

Charles University, Prague
Faculty of Education

**THE TEXTURE OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH:
A SELF-REFLEXIVE PRACTICE THEORY
OF ART AS EDUCATION**

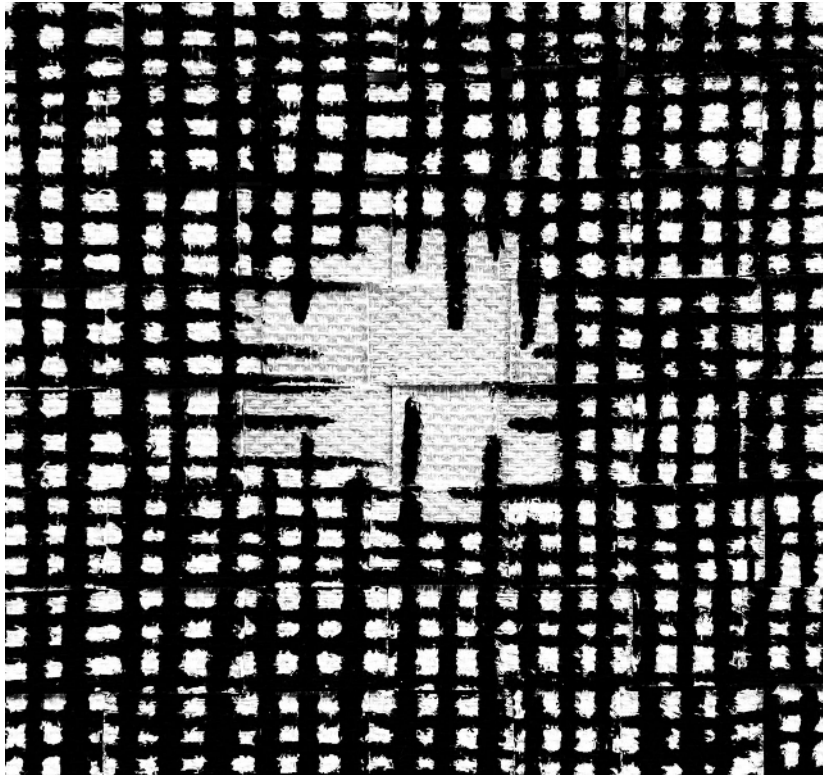


Figure 72. *(W)hole.*

Charles University, Prague
Faculty of Education

Ph.D. Didactics of Art Education
Faculty of Art Education

The Texture of Artistic Research:
A Self-Reflexive Practice Theory of Art as Education
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Prague, November 2023

Defence on:

Acknowledgements

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Abstract In English

This research delves into the transformative potential of *Artistic Research* when utilised by a teaching artist in educational environments. It traces its developmental trajectory from Bachelor to Doctoral levels, exploring its integration into design curricula. The study aims to generate new insights for both teaching artists and students, seeking to connect Artistic Research and pedagogy by incorporating perspectives from sociology, phenomenology, and educational theory. The methodology employed is *Artistic Action Research* in combination with a *Research In Didactics Model* to analyse the three case studies. The results underscore the enhancement of educational experiences through Artistic Research, promoting a self-reflexive approach for teaching artists and advocating for a research-based educational paradigm.

Keywords: Artistic Research, Teaching Artist, Self-Reflexivity, Practice Theory.

Abstract In Czech

Tato studie zkoumá transformační potenciál *uměleckého výzkumu*, když je aplikován učícím se umělcem ve vzdělávacím prostředí. Jak můžeme porozumět metodologii uměleckého výzkumu aplikované učícím se umělcem ve třídě střední školy? Studie sleduje její původ od bakalářského studia přes magisterské až po doktorské studium. Investigace její implementaci do kurikula designu s cílem vytvořit nové poznatky pro učícího se umělce a studenty. Cílem studie je propojit umělecký výzkum a pedagogiku, čerpajíc z oblastí sociologie, fenomenologie a teorie vzdělávání. Použitou metodologií je Umělecký akční výzkum ve spojení s modelem Výzkumu v didaktice k analýze tří případových studií. Výsledky zdůrazňují obohacení vzdělávacích zkušeností prostřednictvím uměleckého výzkumu, podporují reflexivní přístup učících se umělců a obhajují výzkumný přístup ve vzdělávání.

Klíčová slova: Umělecký výzkum, Učící se umělec, Sebereflexe, teorie praxe.

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De Montaigne, M. (1985) *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*.(D.M. Frame Trans.). Stanford University Press. p. 818.

Glossary

Art (Visual Art Subject)

A school subject taught from the ages 3-18. Visual Art refers to the creation and production of visual works of art, such as painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, and photography. It involves the use of various mediums and techniques to express ideas, emotions, and creativity.

Art Education (degree/training)

Is the study and teaching of art. A bachelor, post-graduate and or master's degree that offers training that links *art practice* (material knowledge, artistic techniques, design basics, mediums, concept development) and Education, scientifically examining all teaching and learning aspects (learning theories, didactics, art-based methodologies, pedagogic theories). The completion of an Art Education degree provides professionalisation for occupations at the intersection of art and education, or the opportunity to teach in pre, primary and secondary school.

Secondary School Design Education

Design education refers to the instructional activities, curriculum, and learning experiences provided to students at the secondary or high school level, typically between the ages of 12 and 18. This educational domain encompasses various design disciplines, including graphic design, industrial design, fashion design, and other creative fields. The focus is on nurturing students' logical and creative thinking, problem-solving skills, and design abilities. The curriculum often includes both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The goal is to foster a comprehensive understanding of design and gestalt principles, techniques, and applications while encouraging innovation and pragmatic outcomes.

