colloquial usage it implies a second-rate, imitative or cast-off version of something originally produced elsewhere.

In any case, each iteration of the communication seminar is unique; in particular, each group has organically defined its own degree of tolerance or skepticism toward certain ideological projects and postures, thus requiring adaptability and making the review of certain texts endlessly fruitful and interesting. Although my own research concerns are rarely featured, I value the present-tense classroom as a twenty-first century laboratory in which the lenses that I provide, and those that students may acquire and adapt as their own, like a faerie show of mirrored surfaces, magic lanterns and cameras obscuras, may contribute to the capture, however fleeting, of certain patterns of light and shadow, sound, silence and other sensations that can be useful for the interpretation of otherwise vertiginous social and cultural experiences and, in particular, media ecologies.

Fig. 1: Clown costume.
[Photo from private collection, photographer unknown]

Before heading further into this elusive and unstable terrain, it is useful to put on clown costume and posit the relevance of the circus as a territory that lies, *par excellence,* at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching (fig. 1). In the social sciences where communication studies is often located, in spite of the self-reflexive turn of recent decades and the urgent horizontal imperative of intersectional feminism, the third-person "objective" voice still prevails along with all manner of graphs and statistics; yet even here, as in the arts and humanities, learning and teaching are akin to juggling, tightrope walking, trapeze-flying and other circus skills that enable us to create knowledge by questioning the boundaries created either by physical laws such as gravity or by weighty disciplinary convention. In this arena, the clown, also known as teacher and conceptual artist (fig. 2), having nothing to lose, enjoys a clear advantage.

Fig. 2. Joseph Grimaldi, originator of the clown figure in early nineteenth-century England; teacher, harlequinade leader, conceptual artist. [Version by British illustrator George Cruikshank]

As it turns out, few communication theorists have understood this as well as Marshall McLuhan, the twentieth-century Canadian thinker famous for aphorisms such as "the medium is the message" as well as for his appearances in the pop forums of his time, such as men's magazines and a Woody Allen movie,[2] breaking with the idea of the academy as ivory tower removed from the concerns of the everyday, media-consuming public. McLuhan's 1964 *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man,* as translated into Spanish in the mid-1990s, was the first reading in this year's seminar, providing us not only with a retrospective view of the rebirth of communication studies as cultural studies but also with questions about power and social justice that would stay with us throughout the semester, even though the author himself avoids both terms.[3]

Although present-day consideration of McLuhan has tended to focus on his early insights on connectivity via what he called the "global village," our reading was somewhat different, darker, perhaps due to the unfolding of one media-related crisis after another, from the Cambridge Analytica data mining revelations to the normalization of bots, trolls and fake news which in turn corroborate the endless performances of politicians who govern no longer by rule of law, radio or television—McLuhan's classic examples of hot and cold media—, but rather by Twitter, all this in a scenario describable, following Cameroonian theorist Achille Mbembe, as necropolitics, or in the words of Mexican writer Sayak Valencia, as gore capitalism.[4]

2 *Annie Hall,* 1977.

3 Marshall McLuhan, *Comprender los medios de comunicación. Las extensiones del ser humano,* trans. Patrick Ducher edition (Paidós, 1996).

4 Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics* (Duke University Press, 2019); Sayak Valencia, *Gore Capitalism,* trans. John Pluecker (Semiotext(e)/Intervention Series, 2018).

As our class and the rest of the world drifted and then catapulted into the alternate universe of the present pandemic, we identified with McLuhan's idea of *narcosis*, the paralyzed state resulting from the introduction of new media that enhance certain sensitivities while paralyzing others and causing drastic change across entire cultural formations. The hyperproduction and circulation of selfies, including on pages affiliated with violent organized crime, for example,[5] resembles the gaze of Narcissus staring at his own reflection in the water: not, as McLuhan is careful to point out, out of self-adulation (as is commonly believed), but rather because the abrupt activation of visual stimulus stuns and overpowers all possible reactions, leaving the subject paralyzed.

What will snap Narcissus out of his, her and our coma? Not, says McLuhan, the savvy use of social communication for positive ends. Morality-based focus on content, whether in relation to TV, guns, videogames or any other technology, not only has never triumphed over capitalism's profit-making imperative, but is also not even the point, if we consider the broad effects of these media on our habits, routines, ways of thinking, acting, learning, carrying our bodies and relating to one another on a daily basis. Instead, and here I must oversimplify, McLuhan turns to art, proposing that in a society numbed by the influx of technologies it does not understand but nevertheless adopts, becoming the servant of the very mechanism

5 Fernando Gutiérrez Champion, "Subjetividades necropolíticas 2.0: la narco-*selfie*", in *La mediación en el régimen de subjetividad bio/necropolítica. De la minería de datos al consumo comercial de lo violento*, ed. Ariadna Estévez (UNAM/Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 2019), 25–62.

imagined to be its tool, only the artist can create the rupture, the *anti-medium* or *anti-environment* needed to break the spell and create the holistic revolutionary consciousness that is essential to the creation of livable societies.[6]

How might the artist achieve this, and what creates *in* them (you, us) the possibility to do so? As the viral era drags on and university life continues to simulate itself online, I grapple with this question, determined not to acquiesce in the forcing of myself and those with whom I collaborate into the position of servomechanisms imitating social, political, cultural and creative activity from the plugged-in subordination portrayed in Alex Rivera's 2008 film *Sleep Dealer* as science fiction but seemingly ever closer to twenty-first century reality, along with hunger, environmental sickness and violence. More than formal art spaces, I think of the clown I once saw in a three-ring circus, whose juggling of ever-taller stacks of plates simulated the precariousness of many jobs in the postindustrial service economy. Or the nineteenth-century harlequinade, a climactic transformation scene involving multiple clowns, whose comedy often involved outwitting bumbling policemen or soldiers, among other chaotic situations...

Now that live performances are closed by COVID-19, as are the parks where clowns often present their essentialist, repetitive yet crowd-pleasing program, Mexican clown guild members have joined the ranks of workers who have staged protests in order

6 Sergio Roncallo Dow and Diego Mazorra, "Ecología, arte y política: la estética como control (anti)ambiental," in *Ecología de los medios. Entornos, evoluciones e interpretaciones*, ed. Carlos Scolari (Gedisa, 2015), 263–294.

to draw attention to their economic plight;[7] and in the midst of such uncertainty, I try to imagine what sort of circus act would detonate an anti-mediatic explosion strong enough to generate some sort of epistemic awakening. For now, with few if any answers, the lights dimming, and the circus tent that is our planet on the verge of collapse, I retreat into the collective nature of the task, recognizing that when a clown's time is up and the pantomime is ending, the harlequinade must go on.

7 Fluvio Cesar Martínez, "Ríen por fuera y lloran por dentro: payasos piden ayuda por contingencia", E-consulta.com Veracruz, April 21, 2020, www.e-veracruz.mx/nota/2020-04-21/estado/rien-por-fuera-y-lloran-por-dentro-payasos-piden-ayuda-por-contigencia.

Collaboration, Freedom, Readiness, Power

Nicole Marroquin
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> *...we are each other's harvest: we are each other's business: we are each other's magnitude and bond.*
> *—Gwendolyn Brooks*

I like to think about togetherness of the classroom, like the natural physical comedy that occurs when we are rushing around the classroom and we bump into each other. Remember the way a conversation at a table can become a provocation? What if we all try this... The joyful noise of 25 or even 35 people generating ideas in a room, and how vibrations fill the air in moments before I hand out wet clay, the ideas that we generate together, and the things which can only come to fruition with other people.

I was preoccupied with "preparation" in August 2020, when I was part of panel of educators **Where can we go from here? Reimagining the future** hosted by Gallery 400 and UIC. I asked this group of accomplished educators how should we be getting reading for this semester, and Danton Floyd who teachers at Sumner Elementary and is the founder of 360Nation replied, "If you stay ready, you don't have to get ready" His reply is still ringing in my ears. It made me think of times when we have dropped everything in a crisis, to gather with my class or family to remind ourselves who we are and why we are here.