Art Teacher

A non-specialist teacher, with a professional qualification to teach any subject, but is assigned to teach art. Art teacher with no specialist art training, and has limited knowledge of art and design materials and techniques, and they do not have their own creative studio art-making practice.

Teaching Artist (Artist-Teacher)

An individual who practises making art and teaching and is dedicated to both activities as a practitioner. Thornton, A.(2013) *Artist, Researcher, Teacher: A Study of Professional identity in Art Education*. Bristol/Chicago Intellect. p . 89

Theory

“A theory is exactly like a box of tools. It has nothing to do with the signifier. It must be useful. It must function”. Foucault, M. & Deleuze, G. (1977). *Intellectuals and Power In Bouchard, D.F. (Ed). Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Cornell University Press. p. 208

“The word ‘theory’ derives from the Greek ‘theoria’, which has the same root as ‘theatre’, in a word meaning ‘to view’ or ‘to make a spectacle’. Thus, it might be said that a theory is primarily a form of *insight*, i.e. a way of looking at the world, and not a form of knowledge of how the world is”.

Bohm, D. (1980) *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. Routledge. p. 4

Research

“Any creative systematic activity undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications. UNESCO definition”. *OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms*, 2008.

Practice-Based Research

A novel inquiry conducted to acquire fresh insights, incorporating both practical engagement and the resultant experiences derived from such engagement.

Candy, L., & Edmonds, E. A. (2018) *Practice-Based Research in the Creative Arts: Foundations and Futures from the Front Line. Leonardo*, 51(1), 63-69. DOI: 10.1162/LEON_a_01471. p 6.

Art-Based Research

Is a form of formal qualitative investigation employing creative methods to comprehend and express the subjectivity of human experience.

Artistic Research

To transmit and convey content embedded in aesthetic encounters, enacted through creative processes, and embodied in artistic outcomes. Artistic practice serves not only as the outcome of the research but also as its methodological vehicle, unfolding through the acts of creation and performance. Borgdorff, H. (2011) *The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research*. In: Biggs, M. and Karlsson, H. (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*. New York: Routledge. pp. 45 46.

The combination of Practical action (the making) and theoretical reflection (the thinking). The one cannot exist without the other, in the same way thought and action are inextricably linked in artistic practice. Wesseling, J.(Ed). (2011). *See It Again, Say It Again: The Artist as Researcher*. Valiz.

Reflexivity

Engaging in reflection on the formation and reformation of our identities is a vital aspect of our ethical conduct. A heightened consciousness of self-awareness is an essential quality for artists and educators venturing into the realm of education. Reflexivity enables us to observe the interconnection of identities, prompting us to scrutinise how institutional requirements influence our pedagogical approaches and sometimes diverge from our values. McLeod, H., Badenhorst, C. and Toll, H. (2018) *Reflexive Inquiry, Artistic Selves, and Epistemological Expansion*. pp. 50. In Lyle, E. (Ed)(2018) *The Negotiated Self: Employing Reflexive Inquiry to Explore Teacher Identity*. Brill Sense.

Self-Reflexivity

Self-reflexivity involves a specific knowledge (theory or subject) surpassing the knowledge that gave rise to it (discipline itself or researcher), forming the central epistemological and methodological discourse on the meaning and the feasibility of scientific objectivity in the field. Its significance spans the entire spectrum from reflection and self-reference to self-reflectiveness.

Popoveniuc, B. *Self Reflexivity: The ultimate end of knowledge. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 163, p. 204-213.

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FIBRE

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement

When an artist decides to enter the teaching profession, it is crucial to maintain an ongoing dialogue between *theory* and *practice*. In other words, their *practice as an artist* and their *professional teaching practice*. The study aims to unravel the transformative potential of *Artistic Research* when implemented in an *educational context*. It questions how an artist becoming a teacher can position this research act within a secondary school design curriculum and classroom setting, to conform to the research goal of creating new knowledge within the teaching artist and the students.

The study aims to bring a closer connection between two domains: *Artistic Research* and *Pedagogic Practice*. The proposed practice theory was informed by the analyses of three case studies, and takes on a systematic approach of didactic reflection on past educational experiences, with each case leading to the critical notion of practice as a *reflexive learning* process. The three case studies describe pedagogic activities implemented in the three levels of the Bologna higher education system, in a Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degree. The theoretical framework draws from the fields of Sociology, Phenomenology and Educational Theory which supported the research and practical process of this study. In the context of this dissertation the *texture* is treated as a result of *time* and *transformation*, and there is interplay between the etymological crossovers of the materiality of the mediums *texere* (to weave), *text*, *texture*, and *textiles*.

The study will argue that if an artist who enters the professional field of becoming a teacher implements an Artistic Research approach, it can allow for an enriching and sustaining practice where the *pedagogic act* can become equivalent to that of the *work of art*. In turn, an enriching

practice of a teacher positively influences the creation of quality pedagogic acts, which is essential to fulfilling the students' learning needs of today.

If the study succeeds in its aims, it will firstly advance how teaching artists could develop a self-reflexive approach towards their practice, to enable a more cohesive interplay between their educational theory and artistic practice. Secondly, this study will also contribute to how the implementation of *Artistic Research* methods can ultimately lead to a more research-based educational approach.

1.2. Dissecting the Title

It is worth spending time considering the title of this dissertation, as it encapsulates pivotal themes woven throughout the study. Firstly, the *Texture*, in simple terms, is the result of *time*. The same way in which textures are formed in nature due to exposure to several conditional experiences over time, so does this study serve as the textured result of an investigation that took place for over a decade of dedication to Artistic Research. Additionally, the artistic instances explored in the dissertation delve into the New Materialist and etymological implications of "Texere," the Latin verb for "to weave," highlighting the interconnectedness of the concepts of text, texture, and textile. The idea of tactility serves as the foundational analogical framework for all the artistic research projects conducted in the course of this study.

The *texture* of Artistic Research is formed through the evolution and the metamorphosis of Artistic Research as it is traced through the Bologna, three-cycle higher education system consisting of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees. It aims to show how **Artistic Research** can transcend its former limits, not only providing per definition - the capacity to set forth a theoretical context for the artistic and creative process to contribute to the production of knowledge (Slager, 2015), but when implemented in a classroom setting, it allows for the educative moment to appear inside the work of the (teaching) artist (Biesta, 2020).

To work towards the notion of *art as education*, with the dual aim of creating new knowledge within the teacher and student, the teaching artist has to engage in a self-reflexive manner towards the creative process and outcomes of the students. Here we turn to John Dewey (1934, p. 106), who states that when an artist has a **self-reflexive** stance towards a creative process, the (teaching) artist becomes the creator and the receiver. The reflexive knowledge allows theory to emerge from a "reflexive **practice** at the same time that practice is informed by **theory**" (Bolt, 2007: 29).

1.3. Dissertation Framework

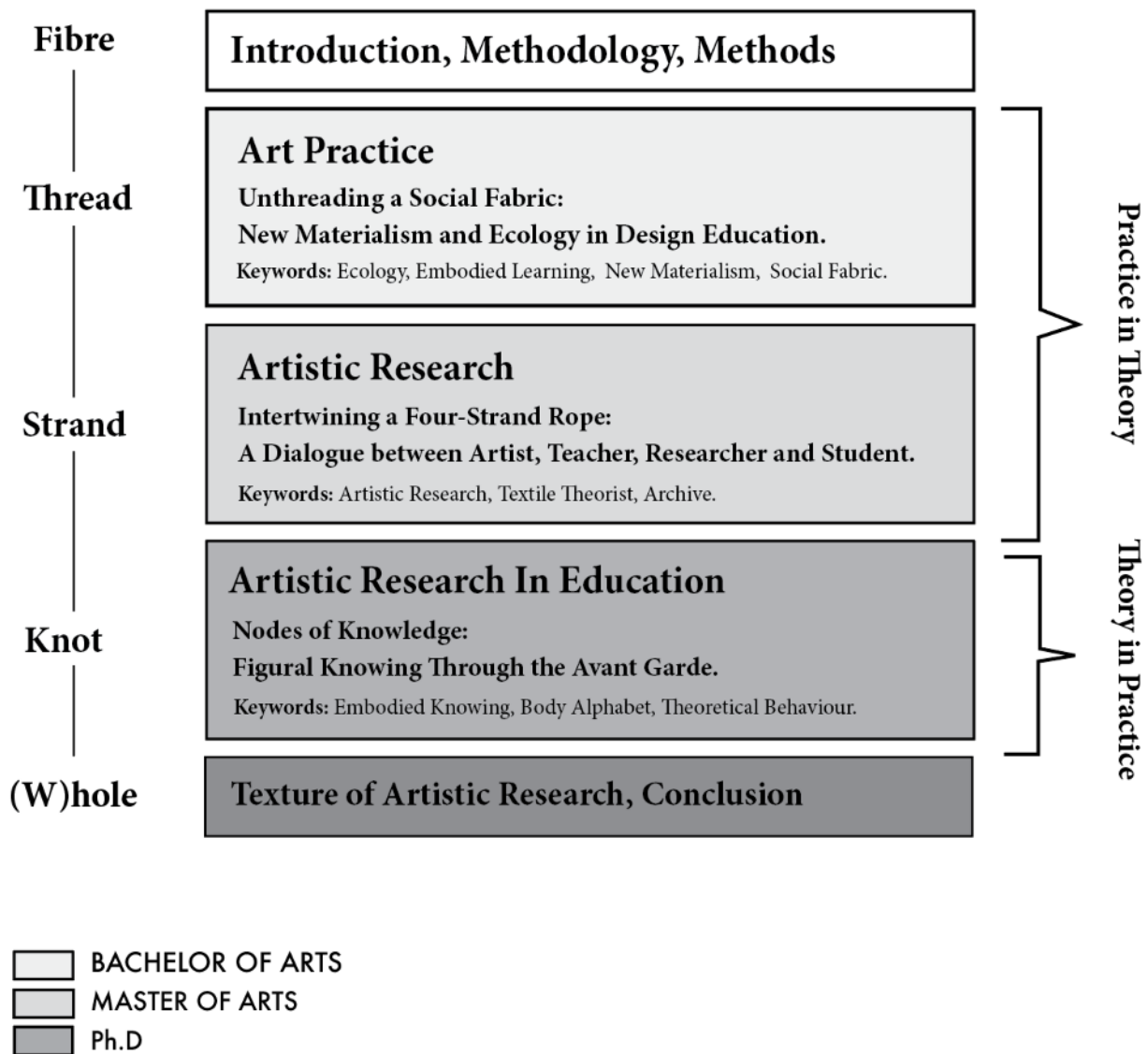


Figure 1: Dissertation Framework

Each segment of the dissertation—fibre, thread, strand, knot, and (w)hole (Figure 1)—aligns figuratively with the structural components of a rope. As a result, each successive chapter plays a crucial role in connecting the physical makeup of a rope to the theoretical content. Simply put, the conceptual structure of the dissertation, the essence of the research, and the writing process were guided by the truth of material understanding.