How can we and our school communities stay ready for this, and the unknowns that lie ahead? Teachers are demand we put a stop to business-as-usual in teaching and learning, because to pretend we can teach in a bubble ignores the real stress and trauma our young people are experiencing— and we need them to be empowered and confident enough to take up the struggle to create a better world. Critiques of power are not simply remote topics addressed by artists whose work we share in class, or ideas for students to analyze at arms-length. Why make art ABOUT a thing, when they could make art that is the thing itself, asks Tanya Bruguera. Furthermore, when we condemn one type of violence we must be prepared to consider how violence manifests itself in our daily lives, including the routines and norms of schooling, how this is related to police abuse AND dynamics of power in schools, because teachers and schools are not above critiques of power. Are we ready to let young people make decisions, speak their truth and confront our authority? Can we admit when we are wrong? Are we ready to build trusting and meaningful relationships with our young people? Are we good

enough listeners to become allies to youth? Do we value their knowledges and expertise? Do we have enough collective courage to push through these unknowns together? Are we willing to encourage and support young people as they learn to practice using their power?

(L) Children playing with an elaborate sand table.
(R) Near-absolute freedom is messy so we often worked outdoors.

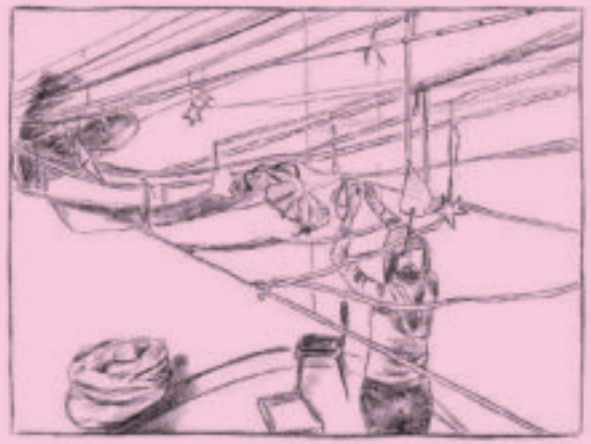
I taught an experimental 1-off course in 2013 that included 10 college seniors and graduate students, 23 Kindergarteners and 1st graders and an outstanding early childhood educator. Our class met inside of their K-1 classroom elementary school on the West Side of Chicago from 9-3 for 10 weeks and the 5 and 6-year olds shared what seemed like infinite generosity, creativity and humor. Our goal was to explore power sharing and collaborative modes of making by exploring child/adult dynamics, and to transform a classroom into the artwork (a la Claire Bishop and Grant Kester) In order to do this, adult participants engaged in intense listening and critical reflection every day. The aim was to learn to follow their lead to the degree that by the end of the semester, the 5 and 6-year-olds would be our teachers.

Adult students in the hallway preparing to work with the children.

Collaboration is a loaded term that can be applied haphazardly in the arts, and it can obscure an imbalance of power, one can gain cultural capital from the labor of another, and is sometimes used to imply that labor as being shared equally on something when it is far from equal. *COLLABORATION* was in the title of our class, and we wanted to trouble the waters and dig deeper during this experiment. We could say we were collaborating together and with children, but what would it *really* mean to be in collaboration with children, and could we let them lead us?

Right away we discovered that reconceptualizing space and imagining conversations as artwork both easy and pretty boring to the children. Their intense powers of imagination could transform them into any animal or take them to the moon anytime, and they are not burdened by capitalist notions of time and the art world.

For a 5-year-old, almost everything they do is new and experimental, and so the children expressed their passion and curiosity and post-post-post-modernist ideas freely, and typically with wild abandon. In the beginning we tried to keep up with them and trailed far behind, but then we learned to watch and listen, and we fed their enthusiasm with mountains of materials, created surprise encounters, planted mystery objects and clues in the classroom. We documented, reflected, read and checked-in with their expert teacher and engaged in endless conversations with our 5 and 6-year-old comrades. They called us their "special artist friends."



When the children were at lunch, we would add new pieces that would invite them to step in.

Below are quotes drawn from readings and responses from the adult students (participants) and the teacher

> *Early on, we figured out that this would require some kind of radical power sharing in order to allow the children to "steer the ship." Another big*

shift was going from making things that were the artwork to examining the processes, decisions, ideas and motivations of the children, including their resistance, which we realized was actually the artwork. But then, what is our role in the classroom? The children are the experts, and we are learning to collaborate, and are the real beginners. (Participant)

I kept finding myself being skeptical or defensive about the complete freedom the Mammalian Diving Reflex gave the kids, and my reaction was even shocking to myself! I have worked with kids and found that clear directions for behavior were important. It felt like an issue of fairness, that the clearer the rules and expectations were, the better. But what about the children making all the rules? Are we talking about total freedom? I don't know about that. (Participant)

"Focusing on experience allows students to claim a knowledge base from which they can speak... Coming to voice is not just the act of telling one's experience. It is using that telling strategically—to come to voice so that you can also speak freely about other subjects." (bell hooks 1994)

Most of us chose to work with these students because we wanted to learn from them, learn about them, and to make something with them. (Participant)

I had to figure out how to be sure not to dismiss small people's perspective. If they were having an issue, they needed the room to express it, and to go beyond freedom to express. They had a right to be

heard and for their ideas to be shared with others. We had the advantage of being in a school where this is the norm. They had daily class meetings to discuss concerns as a group, so the learning curve was mostly on our end. We had to shed what we had learned about schooling, and what we experienced as children in schools. (Participant)

Making work this way presents one possible means of correcting this power imbalance, here. Students already conduct their lives in public social spaces which could serve as sites of inquiry, where they could make personal connections to concepts without the delay or dislocation of teacher-driven instruction. (Participant) We could "...move students beyond modes of passive spectatorship and towards more generative and thoughtful forms of cultural production and resistance..." (David Darts, 2004)

When we found ourselves struggling with collaboration (with the children) we remembered that struggle is also a part of building trust. (Participant)

"Developing trust across difference requires active listening that is focused on understanding others' realities and holding those differing realities as relevant as my own." (Dionardo Pizaña 2003)

"The more openly and generously we listen to each other and encourage other perceptions, the more we will hear, and the greater the work of art will resound." (Mary Jane Jacobs 2005)

“Strategies for artmaking that are active and socially engaged enable students to make use of the methods of communication that they already possess but feel disempowered to use.” (Jack Watson 2012)

“Generosity exists in exchanges, like conversations, and within temporal experiences shared by a social or communal body, which are conceived as art, crafted by artists, though these generous acts might not look like art, or in fact be art but become art-like moments” (Mary Jane Jacobs 2005)
“....active listening... is focused on understanding others’ realities and holding those differing realities as relevant as my own.”—Dionardo Pizaña, 2003

“Learning how to moderate a conversation, negotiate among interests in a group, or assess the complexities of a given social situation does not curtail artistic liberty; these are skills that can be used to support our activities.” (Pablo Helguera 2012)

Listening is a big deal. We were able to be there in such a pure form, with the intention of just

collaborating with the students on conceptual art—rather than having to meet state standards as teachers, or to address the expectations of other adults. When I started going there it was for our class, but then it became something else. No offense but the SAIC class and credit didn’t matter to me because the cool things the children made and said was what I cared about. (Participant)

How one student explained the unusual happenings in the classroom. “Tiny ninjas come in at night,” he told us.
“Authenticity is not about getting children to love or obey us, or even to admire our talents. Authenticity is about knowing oneself well enough to allow others to know themselves.” (Ruth Charney, 1991)

As we grew more open to failure over time and learned to curb our expectations, we became more sensitive and flexible. (Participant)

When we looked at Temporary Services and the chapter that included the "dibs" parking savers from different countries, I thought about it more as documentation of nonverbal communication between community members around things like divisions of space—organic, minus authorities. I can see this in the context of what we are doing with kids. (Participant)

This experience, of living and working inside this evolving installation, has definitely made me more conscious of the idea of the space in which kids learn and create. To think of the space itself as work of art. The classroom is not neutral... Now everything is a potential work of art. I want to build this experience for kids where they are artists, living and working inside a work of art. (Teacher)

Thank you to Jeanette, Brianne, Patsy, Stephanie, Emma, Bridget, Hannah, Maddie, Gabe and teacher Jennifer Klonsky, who's ideas are represented here.