This dissertation relies on a retrospective view of past educational experiences. It asks the question of how to uncover how Artistic Research behaviour in an educational context (**Case Study: Knot**) could be understood. Employing systematic didactic reflection, it underscores Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *Habitus*, emphasising the active presence of pre-existing structures derived from past practices (**Case Study: Thread and Strand**).

The aim to interrelate *theory* and *practice* is reflected in the structure of the dissertation. The dissertation is divided into two main sections. **Part I: Practice In Theory** scripts two case studies, analysing *practice* through an in-depth *theoretical* lens. The **first case study, Thread**, analyses the practice of the didactical implications of a final year honours **Bachelor in Art** degree, with a specific pathway of Visual Communication Design. The chapter unthreads the didactic elements of a community-based design curriculum in South Africa. It is aimed at asserting that New Materialist approaches and embodied learning are deeply rooted in ecological theory and serve to be the most influential school of practised thought to overcome dualist doctrines. The transition from a Bachelor's to a Master's degree, points to the important level of transition from *Artistic Practice* to *Artistic Research* and the emergence of *theory* and *practice* connections.

The **second case study, Strand** delves into the implementation of Artistic Research by an artist, teacher, and researcher, illustrating how *pedagogy becomes a work of art*. Notably, the concept of art takes on a dual significance as the artworks created by the teacher and the student are integrated within the didactic context. Within this chapter, particular parts of the dialogue are included to emphasise the teacher-student relationship. The dialogue between the former student and teacher, retrospectively explores their shared journey during a **Master's in Art**, degree program. Moments of Schön's (1983) Reflection-In-Action, Reflection-On-Action and Bourdieu's (1990) Reflexive Learning are incorporated. Ultimately, this chapter elucidates the performative nature of *theory* and its activation in *practice* and how a reflexive stance towards one's formative education can later influence and form part of one's dispositions, frameworks, and patterns of thinking and action as a teaching artist.

Part II: Theory in Practice takes all the *theoretical* findings from **Part I** and applies them in *practice*. In the **third case study, Knot**, the artist takes on the role of a teacher and artistic researcher. The case study showcases the phenomenological, pre-reflective and pre-reflexive didactic process, in a classroom context. It aims to show how the teaching artist is not always conscious of the complexity, richness and hidden significance in what we might call the *pedagogic work of art*. The

effect of the process and outcome illustrates that for the teaching artist, there is no difference between research process, thinking and application when creating an *artwork* or a *pedagogic project*. The case study attempts to answer the research question of how a practice theory of *Artistic Research* can thrive *pedagogically* and *artistically*. Furthermore, the study showcases an experimental, inventive and practical approach, where the *artist-teacher* fuses the *artistic act* with a scene of *teaching*. The artistic behaviour takes risks and is filled with moments of intuitive thinking for the teacher and the students, aimed to guide students to become critical thinkers and perceptive viewers. The study also serves as an example to challenge the nature of the *practice* of a practice-based PhD, as it should naturally contribute to the field of education when an artist decides to become a teacher at this level of education.

1.4. Research Problem

Limits of Reflection

Every artist engages in *research* during their creative process by drawing inspiration from theory, observations, materials, and techniques. However, when an artist enters academia to conduct *research through practice*, especially at the PhD level, the parameters defining what constitutes practice and *research*, as well as the potential *forms* it may take, undergo significant expansion. Fulkova (2019) highlights this instance, as the work of artists takes on new forms, and are often experimental acts through which the artist takes on the role of social worker, activist or *teacher*.

A central problem that this study aims to address is the fact that at doctorate level of education we often reach a saturation point of *reflection*, and are yet to arrive at the optimum level of *self-reflexivity*. “When reflection is conceived as a process of looking back alone, it may not improve pedagogy/practice. The assumption that reflection is an objective and rational act is misleading and maintains teachers in isolated positions”. (Taylor Webb cited in Burgess, 2001, p. 89). Bourdieu characterises this reflection as the *epistemology of the individual*, a form of reflection that neglects the social and cultural elements and values shaping the construction of subjectivities. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2002).

James Elkins has followed the literature surrounding practice-based PhDs in different countries, and even published a book¹ on the topic. Elkins (2015) strongly advocates the value of self-reflexivity. At the Conference “Educational Turn and the Avant Garde” at Black Mountain College, Elkins (2015)

¹ See Elkins, J. (Ed.) (2009) *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*. New Academia.

gave a seminal keynote speech entitled: *What is Research?* He concluded his talk with a fundamental principle that forms one of the main arguments for this dissertation. Elkins highlighted the theme of *self-reflexivity* within practice-led doctoral programs, particularly emphasising its significance and under-theorised nature in practice-led programs. He proclaims that:

If you start as a young artist and stay in school long enough to continue to get a PhD in practice-led art, you are necessarily becoming more and more self-reflexive.

In other words, you are becoming more and more self-aware of your practice. You are necessarily articulating it better and better to yourself and to others, and that is written into the rubrics and assessment criteria of PhD programs. But it begs a very important question, and that is that it makes the assumption that the PhD takes you to an *optimum level of self-reflection*, which for the production of interesting, good, new art, however you want to qualify that, - seems to me to be very problematic, because the history of artist is full of artist that *could not talk about their work at all* and no matter how much you paid them, they would not be able to say what in the world they were thinking. So, the correlation is dubious. And then, since we are all good post-structuralist for several generations now, it should be very problematic to every teacher and administrator that a more acute self-reflexivity creates a better art. And that is the tacit assumption built into these programs. None of them that I know of have figured out a way to make an artist *less reflective as they go along and get their doctorate*.

Reflection to Reflexivity

It is important for teaching artists to develop an understanding of *epistemic reflexivity*, as defined by Bourdieu (1997) as a reflexivity whose primary target is not individual analysis, individual subjectivity or self-reflection, but a recognition of the social and intellectual unconscious embedded in practice. This can be reached most effectively through collective enterprise rather than through the struggles of the ‘lone academic’ or creative practitioner constrained by *passionate attachments* (Burgess, 2010, p. 92). Even when the artist works on their own as Dewey (1934) points out - there is still room to take the third person point of view, and become aware of the knowledge that overcomes the knowledge of what the artwork originally produced. Wesseling (2011, p. 4) backs up this idea that within the framework of research for PhD in the field of a practice-based research, that research should not merely be the advancement of the level of one’s personal work- “but for art in a broader sense as well”. Slager (2014) supports this concept, asserting that research entails a specific ethical responsibility, involving investigation for the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of the world

or for the sake of improving the world. Both these statements coincide with what Biesta (2017) claims as one of the biggest issues with society that deprives us of being *In and with the World* as he uses the terms *egological crises*, where we are still too much self-centred and fixed in the realm of our own egos and importance of the individual subjective point of view. *Artistic Research* endeavours should extend further than the personal, and subjective artistic development, not aimed at the artist's own oeuvre often intended for gallery spectatorship, which has privileged and limited access and significance for the wider research context.

Artists continuing with their education to obtain a Master's or Doctorate level in practice-based research degrees and entering the field of education, need to shift from their egoistic and reclusive studio practice to engaging more *reflexively* towards their practice. This means you are developing a dynamic dialogue between an art practice (studio practice in art; design and craft; personal expression) and an educational practice (classroom setting; learning theories; pedagogic concepts). This not to say that because of the newly adopted practice of a teacher, you should neglect your studio practice, but this study aims to show that it is crucial to develop a dialogue between your artistic *theory* and *practice* and your developing educational *theory* and *practice*.

Deciding to work in education signals a desire to prioritise and value the educational needs of young learners. The fact that you have chosen this field, portrays that you've experienced the transformative potential of art in education and would like to facilitate learners to explore the value of an enriched aesthetic awareness and sensibility, problem-solving, making connections between concepts, logical thinking, research and creative thinking skills, to name but a few of the power of thinking and working through art.

Teaching artists who fail to develop a dynamic dialogue between their artistic practice and educational theory, ends up creating a curriculum framework based on the outdated Fine Art Studio model, as well as adopting a series of recipes and "exam safe procedures that have culminated in a set of reproductive practices known as school art" (Addison, 2010, p. 45). This recipe ensures 'excellence', but it also militates against the development of creative and inquiry-based learning (Addison, 2010). Furthermore, if we claim this as our practice we lose out on the essence of what Biesta (2013) calls the 'Beautiful Risk' Art education has to offer. The risks we take can allow for moments of rich, intuitive acts, filled with valuable, unexpected and rich experiences within the teacher and student. Biesta (2013, p. x) proclaims that the essential 'risks' we need to take as educators - and which are already inherent in art and artistic research practices - are not to be seen as

the *weakness of education*, “but should rather be understood as the very dimension that makes educational processes and practices *educational*.” (p. x).

1.5. Research Question

To what extent can a *pedagogic act* become equivalent to a *work of art*?

Secondary Research Questions

- How do teaching artists develop a closer relationship between their *art practice* and *teaching practice*?
- What parallels can we draw between the process of creating an *artwork* and a *pedagogic act*?
- To what extent can we position *Artistic Research* acts within classroom settings, to conform to the research goal of creating new knowledge within the *teacher* and *student*?
- How can we build bridges between *theory* and *practice*?
- How can one implement a practice theory that allows for *Artistic Research* in education to thrive, *pedagogically* and *artistically*?
- Can we explore the potential *artistic* and *knowledge-based* outcomes of art-based PhD. projects, extending beyond traditional gallery and exhibition contexts?
- Can we develop a pragmatic framework for pre-service teachers to incorporate an artistic research methodology into their teaching practices?
- What benefits and difficulties eventuate from maintaining artistic and pedagogic practice?
- How do we systematically implement a methodology to enable a pedagogic act to become equivalent to that of a *work of art*, but not to lose the essence of the intuitive nature of artistic research?
- How can we build bridges between *Artistic Research* and *Educational Research*?

1.6. Intention of Study

The aim of this empirical study is to methodologically formulate a practice theory of how *Artistic Research* is conducted within an educational setting. If the study succeeds in its aims, it will first advance how Teaching Artists could develop a self-reflexive approach towards their practice, to enable a more cohesive interplay between their artistic *theory* and pedagogic *practice*. Secondly, this study will also contribute to how non-artist art teachers could implement *Artistic Research* methods in classroom settings, ultimately leading to a more research-based educational approach infused with

artistic thinking strategies. Finally, although this dissertation is a theoretical lens, in the form of *text*, it aims to conceptualise a practical pedagogic application inter-threaded by Artistic Research.

The goal of the study is to emphasise that the work of artists can take on new forms of practice, often experimental acts through which the artist takes on the role of an educator. (Fulkova, 2019). The study will argue that if an artist who becomes a teacher implements a reflexive stance towards their practice in an educational setting, it can allow for an enriching and sustaining practice where their *pedagogic act* can become equivalent to that of the *work of art*. (Fulkova, 2019). Furthermore, a twofold objective is on the agenda, which entails that a reflexive and enriching practice of a teacher influences the creation of quality pedagogic acts, which is essential to fulfilling the students' learning needs of today.