Afterwords: On August 15 of 2020, at the time of the event for which this text was created, the appointed Board of Education in Chicago failed to get the votes necessary to cancel their contract with the Chicago Police Department who provide armed officers in schools. The struggle continues.

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Note for the reader:

This text is composed by two authors and multiple lives. The text shares two main stories that can be read in a zigzag order following the symbol ⤮
Or, you can choose to read horizontally following the numbers only. Either way, both voices blend and support each other for the purposes of our argument.

1.
I am committed to certain seriousness.
I am committed to certain seriousness in an absurd task.
I am committed to the seriousness in an absurd task, that emerges from a visceral question, sustained with others.

Because it does not necessarily make sense at the beginning—remember, it is an absurd task—trust, commitment, passion, and even stubbornness are crucial. At some point, this becomes an entirely new thing... ⤮

2.
Proudly, I jumped—literally—into a definite failure. I failed, my students did, and we all held each other from—also literally—falling too hard. This moment of failing has been one of my most successful moments of art teaching. Falling, suddenly becomes something else...

It becomes art and teaching, by playing with the moment in which a group emerges as such. "Groupness," and our perceived interdependence, become something we can work with, as an art material.

3.

On the first day of the semester, my students entered the classroom, found their preferred space—back corner, front center, or whatever seat is open when they showed up late. They then manifested their expectations about the course on methods for art teaching: NOT making any art. ⤭

In the next class, we walked to a room where, I explained, we would practice collaborative compositions. Students got into the room seeking their preferred back corner, front center, or whatever seat is open—but the room was empty. Confused, some visibly uncomfortable, students looked at me expectantly as we waited for everyone to arrive. I asked: "What if we consider our body, movements, and space as part of the materials and forms of the art that we teach-and-make"? ⤭

"This empty room holds our collaborative composition. We will mark this space and make our piece only by walking, stopping, standing, moving faster, changing directions, or leaving". I finished explaining, but nobody moved. I showed that I *literally* meant walking through the room: in a line, zig-zags, or circles. Still, no movement. "Do you want to try it with me?" I asked, and then, confessed: "I am not really sure what this *is*, but I have learned so much about how these walks help to experiment with groups and spaces. I have felt it". Reluctantly at first, they began walking. ⤭

4.

Cold rain pours over Bogotá so intensely that creeks begin to appear at our university's campus. Yet, we feel warm and active. With fear and excitement, students stare at a three meter-tall wall in front of us. Leaning out through its rectangular opening, is the *parkour* teacher looking down towards us. I invited him to a class I teach called "Practices of space and place," to expand our bodies' movement possibilities in the city. ⤭

The *parkour* teacher extends his arm, inviting us to jump towards the wall and push ourselves up, like spiders. A nervous laugh makes our bodies shake. Some of my students immediately say, "I can't!" others hesitate silently, while I secretly scream to myself: "It is impossible to jump over that wall!" The first intrepid person moves backward, gathers momentum, and jumps directly to the wall. ⤭

As expected, lacking any *parkour* experience, he gets stuck halfway. In a matter of seconds, the whole group runs to assist him, pushing his body up and encouraging him to find the strength to climb. He turns to us from the top of the wall, proud of his achievement, which we feel like ours. Suddenly, the students look at me with expectation, inviting me to give it a try. I couldn't help thinking about how ridiculous I am going to look. Anxious, I regret for a second putting myself in such a vulnerable situation. ⤭

After some time, students generously engaged with tasks like never leaving anybody alone in a corner, perceiving changes in pace and following such shifts as a cue, and initiating a composition by entering the space as a first mark, and building on it. Soon, their marks and compositions became more complex, and—beyond walking and standing—they played with shapes and positions that emerged as they moved together. ⤭

Without time to overthink, I jump, also getting stuck halfway. Immediately, I feel the group's hands holding my body, supporting my legs, and helping me to continue. Thanks to everyone's strength, I manage to climb the wall! Everything happens in slow motion, awkwardly, and ungracefully, but with a lot of determination and solid attunement. Life raises taller than *parkour* skills. Its materials—time, fear, tiredness, agitation, and others—root us to the present, to the group.

What is possible when "groupness" is our main art material? How to make tangible, sculpturable, audible, danceable, foldable, or drawable, the process in which a group emerges as one? Why is this relevant to talk about conceptual art and teaching?

Conceptual art has broadened the materials, forms, and spaces where art, and art teaching, are possible. Standing on this expanded art field, we understand "art materials" as whatever helps to investigate questions that guide creative processes. In our practice, we claim "groupness"—our ways of *being* together—as our main question and art material. We want to explore what such "groupness" can become. An amateur *parkour* practice in a visual art class, and absurd walking tasks to interrogate the limits of 'teaching art,' are resources to explore this intricate material creatively, and relationally. Conceptualism moved art away from objects and techniques alone, to questions supported by objects and different skills. In our case, art moved towards visceral questions: towards visceral questions enacted through bodies in shared movement.

What we *teach*, then, is not limited to how to *"make a thing."* Rather we inquire, with our students, what we can *"make"* out of the *fact of being-with each other*. To do this, we propose a creative practice with an ethical horizon, which assumes the responsibility and care of interdependence, but relinquishes the ambition of uniformity. Studying art through the question of *"what is possible out of being together"* refers to multiple realms. Among many, many directions in which this study can take us, some relevant questions that we have explored with our students—some of which we recounted above—are:

5.
How to perceive when a group is committed to an absurd task? Why is it visceral?

When I first invite students to practice these initially absurd tasks, we *feel* in our bodies, something like that awkward moment of silence when nobody wants to jump into a conversation during a class, or begin the dancing at a party. But these tasks, for me, are provocations to practice attunement, requiring participants to be fully invested: as embodied, interdependent beings. Once the first brave person literally takes a step, you can feel a different energy blooming. You can perceive everyone ensuring that no invitation stays unanswered and that nobody makes all the decisions. The absurd task, then, activates a sense of visceral responsibility and solidarity. ⤮

6.
How does failing to jump become an effective material of teaching? Of art?

Suddenly, failing to jump demanded us to *move* from our positions and foregrounded our being in relation. Then, it became an artistic and pedagogical action. Failing to jump in front of the group, revealed that we were all responsible that nobody falls/fails too hard. It emerged as a creative and learning experience in the second in which it took us away from our comfort place, and towards the others. When we acknowledged our shared vulnerability and our tiny or gigantic fears, we extended a strong sense of solidarity among us. This expanded solidarity works as connective tissue, as a material that embraces our differences and collective needs. Solidarity creates a new space, one of *us being-with and for each other.*

Our question is interdependence. Our main materials are groups and their relationships. We, too, are part of our own art material.

We rely on each other and our students, to commit to the visceral question of what is possible with ourselves, as we explore what is possible with our groupness.

Because of the ethics of pedagogy, as we play with the pliability (Lucero, 2020) of groups and make them our material, we, ourselves, become unequivocally immersed in it. Us—artists-teachers—also become malleable to the forms and dynamics of groups we work with. Here, we write as a duet, trusting the potential of that malleability[1]. We believe that exploring groupness always needs to be enacted with others. We have the other's voice and body as a counterweight, creating a generative tension that reminds us that we are not alone in our desires. Working-with, thinking-with, and moving-with, challenges our potential one-sided view and rehearses our question of interdependence as a creative

1 We are thankful to Jorge Lucero, not only for inviting us to this conversation, but because this idea is inspired by his theorization about the "pliablity" of everything (Lucero, 2020), as part of the practices and permissions afforded by art, and conceptual art in particular.

practice. We decide to commit to the openness, vulnerability, and transformation that emerge when at least two bodies enter into contact, and to work with the textures, rhythms, tensions, and contrasts produced by such encounters.

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We Are Not Dogs

Ross Roadruck
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One of my favorite fables is the one about the dog and its reflection. The dog has a bone and is immensely happy about it. I think the bone was stolen but either way, as the dog returns to its home, they must cross a bridge. While crossing the bridge the dog looks down and, not knowing what a reflection is, becomes jealous of the other dog in the water with a bone in *their* mouth. Rather than being satisfied with what they already had, the greedy dog jumps at the dog in the water, losing their own bone along the way.

The traditional moral of the story is that it is foolish to be greedy, but I often think of this story for other reasons. The relationship to greed is clear but I think of it for the misunderstanding; for not truly knowing what you are looking at and thinking the thing in front of you is different than it actually is. This added or alternate layer of self-reflective thinking, that we as humans are able to apply to this tale, and which is essential and critical to conceptual art (Goldie, Schellekens. P. 12), is an idea I'll return to later on.I guess it would be important to mention, too, the common struggle of finding balance between the role of a teacher and artist and then situate it within the typical models that are provided to most undergraduate students who have an interest in both artmaking and teaching.

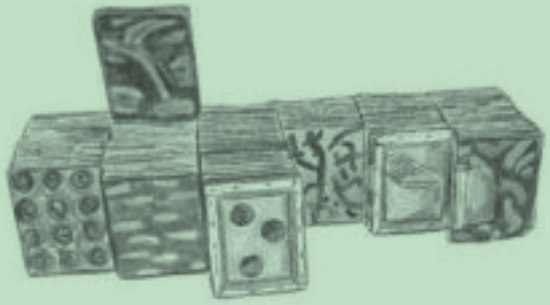
Throughout my experience as an undergraduate, studying art education, the K-12 art teachers that I observed in their classrooms seemed to have little to no interest in being an artist or creating their own work; or at the very least, never felt a need to discuss it with me, a beginning art educator. As such, I don't believe I ever had a model of how to take on such a task; of how to be both an artist and a teacher at the same time. How was I supposed to fulfil the role of both? How was I supposed to make both work without feeling as though one was being left to suffer due to lack of attention and focus?

The robust studio environments and resources that many undergraduates have access to cease to exist upon graduation, and the time to create often goes along with it. This struggle, which many art students have experienced, stayed with me for years after graduation and the excuses and challenges are all too familiar. Not enough time, no dedicated space to create, etc. I continued to look at art and talk about

art with other artist friends but truthfully, I very rarely made make my own work. This happened for several years, I was consumed with the tasks of teaching, creating "example" lessons for my students, grading assignments, displaying student work and all the other expectations that come along with K-12 teaching. I have found this to be a fairly typical tale for most K-12 teachers, beginners and veterans alike.

When I began to seriously consider returning to graduate school after a handful of years in the classroom, I knew that I wanted to pursue a program that allowed me to continue teaching but also one that would push me to begin taking myself more seriously as an artist. To get into a program like this, I knew I would need to build my portfolio but still struggled to find the time and space to work in a traditional studio setting; not to mention the cost of trying to seek out an additional studio space outside of my home. Because of this, and in an effort to reduce waste in my 6-8th grade public school classroom (that did not have a sink or running water), I decided to begin painting in my classroom using the leftover or mis-mixed acrylic paint from my students. At the end of each day, or every couple of days, I would collect the "bad" colors from students and would spend a little time after school using it up. Having studied painting as an undergraduate student, returning to painting felt safe. It was a challenge to use the unwanted colors from students and I wanted to relearn how to move paint around on a canvas. I would paint on several small, 8" x 10" store-bought canvases until the "bad" paint was gone. As I was relearning and teaching myself how to create again, it was increasingly helpful to utilize creative constraints (i.e. small canvases, colors "provided" by students, use paint until it was gone,

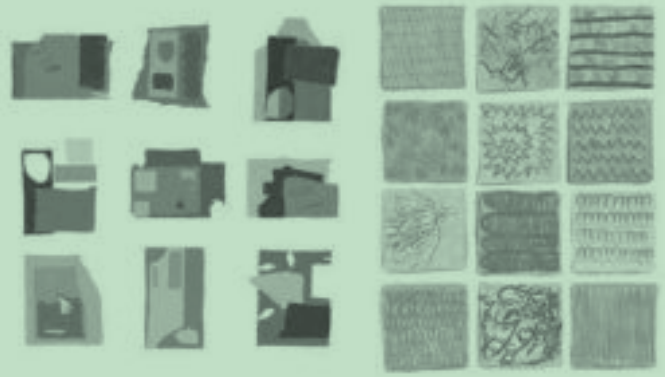
etc). Doing this was reinvigorating and it was also about this time that I was a part of a year-long professional development cohort where Jorge Lucero was one of the advising instructors.



I am certain that a writing or conversation from or with Jorge during this time shifted my thinking and I began to consider the other ways that my classroom could become material. I began to think about how I could use the time and space that I already spent in an art classroom/studio, talking about art, thinking about art, and making art, to make artwork that was my own. How could I look to complicate the line between teaching, artmaking and life? I began to collect and experiment in my classroom more and more. Acts that were necessary to provide students time and space to work, like cleaning dried paint off mixing trays, became an opportunity for me to save dried paint skins. At the end of the year, displaying all the paint skins in a shadowbox frame recontextualized the "waste" material into something new.

This challenge allowed me to further investigate all aspects of teaching. Suddenly, staff and committee meetings that had little or nothing to do with my specific art teaching, were spaces where I could make

drawings on Post-It notes with whatever drawing media was provided in the meeting (highlighters, colored pens, etc). Self-guided staff development became a space to accomplish a practical goal (sorting through the scrap collage paper in my classroom) and also to test time as a potential material (taking pieces from the scrap box and giving myself one hour to arrange colorful abstract collages, and one hour to assemble them, resulting in 47 works of art). These playful but serious explorations of possibility continued to reveal themselves to me.



During this period of illumination, I continued to read and seek out other artists working to make from the material of their daily life. Allan Kaprow writes that "what happens when you pay close attention to anything, especially routine behavior, is that it *changes.* Attention alters with is attended." (p. 236) This idea, and the history and practices of conceptual art, allowed me to merge and blend my art, teaching and life, simply by looking more closely and highlighting the often-mundane essential tasks required by teachers. Kaprow further states that "meaning" here is not only variable and unfixed but

also inventive. It is what we add, by imagination and interpretation, to what we do" (p. 239). Looking carefully and playing with the routines required by our classrooms is a way to test them as material and use the structures and objects of teaching to create.

Many of us, I think, are not intentionally blinded (like the greedy dog with its bone) but rather occupied by business and frustration. We fill our lives so full and try to do more than we have time for. This is often driven by deep-rooted capitalistic tendencies to acquire more (more wealth, status, and so on...) in the pursuit of feeling fulfilled. And although the fable with the dog and his bone highlights human nature toward greed, I think it also reminds us that we often don't realize what we are looking at. I think the lesson that we can consider as readers (and not dogs) also emphasizes our ability as creative-minded, self-reflective beings (unlike the dog), to recontextualize our pre-conceived notions and expectations and allows for us to situate our experiences in new ways. Rather than continue to be frustrated by "tasks" required to exist as an artist, teacher, son, partner, etc—and separate my art, teaching and life—I've decided to continue to seek out ways to blur the lines that separate each, leaving space for chance, play and experimentation along the way. Often the thing right in front of you can be more fulfilling than you had ever imagined and looking at it a little bit longer, or from a slightly different angle before jumping to seize it, can provide more enriching outcomes than what you thought was in front of you to begin with.

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You Are my Neighbors and I Just Want to Say HELLO

Fredric Gunve
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

I took part in a Zoomposium; it was an artist, researcher and teacher who tried to define **what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching?**
The Teacher said: —MY TEACHING IS conceptual art.
The artist said: —ALL ART is an intersection.