Aims and Objectives

- To make connections between an *Artistic Research Practice* and a Teaching Practice.
- To develop a methodology for sustaining an *Artistic Research Teaching Practice*, which in turn influences the creation of quality pedagogic acts, in order to fulfil the students' learning needs of today.
- To build bridges between the outcomes of *Artistic Research* (when implemented in classroom settings) and educational research?
- To develop a practice theory of *Artistic Research* for teaching artists to implement in K12 classroom settings.

2. Methodology

2.1. Literature Review

A variety of methodology and expressions exist to denote research in the arts. There is no consensus on the definitions of all research acts within art education research. Art-based and practiced-based terminologies and applications take on many forms, they are often developmental, fluid and hybrid. Moreover, it has been noted by Richard Hickman (2005), that *Methodology* and *Methods* are the two terms which "litter the field of educational research". (See Figure 2 as a visual interpretation of Hickman's statement).

Research through Art and Design
Research In And Through Art • Knowing by doing
Practice-based Research • (Teaching) Practice-based Research
Practice-led Research • Arts-informed Pedagogy • Arts-Informed Research
Practice-as-Research • Artistic Research • Practice-based Evidence
Discipline-based Education • Process-based Approach • Action Research
Constructivism-informed Research • Arts-based Research • Arts-based Scholarship
Knowledge-based Reasoning • Arts-based Scholarship
Problem-Based Learning • Studio-based Research • Post-disciplinary Practice
Evidence-based Research • Procedure-based Approach
Post-Constructivism-informed Research • Learning through doing
Action Inquiry • Reflexive Practice • Reflective Practice
Art-based Learning • Pedagogical Action Research

Figure 2. Endless Methodological Cloud

A/r/t/ography, as proposed by Irwin and Springgay (2008), represents a departure from conventional distinctions between artist, teacher, and researcher, emerging as a prominent arts-based methodology embraced by many artists pursuing doctoral education. Acknowledged for its non-hierarchical structure, multiplicity of connections, and nomadic exploration, often characterised as "living inquiry", this methodology has elicited commendation but also critique as a methodology possessing an *empty signifier* (Jagodzinski & Wallin, 2013). Opting not to adopt A/r/t/ography in my research was rooted in the necessity to not *align* a methodology with my practice; instead, I naturally gravitated towards the methodology of *Artistic Research*, in which I received formal education.

A significant critique of A/r/t/ography lies in its perceived subjectivity, potentially impacting the credibility and dependability of research findings. Additionally, I argue that the methodology is not seamlessly tailored to classroom didactics, being more suited for artists engaged in distinct studio or gallery oriented practices. The knowledge generated through such research is often criticised for its subjective nature, diverging from the transformative potential for educational practice and policy advocated by the originators of art-based research methodologies, Barone and Eisner (2011).

Sullivan's (2010) seminal justification of *Art Practice as Research* gives a clear justification for art to be theorised as research, but it fails to take into account if it is applied in educational and classroom contexts. The summary below shows how he rightly so, theorises *Art Practice as*

Research, but fails to specify if this theory need to work in an educational context The [red] in brackets are my inclusion to show the paradigm shift for an art-based *educational* implementation:

Engaging in a visual art and design [teaching] practice can be regarded as a form of inquiry characterised by a strong theoretical foundation, methodological robustness, and the potential to yield significant creative and critical outcomes.

Theorising within the realm of *Artistic Research* [in the classroom] is a reflective research practice that underscores the significance of the imaginative intellect and visualisation in the creation and construction of knowledge, with the transformative capacity to reshape human understanding.

Artistic Research [within a classroom context] represents a facet of human understanding wherein cognitive processes are dispersed across diverse media, languages, and contexts employed to frame the interpretation and production of images, objects, and events.

Fundamentally, every artist [teacher] undertakes research and engages in theorising as an integral part of their work. The process of theorising is a fundamental aspect of inquiry and, as such, constitutes a central element in [educational] research.

Artists [Teachers] often employ theorising as a problem-solving tool, with theories occasionally grounded in experiential knowledge, aiding in the comprehension of complex ideas.

To further delineate the limitations of employing art-based methodologies in educational settings, Mateus-Berr (2013) conducted a thorough comparative analysis, as depicted in Figure 3. Notably, the final row added by me in red signifies the paradigmatic transformation that occurs with the application of *Artistic Research* in an educational context, which this

dissertation aims to substantiate.

Research types	Relations between research and practice	Subjective relations	Research object or objects	Types of produced knowledge	Research output
Academic (Scientific) research	Research about practice	Researcher ≠ author of artwork	Artworks, processes, ideas produced by other persons	Ideas, theories, methods, new data (art history and theory)	Texts
Practice-led research	Research is based on practice	Author of artwork = researcher	Artwork (artworks) produced by researcher	Artwork (artworks) and documentation of its production	Artwork and text
Research-led practice	Practice is based on research	Researcher = author of artwork	Production of artwork and new knowledge	New technological solutions, methods and theory	Artwork and text
Art-based research	Practise as field research	Researcher is not necessarily author of artwork	Effect caused by artwork(s) on social environment	Ideas, theories, methods, new data (social sciences)	Text
Artistic research	Practice and research are inseparable	Author-researcher	Artistic practice	Artwork and ideas and theories	Artwork and text
Artistic Research in Education	Teaching Practice and Artistic Research are inseparable	Artist Teacher Researcher	Artistic-Research-Teaching-Practice	Curriculum Development Educational Research Artistic Research Practice	Pedagogic Acts as Art, Text

Figure 3. Table to show the relations between Art Practice and Research.