The researcher said: Conceptual art, is art IN THE FORM OF A SYLLABUS that instruct, direct and sets the stage, or frame if you like, to break down the dichotomized relationship between the artist/teacher as divine creator, and the audience/students as powerless receivers existing only to be transformed by the artist/teachers magical tricks.

Then a voice was heard from the back of the room —You are all right, all wrong, it's collapsing around us as we speak in this Liquid Times and Age of Uncertainty, Zygmunt Bauman said.

What's happening in the intersection between conceptual art and teaching is fusion in a moment out of time, or as Adrian Piper titled her book Out of Sight, Out of Order. Transformation will drag me down, suck you in and throw us up.... hopefully into the air again.
In the endless second of transformation everything is dead, in that moment we don't know who's who, what's up, what's down, it is conceptual art/teaching in action.

HELLO; you are my neighbors, family and friends.

1998 I was determent to go to art school, and study contemporary art at one of the major universities. It was an achievement to get accepted, only ten out of a thousand applicants were approved worthy to enter the doors into the secret world of contemporary art.
I had already been turned down twice.

Desperately I tried to figure out, what kind of art they were looking for, I borrowed books at the library, bought catalogs, talked endless with family, friends and strangers, traveled as much as my money allowed me, went to every art exhibition I could, and experimented with my own art to twist it into a conceptual art frame, that hopefully would please the professors at the art school.

I was already attending an art school in 1998, not at university-level, and not in contemporary art. It was printmaking, stone-lithography to be exact. We were taught how to draw, paint and print 2-dimensional images through the media of lithography. But I was looking for something outside of the image, beyond the relationship of artist DO—audience LOOK.

Being in an art printing context, in the beginning of the era of cheap personal computers, printers and the

internet, I did what the books and exhibitions of conceptual artists had taught me, and looked towards easy and accessible art materials.

These materials was thrilling, and not in line with the art education I was taking part of.

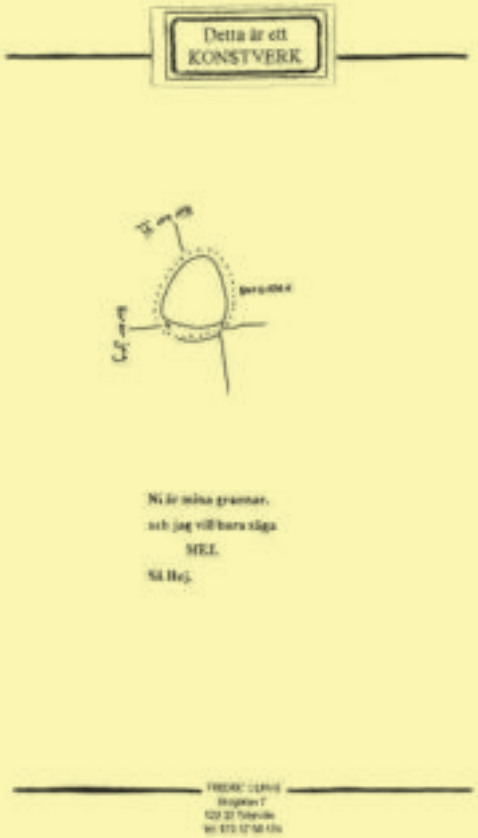
You are my neighbors, and I just want to say HELLO. So, hello.

1998 and I lived on a Cul de Sac street, you enter and exit at the same intersection, one way to lead them all. It was the year when I took a conscious leap into the void of conceptual art and teaching.
I started my own education in conceptual art and teaching by writing a key sentence on a piece of paper, later to be distributed to all my neighbors.

You are my neighbors, and I just want to say HELLO. So, hello.

I printed the paper, added a drawing of the Cul de Sac street, pointed out where I lived, and where we as neighbors lived, photocopied the picture in 58 copies, and made stickers with the words: This is A PIECE OF ART, to make sure people understood that this was art, and to make sure I myself also understood this is now part of my educational art practice, and future. The importance here being that this art was not only to transform others, but also to transform me. It was us living on the street being addressed, not just me living on my street.

On March the 10th 1998 I distributed a copy to each and every one of the 58 households on the street.



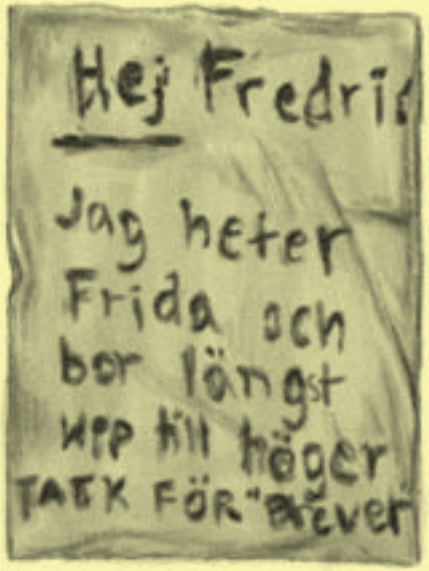
My part of the work was done.

At that moment I did not know I was by this action placing myself in the intersection where conceptual art crashes into teaching.

I had just followed an idea born out of personal necessity to define an art space for myself, experimenting with the concept of meetings, and to make an art piece that might please the professors at the academy of fine art.

I got five answers; one phone call, two people talking to me on the street, and two responses in my mailbox.

One of the answers were a drawing made on a postcard depicting a person with a hand raised in the sign of a greeting, and the text: Hello. Thanks for the incredible nice art piece



The other one was a text in blue paint written with a brush on a piece of fabric, and said:
HI Fredric My name is Frida and live top right THANKS for the "Letter"

CONNECTING THE DOTS—it's about liberation

What conceptual art brings to teaching in formal institutional educational settings such as schools and universities, is the knowing of how to create connections through unconventional means, and between unconventional parts or partners.

Conceptual art brings the element of surprises into often fairly mundane situations or objects.

Hello, you are my neighbors was never about specific learning outcomes, or artistic value.

The piece of fabric and the words written on it, and the drawing I received in my mailbox are as much art as the initiating "art piece" itself. It doesn't make any sense to talk about one being more art than the other, since it was the community building, and actions that emerged from the meetings that the HELLO created that mattered.

Conceptual artists has since the 1960s, and earlier, developed ways for people to take part in creative practices with outcomes that is not possible to know beforehand. True experiments with the potential for radical results is what conceptual art in teaching brings. These experiences is of great importance today, to be able to make connections and build relationships that can float in time of liquid modernity.

Conceptual art in teaching is a bastard, a traitor, instigator, fire starter, and liberator, and will show you what you do not want to know, if you are looking for peace and quiet—oblivion.
If your intentions are to stay safe within the borders of policy, law and order, you should never enter the intersection of conceptual art and teaching.

It's a rip in the fabric of school reality, an opening between paradigms, ethics and ideologies from where monsters are let in to the world of norms.

It is a School Fiction come alive!

Conceptual art, teach art to kids knowing there is no way to grade there results, and to be fine with that, since it is an action of rebellion. It is to be the opposition, a pedagogy against the state as Dennis Atkinson puts it so elegant in his book with the same title.

It tells you to ask a friend to shot you in the arm, not to go indoors for a year, totally trust your life in others, dress an unknown person by sending him one piece of clothing every Christmas, stuff your mouth with a bath towel and ride the bus.

It teach you there is always more than one answer to every question on the test, even if the test tells you there can only be one.

It's the education of what can be, never straight, unless told to be a curve, then it is straight as hell...

You are my neighbors, my friends and family, and I just want to say I LOVE YOU.

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Prophesy to the Bones

Anne Thulson
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Whenever I see a box that is no bigger than my hand, I pay heed to it. I hear a call and feel a sort of lift in my heart, an odd desire to collect it, a ghost reflex from my years teaching children. My students turned the boxes into tiny theaters or model cities or objects I never fully understood. As I took these boxes away from my kitchen and tucked them into my home-to-school bag, the promise of transformation thrilled me. Never again will they harbor matches, aspirin, or Band Aids. I also loved the thrift of it all and, of course, the smallness. Things no bigger than your hand have room for multitudes: many desires, many attempts, many mistakes, many collaborations, many collisions, many tiny spectacles (Bennett, 2010; Stewart, 1993).

Now I teach adults and they are more circumspect with their use of boxes. The boxes prophesy to these pre-service teachers, *You will need to foster metamorphosis! You will have no budget! You will have no storage space!* I am startled that I am still moved by how potential transformation, thrift, and smallness create meaning. Which brings me to chicken bones

Between semesters, I buy a large package of chicken wings to roast with lime, olive oil, and thyme. After dinner, I collect the bones and wash them with a stiff brush, under the kitchen faucet. When most of the gristle and meat are gone, I put the bones in the dishwasher. A few days later, I sand them smooth.

They end up as dry and forlorn as any animal bone in a F.S.A. Dust Bowl photo. And like the Dust Bowl photographer who snuck a steer skull into the corner of a farm scene to heighten the drama, I stealthily place bones into my curriculum for a good purpose. That purpose is to interrupt the continuous, sad, and sorry rituals of "doing school." Like a stray dog who wanders one day into a school room, matchboxes and bones have the power to wake us from our slumber, especially if we happen to encounter them before they become an abstraction or an acronym. (Herndon, 1971).

So, I bring the bones to school. On my office desk, I lay them out in a row and count them. *Sixteen.* I check the notes on my class roster. *Shealene is a vegan.* I reach in the back of my desk drawer and grab a rock for Shae. I put fifteen bones and one rock in a small box and shake it to hear them rattle.

And then I enter the classroom with no windows, poor ventilation, and never enough horizontal surfaces. *You will need to foster metamorphosis! You will have no budget! You will have no storage space!* My students have already settled into their seats, pens in hand, phones to the side.

OK. We are going to start using something soon as we move into curriculum writing and I need to give it to you. I want to give it to you in a certain way, so let's go outside. My students start to put on their coats.

Do we need anything?
No.
Do we need a pen?
No.
Do we need our notebooks?
You need empty hands.

We shuffle outside of our Brutalist classroom building and walk towards the trees.

Stand in a circle. No, like a real circle. This is an amoeba.
That's better.
I'm going to read you something and then give you something.
Listen, I mean no disrespect if you are Jewish or Christian.
I'm reading an ancient text from those traditions and I think it is beautiful.
I hope you'll stay with me in it.
Ready?

He set me in the middle of a valley;
it was full of bones.
He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley. The bones that were very dry.
He asked me, "can these bones live?"
And he said "Prophesy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.
So I prophesied as I was commanded.
And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.
I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them,
but there was no breath in them.
Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy,
So I prophesied, and breath entered the bones;
they came to life and stood up on their feet.
(Ezekiel 37, New International Version)

After I read this, I take out a double-sided paper containing the Colorado-State-Visual-Art Standards-Grade-Level-Expectations-At-A-Glance (or for short, the C.V.A.S.G.L.E.A.A.G) and my box of bones. I walk inside the circle from person to person, look them in the eye, hand them each the standards page and a bone and say:

Adriena, prophesy to the bones.
Lucas, prophesy to the bones.
Jessica, prophesy to the bones.
Shealene, prophesy to the bones
(but she gets a rock).
Maria, prophesy to the bones.
Will, prophesy to the bones.
Andrew, prophesy to the bones.
Dakota, prophesy to the bones.
Elea, prophesy to the bones.
Jazmyne, prophesy to the bones.
Visi, prophesy to the bones.
Alyssa, prophesy to the bones.
Claire, prophesy to the bones.
TJ, prophesy to the bones.
Stephanie, prophesy to the bones.
Julio, prophesy to the bones.

And I believe every single one of them will.

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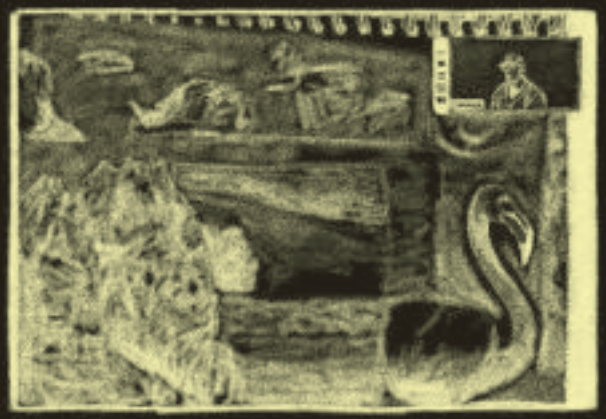
A Letter to Friends: Visual Journal as Inclusive Virtual Art Education



Sam Peck
University of Minnesota
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Dear friends,

I speak to you now from a prepared script, a performance written as a letter to you. The images shared here are from the visual journals (Scott & Modler, 2010) of my former middle school students. In sharing them with you, I hope to honor who they were and are. As a companion to these artworks, I would like to propose an imagined conception of teaching as a form of constant assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The imagined teacher is a continually morphing and changing conceptual artist.

These visual journal images act as context for how we educators *may* and *can* practice inclusive art education. This inclusivity is a challenge to the status quo and can seem daunting. I want you to see this as an opportunity to build your artistic practice as conceptual art rather than another task added to the long list of demands on teachers. This platform helps by removing curricular impediments as it acts to make space for differentiation and presents educational goals to engage and support all learners.

I propose that two concepts that are often thought of as disparate, the physically situated art practice in a studio and the conceptual art practice called post-studio, can be merged through the utilization of the visual journal. Let the visual journal be an intra-acting (Jackson, & Mazzei, 2011) reflection of teaching in form and function. Here this tool allows agency for each member of the classroom and the art itself as non-human (Barad, 2007) while also speculatively becoming a carrier bag (Le Guin, 1989) of multimodal inclusive possibilities. A post-structuralist method that, as Vagle (2015) said, "I did not sense a need to refuse one to embrace the other. Rather, I sensed an engagement in both." Here Vagle is discussing feminist and phenomenological theories, but this can also be applied to studio and post-studio practice. The two do not need to be opposed, and like Vagle proposed, the two can engage each other within the visual journal.

By utilizing the visual journal as a collaborative conceptual art/teaching practice, educators will have the advantage of a larger toolbox to draw upon to increase student engagement through differentiation. Approaches to differentiation have classically been developed to sustain students with disabilities. Once these skills are within the conceptual framework for an educator, they can provide a multiplicity of teaching methods within the classroom. Alongside a choice-based model (Douglas & Jaquith, 2018), the visual journal can give each student a place to express their knowledge differently. I advocate that educators create the opportunity for students to find the means that best fit themselves.

Teaching through virtual platforms due to the COVID-19 pandemic is challenging and developing relationships with students can consume most of your time.

The visual journal can be an excellent means to build these relationships through differentiation over time. To better understand your students, review IEPs and 504s alongside a special education teacher, counselor, social worker, or curriculum specialist. Educators must learn about their students' needs and understand their history as artists would research any other aspect of their practice. As educators, we must look beyond this as a legal requirement and instead conceive of it as part of the story you are trying to build to help students flourish as artists through your class.