2.2. Artistic Action Research

How do we systematically implement a methodology to enable a *pedagogic act* to become *equivalent to that of a work of art*, without losing the essence of non-linear artistic thinking and allowing for suggestive rather than prescriptive framework? This study is about implementing and analysing *Artistic Research* in an Educational context, which in itself is a methodology. In order to systematically analyse the workings of *Artistic Research* in Educational context, I've utilised *Artistic Action Research* (Mason, 2005; Räsänen, 2005) as an overarching methodology.

Artistic Action Research is a combination of *Artistic Research* and *Action Research*.

Action Research strives for the transformation and enrichment of practice, seeking transformative change by concurrently engaging in *action* and *research* processes, interconnected through critical reflection (Coghlan, D, & Brydon-Miller, M., 2014). It has strong affinities with *Artistic Research*, as a methodology which seeks to “communicate content that is enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices”, it is also “its methodological vehicle, when the research unfolds *in and through* the acts of creating and performing”. (Borgdorff, 2011, p. 45). More importantly *Artistic Research* encompasses *practical action* (the making) and *theoretical reflection* (the thinking) (Wesseling, 2011).

From a methodological stance the hybrid nature of *Action Research* and *Artistic Research* is well defined in Rasasen's (2005) and Mason (2005) *Artistic Action Research*. According to Räsänen (2005, p.11-12) both art and research are seen as research. Furthermore, within *Artistic Action Research*:

It is reflection that connects the artist and teacher in Artistic Action Research. This necessitates distancing oneself from the processes of art making or teaching, and verbalising and documenting the experience. In the context of art education, action research might involve studying one's own work as an educator and an artist. This might help art teachers to recognise how the artist, teacher and researcher roles overlap. Researching their own art production to understand how it affects their teaching and vice versa. The teaching artists' thinking habits, technical choices, expression etc., all have to be systematically documented and reflected on. Teaching can be improved through comparison of one's own artistic processes with those of students, for example, and through questioning the effects of different curriculum interventions.

Furthermore, Diamond and Mullen (1999) reaffirms a crucial point that is well suited for the nature of this study. They tell us that engaging reflexively towards an artistic practice and teaching, to reach a level of objectivity, - does not kill creativity. Documentation of the co-joined research procedure can take the form of verbal and visual narratives marked by poetic, personal, poetic and artistic expression.

Artistic Action Research serves as a bridge between artistry and teaching. Recognizing art as a mode of knowledge acquisition has the potential to bridge the divide between specialists and generalists. This understanding might prompt art educators to equally appreciate teaching and research alongside art production. (Jeffers, 1993).

The *Artistic Action Research* approach is accompanied by Schön's (1983, 1987) reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action retrospective procedure. *Retrospective reflection*, according to Dewey (1933), has the potential to orientate future action and is synonymous with reflection-on-action. The paradigm of weaving (Latin *texere*, to weave) continues throughout this study "as an image of the structure of the dialogue". (Sampson, 2020, p. 489). In other words, the dialogues on this past educational experience is woven through critical didactic-pedagogic reflection.

2.3. Research in Didactics Model

The *Artistic Action Research* approach is guided by a *Research in Didactics* model (Figure 4.1) to give insight into an ever-present, and sustainable didactic triangular relationship among *Subject, Teacher, and Student*. These three aspects are analysed within the larger framework of the Context, the *Theory*, and *Practice* of the Teacher, and the *Outcome* of the student. The *Research in Didactics* model is aimed at elucidating seven levels of phenomena:

- Geographical, socio-political, and environmental context influence educational policies and the academic climate of Universities.
- *Curriculum Research* based on context, cultural content, historical, and contemporary perspectives.
- The *context* and *subject* of the study programme have an influence on the research outputs and teaching practice of the lecturer.
- *Research on teaching and learning*, especially in this case study, the research on the teacher's practice and theory.
- The student's way of engaging and interpreting the subject, didactic input, and design problem.
- *Research on learning linked to individual learning processes*, like concept formation, outcome and theory formation.