Inclusion shouldn't merely be about a focus on student's abilities as a way towards removing stigmas about disabilities. It should also involve advocacy for traditionally marginalized individuals, such as LGBTQIA+, black, indigenous, and people of color within the classroom, to provide spaces for success and access. What you ask the class to do rather than what they are prohibited from doing is essential in making inclusivity actionable. Making a commitment to being antiracist (Kendi, 2019) and consistently investigating your own biases is critical, but how do you practice that in each interaction you have with students? As an educator, you can utilize the visual journal as a conceptual art performance and practice to model for students how to work through themes of inclusivity, acceptance, antiracism, and self-acceptance. This can be done by modeling not only what is in the visual journal but its curricular deployment in the classroom. The visual journal's agency for students seeks to provide a safe space for them to express themselves working without any preconceived cultural norms or expectations, thus allowing themselves to create free of societal or self-judgment. The visual journal will enable students to take up their conceptual art practice because the personal narrative

and voice made within this book aren't defined by the curriculum where barriers may exist for the unencumbered imagination (Greene, 1995). The challenge within a choice-based classroom is that you are slowly releasing kids' responsibility through them making their content. This agency's release depends on each educator's skill set, temperament, or intuition about when to let a child take the reigns or if the student needs more support—knowing where a self-reflection moment is versus when a technique needs more practice. There isn't a recipe; it's only learning through the experience of teaching in real-time that can allow for it. Facing the struggle of what a compelling resource the visual journal can be and that some students will be apathetic about it keeps the energy on the rich and robust content made possible by the visual diary despite the indifferent student's lack of engagement.

With inclusive education and an antiracist positioning, making our physical or virtual space safe is crucial. Support and advocate for your students and yourself; Hang posters on your wall that say," Gay rights are human rights", "Black Lives Matter ", etc.- Show that you are in it, and you are a part of it. Be the model for empathy, compassion, self-awareness, and self-reflection, and sharing that you are asking from them in their work. Make your classroom, whether digital or physical, a three-dimensional representation of your visual journal, reflecting who you are for the students to see, and feel safe. Engagement needs to be meaningful, and at some point, students need to take a chance, but it needs to be their decision and not merely because you asked them to.

Conceptually, how can students create work within your class and provide a safety net for making their work? Call it a blueprint for behavior management,

a guide on the side, or a set of rules. I know that's what the creator of these rules did, Sister Coretta Kent (Kent & Steward, 2008) and sometimes attributed to John Cage. I often referenced these rules when I felt stuck as an artist/educator/researcher (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008) and handed them out to students as a constant reminder.

10 RULES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Rule 1: Find a place you trust and then try trusting it for a while.
Rule 2: General duties as a student—pull everything out of your teacher; pull everything out of your fellow students.
Rule 3: General duties as a teacher—pull everything out of your students.
Rule 4: Consider everything an experiment.
Rule 5: Be Self Disciplined—this means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.
Rule 6: Nothing is a mistake. There is no win and no fail. There is only make.
Rule 7: The only rule is work. If you work, it will lead to something. It is the people who do all the work all the time who eventually catch onto things.
Rule 8: Do not try to create and analyze at the same time. They're different processes.
Rule 9: Be happy whenever you can manage it. Enjoy yourself. It is lighter than you think.
Rule 10: "We are breaking all the rules, even our own rules, and how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for X qualities." (Coretta Kent & John Cage)

Helpful Hints:

- Always Be Around. Come or go to everything.
- Always go to classes.
- Read everything you can get your hands on.
- Look at movies carefully and often.
- Save everything—it may come in handy later.

Here, my friends, I'd like to end where we began: imagining teaching and learning as an assemblage, pliable, and capable of the changes we propose or make within it. Teaching and learning is an amorphous cloud that changes as much by our thoughts as it is by our actions. Not the rules set upon us as chains or restrictions but rather a freeing openness because of the creative opportunities it provides, an opening up. This space of uncertainty needs embracing; it calls for a hug. Breathe in your imagination; breath out in the calm necessary to stay steady amongst your sensed excitement of the coming journey and its potential joy. Both the visual journal and choice-based art education live in this space, but once adopted, can provide room for the "osmosis between intellect and intuition" (Popova, 2015). I end here with a quote from poet Rainer Maria Rilke in Letters to a Young Poet (1903, pp. 34-35),

"...I want to beg you, as much as I can, dear sir, to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to *love the questions themselves* like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them..."

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The Radical Relationality of Art, Research, and Pedagogy

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In taking up the question 'what happens at the intersection of conceptual art and teaching,' I want to turn our attention to the intersection or the *conjunctive*. The conjunctive: with-ness, collaboration, reciprocity, relationality, and an ethics of care. These conditions of the conjunctive, or what I call *feltness*, are deeply embedded and entwined in my doings of art, research, and pedagogy, or more specifically the practice of research-creation (eg. Springgay, 2019; 2020). This feltness, shifts research and pedagogy to become a practice of intimacy. I have unpacked feltness and intimacy at great length in previous publications, drawing on feminist theories of touch and relationality, the practice of hand felting, affect theory, and queer theory. Likewise, I have published extensively on the practice and value of research-creation (eg. Springgay, 2020; Springgay & Truman, 2018; 2019a). Provoked in part by Jorge's question, and our current moment and the crisis of isolation, in this short paper, I want to focus on, and explore the conjunctive, or what I call feltness.

The conjunctive, Owen Chapman (2019) writes, "invites the juxtaposition of other terms, concepts, and categories" (p. xvi). Erin Manning and Brian Massumi (2014) consider the conjunctive as crucial in formulating an understanding and practice of research-creation. The conjunctive they write is "a mutual interpenetration of processes rather than a communication of products" (p. 88-89). Research-creation taken as a conjunctive whole becomes a "thinking-in-action" and a "practice in its own right" (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 89) as opposed to the combination of distinct disciplines where each discipline remains intact (Loveless, 2019). For Manning and Massumi research-creation is experimental and catalyzes emergent events. Similarly, the proposition 'with' is used to indicate associations and connections between entities (Springgay & Truman, 2019b). However, with is more than merely additive (it is not a + sign); it is ethico-political (in)tensions brought to bear on research-creation. As such *with* is a milieu; an active set of relations that are composed of dimensions and vibrations that materialize a moment of space-time. If research-creation is composed in the conjunctive of response-able relations, as a practice of intimacy, then we can ask: *What grows and emerges within such a place?*

Returning to the conditions of the conjunctive; its feltness: relationality, reciprocity, and an ethics of care demands that we ask complex questions about what it means to be in relation; to conjoin or collaborate. How are relations composed and sustained over time? How are all bodies in relation being accounted for, attuned to, and offered something for their contribution/labour of being in relation? Jennifer Nash's (2019) scholarship on Black feminisms and intersectionality might be of help here. Writing about the ways that intersectionality

has become emptied of its reference to black feminist thought, intersectionality, Nash contends, has been used to incite an inclusive feminism but in doing so it has become "both over determined and emptied of any specific meaning" (p. 18). Sarah E. Truman elaborates on something similar in her bibliographic entry on feminist new materialisms. She writes (2019) "the relationships scholars build with concepts and research that they cite is part of a feminist praxis. In other words, it is not feminist new materialism to read a piece of data diffractively, unless one also takes into account the diffractive production of intersectional politics" (p. 8). Thus, simply stating that things are composed in relation doesn't get at the heart of a research-creation practice attuned to feminist ethics and politics. The conjunctive, I remind you, is not additive, it is not a plus (+) sign, or **performative inclusion**. Rather this is radical relationality that is consensual, nurturing, and intimate and that foregrounds reciprocity, kinship and care (Recollet & Johnson, 2020). As a relational practice then the conjunctive between art and pedagogy, or art, research, and pedagogy becomes collective work in undoing white supremacy. With this in mind the conjunction becomes a space *to do* feminist, queer, anti-racist, anti-ableist, and anti-colonial work.

At *WalkingLab* (www.walkinglab.org), which I co-direct with Sarah E. Truman, we have been thinking about troubling the normative ways that walking is approached through oblique contours. This means that the place where the walking event takes place and the concepts activated on the walk need to materialize oblique relations. For example, one of the ways we approach this is through what we call a 'queer walking tour.' Conventional walking tours can reinforce dominant histories, memories, power relations,

and normative or fixed understandings of place. This place-based knowledge can serve various forms of governance or ideology and maintain the status quo, including the ongoing violence of settler colonization and erasure of racialized, gendered, and disabled bodies. Queer walking tours are situated (they happen in a specific location and attend to that location) but simultaneously are 'out of place' (meaning that they defamiliarize how diverse publics attune to place and concepts) (Truman & Springgay, 2019). For example, *The Bank The Mine The Colony The Crime* was a queer walking tour in Toronto's financial district that included lectures and performances on Canada's legal, financial, and genocidal implicatedness in extractive economies. The walking tour exposed the racialization of geology and its implications in ongoing slavery and genocide.

In my ongoing research-creation project *The Pedagogical Impulse* (www.thepedagogicalimpulse.com) the commitment to radical relationality materializes in the *Instant Class Kit* a mobile curriculum guide and socially-engaged art work that contains work by 14 contemporary artists. *Instant Class Kit,* produced as an edition of four, brings together contemporary curriculum materials in the form of artist multiples such as zines, scores, games, newspapers and other sensory objects from a diverse group of artist-educators across North America (Miles & Springgay, 2019; Springgay, Truman, & McClean, 2019). The lessons, syllabi and classroom activities produced by this new generation of artists address topics and methodologies including queer subjectivities and Indigenous epistemologies, social movements and collective protest, immigration, technology, and ecology. The kits, circulate to postsecondary classrooms, where they are handled, touched, and cared for.

We are currently developing online curricula for use of the kit during COVID. Some of the kit contents include:

Anthea Black's *Keep Queering the Syllabus,* is a 16-page zine that contains biographies and information on Queer and Trans artists; the *Celebrate People's History Posters* are rooted in the DIY tradition of mass-produced political propaganda. They bring moments in the history of social justice struggles to life such as the fight for LGBTQ rights, Black liberation, and labour reform. The People's Kitchen Collective *Kitchen Remedies* invites participants to bring the stories, traditions and wisdom of our elders and ancestors into the kitchen. Small pouches with food ingredients ask activators to smell and put their noses and memories to work. The collective seeks remedies for everything from upset stomachs to the patriarchy (because we know that these are, in fact, connected). Ingredients hold stories of our resilience. *Kitchen Remedies* operates via this turn to affect and sensation, with food as the medium for memory and knowledge. Black Trans activist Syrus Ware's *Activist Love Letters* is similarly committed to an ethics of care. It asks participants to think about their role in sustaining a movement and supporting their communities. Indigenous artist Tania Willard's *Bush Manifesto* etched into a piece of living birchbark asks how gallery systems and art practices might be transformed by Indigenous knowledges, aesthetics, and land use. It is a practice of stewardship and decolonization that centres Indigenous knowledges and creative land practices.

Currently, I am turning my research-creation practice to my new role as the Director of the School of the Arts, at McMaster University. I want to think of academic leadership as a conjunctive practice that takes seriously radical relationality. What does it mean

to ‘direct’ as a research-creation practice guided by feltness? How can ‘we’—the faculty, students, and the Hamilton arts community—collectively, conjunctively, challenge systemic institutional racism, ableism, and colonialism; and how might we do that as a research-creation practice committed to radical relationality?

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Associate Professor of Teaching + Learning at The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

& BROOKE HOFSESS

Appalachian State University, Boone, NC

Mindi Rhoades: I use arts-based approaches to research, teaching, learning, and activism. I love to play with materials + ideas. I have a high tolerance for chaos. I'm fine delaying or denying closure. I am unafraid of nonsense, foolishness, and failure. I love disruption. I am interested in seeing where things might go. I hate bios. **Brooke Anne Hofsess** is an associate professor of art education at Appalachian State University. Her research contemplates teacher education and renewal through her creative practices in papermaking, book arts, and photography. She is the author of *Unfolding Afterglow: Letters and Conversations on Teacher Renewal.*

ROSS ROADRUCK

Art and Design Teacher, Leroy Greene Academy, Sacramento, CA

Ross is an artist and teacher living and working in California. He teaches art and design to 6-12th grade students in Sacramento and is the Co-Founder of Social Studies Residency, an Artists-in-Residence program in rural Colusa County, California.

SAMUEL D. ROCHA

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Samuel D. Rocha is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia.

ALLISON ROWE

PhD Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Iowa, IA

Allison Rowe is an interdisciplinary artist, educator, and researcher. Her artistic work attempts to re-personalize political discourses, exploring the possibilities that exist in this transitional process. Allison is also the Program Coordinator of Art Education at the University of Iowa.

ROSS H. SCHLEMMER

Visiting Lecturer, Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA

His work as an artist, a researcher, and a teacher considers the social geographies of communities that often lie in conflict and contradiction—and how socially-engaged art and education can serve as a catalyst to mediate dialogues in those spaces.

HEATH SCHULTZ

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Heath Schultz is an assistant professor of art at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. You can view his work at heathschultz.com.

NATHAN SHACKELFORD

St. Charles East High School, St. Charles, IL

Graduate of Biola University (LaMirada, CA) and Northern Illinois University (DeKalb, IL)—Nathan has been collaborating with high school artists for 25 years, and outside of work he explores natural things, and enjoys family. Nathan's main interests relate to growing, fermenting, baking, slurping, and eating. Instagram: @nshack

STEPHANIE SPRINGGAY

Director, School of the Arts & Associate Professor, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada

Stephanie Springgay is a leading scholar of research-creation with a focus on walking, affect, queer theory, and contemporary art as pedagogy. She directs the SSHRC-funded research-creation project The Pedagogical Impulse which explores the intersections between contemporary art and pedagogy, and WalkingLab—an international network of artists and scholars committed to critical approaches to walking methods. She has published widely on contemporary art, curriculum studies, and research-creation.
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ALBERT STABLER

PhD Assistant Professor of Art Education, Graduate Program Coordinator, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Affiliate Faculty, Wonsook Kim School of Art, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Albert Stabler has over 25 years of experience in arts-related teaching, writing, and community work. He began publishing writing on conceptual art, school, race, and incarceration while in graduate school, and has moved into reading, research, and writing on disability politics and culture as an early-career faculty member.

ANNE THULSON

Associate Professor of Art Education at Metropolitan State University of Denver

Anne uses her 20 years of experience teaching contemporary art to children to teach others what she learned. She makes art through traditional and post-studio methods, and views teaching as a conceptual art practice.

SUE UHLIG

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, Lecturer at Purdue University; PhD candidate, Penn State University

As a lecturer at Purdue University Sue Uhlig enjoys teaching online classes in art appreciation. Her PhD research addresses collecting and social practice using a research-creation approach.

A note on the type

This book is set in two typefaces. The typeface used for the titles is Open Dyslexic Bold by Abelardo Gonzalez. It is created to help dyslexic readers: bottom heavy and unique character shapes make it more difficult to confuse letters. The typeface for the running text is Junka Medium by Karel Martens and Jungmyung Lee: a grotesk font somewhere between Akzidenz-Grotesk, Helvetica and Univers.

A note on the paper

The book is printed on 6 different colours of paper (80 grams Clairfontaine Trophee) changing according to the rythm of the printing sheets.

Colophon

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Jorge Lucero and Catalina Hernández-Cabal

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Research Group Arts Education
The Research Group Arts Education of the Amsterdam University of the Arts focuses on knowledge development and education development in the field of arts education. The Research Group is headed by Melissa Bremmer and Emiel Heijnen.

www.ahk.nl/en/research/

We didn't want to make a book, we wanted to make an artwork; and yes—we attempted the conceptualist's mental calisthenic to make it *not a book*—but here we are: sequential pages, written words, composed—mostly linear—ideas; commissioned design and illustrations, paper and ink considerations, print (both the thing and the action), a title, noted contributors, distribution, editing and citational conventions, and two introductions!

This *is* a book. You'll hear us call it that.

What Happens at the Intersection of Conceptual Art and Teaching? was first a live, six-hour and ten-minute marathon zoomposium held on August 15, 2020. With contributions from thirty-nine artists, researchers, and teachers at every level and kind of institution in Poland, Canada, Korea, Mexico, Colombia, Sweden and the United States.

Jorge Lucero is an artist from Chicago. He serves as Associate Professor and Chair of Art Education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Catalina Hernández-Cabal is a Colombian-American movement researcher, artist, scholar and educator. Currently she is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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