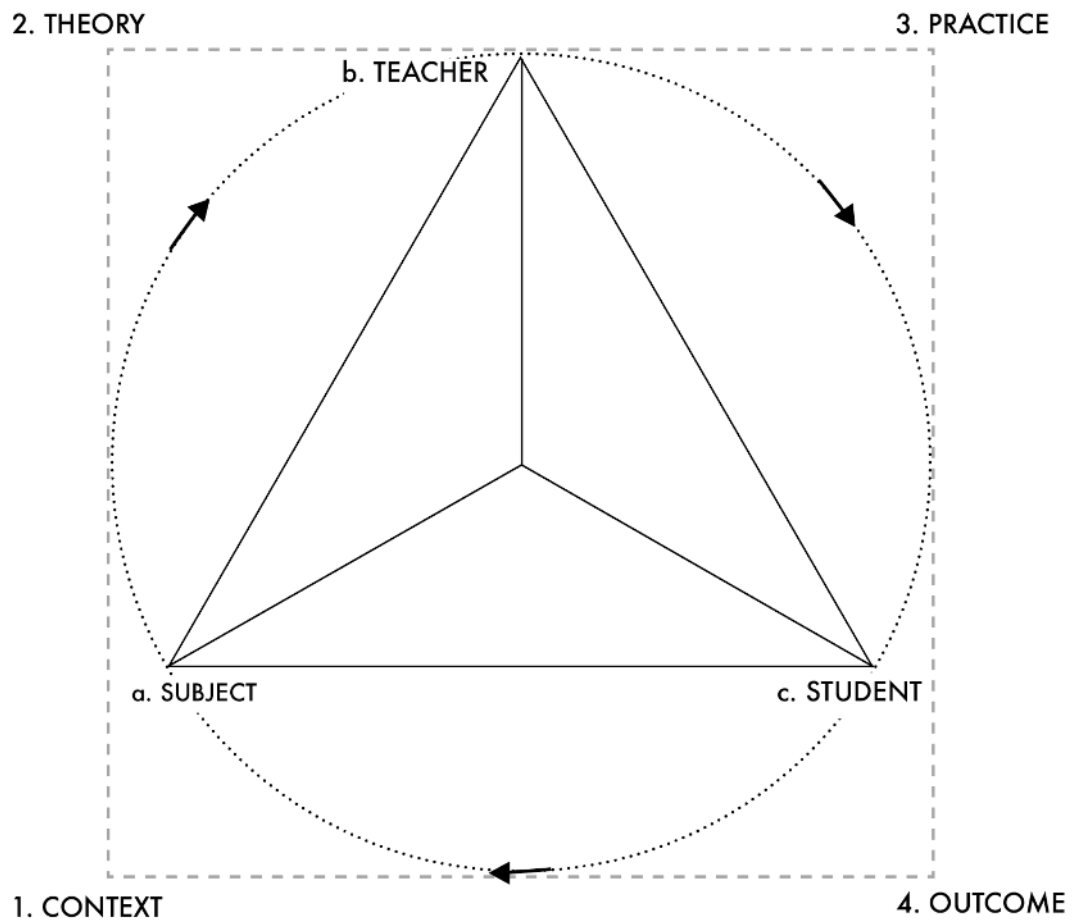


Figure 4.1 Research in Didactics Model

For the purpose of this study and the nature of the didactic examples I will refer to the broad definition of didactics as *the theory and practice of teaching and learning* (Jank & Meyer cited in Gundem, 2010), as well as the interaction between the concepts in the definition. (Figure 4.2)

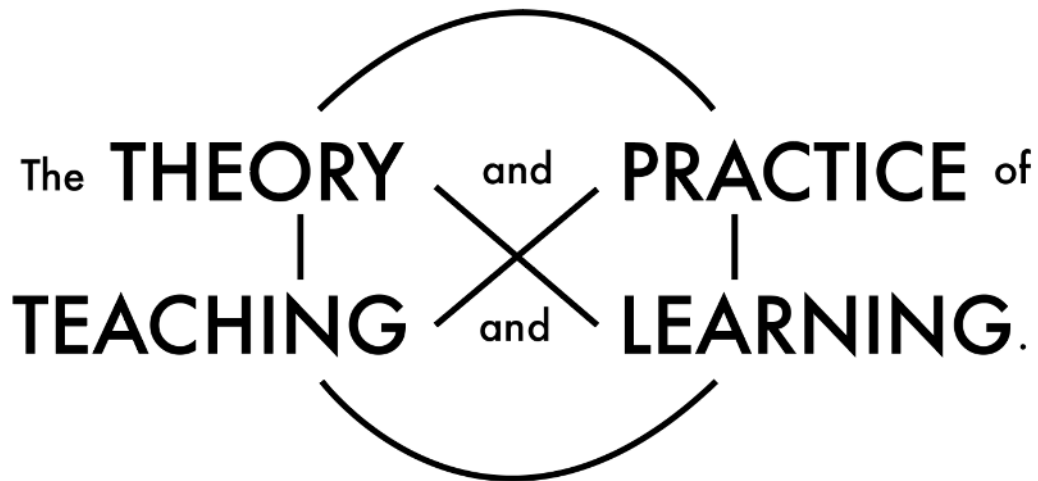


Figure 4.2. The dynamic interplay of concepts in the definition of Didactics.

2.4. Methods

Qualitative Data Analysis

- Empirical study, qualitative and interpretative analysis.
- Case Studies with Protocols (See Appendix 2)
- Transcripts of Semi-Structured Interviews with teachers within the studied programs.
- Pedagogic Material Analysis: Photographic and video documentation; Assessment strategies, Curriculum Analysis, Artwork analysis, Lesson plans, Process and Outcome Documentation.
- Reflective diary writing
- Other Relevant Data Collection: Symposium notes, Archive material, Conference dialogues, Museum and Archive visits.

3. Theoretical Framework

The subsequent section will describe the theories that supported the research and practical process of this study. The framework is divided into *Educational Theory*, *Sociological Theory* and *A Phenomenological Approach* (Figure 5). From pragmatic insights into phenomenological contexts, the theories aim to contextualise and justify the research problem and they serve as protocols for developing subsequent arguments throughout the dissertation. By the nature of the functions of the theories, they connect in a triadic relation and develop an undertone of pragmatism.

There are subtle and more explicit connections between the theorists and their theories. For example, Pierre Bourdieu (*Sociological Theory*) was a student of Merleau-Ponty (*Phenomenological Approach*), and one can easily refer to how Merleau-Ponty influenced Bourdieu's patterns of thinking and educational *Habitus* - defined as "active presence of past experiences" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). In the broad sense, John Dewey considered how humans engage with their environment, Gert Biesta, (*Educational Theory*) investigated and built on John Dewey's ideas and of *Art as Experience* - a cornerstone of Deweyan thought. Furthermore, Biesta developed a powerful analogy of comparing students to 'living material', connecting with Merleau-Ponty's tactility and bodily experiences as translated through various mediums. For Bourdieu (1998), *theory* is intricately linked to *practice*, Gert Biesta (2013, p. xi), reminds us that education is *verb* - something we *do*, and that "any act of creation (including education) is at best a dialogue between one's intentions and the material one works with". In conclusion, the notion of *Reflexivity* emerges as a seminal thread interwoven across the fabric of all three theoretical trajectories, consistently traversing each thematic domain.

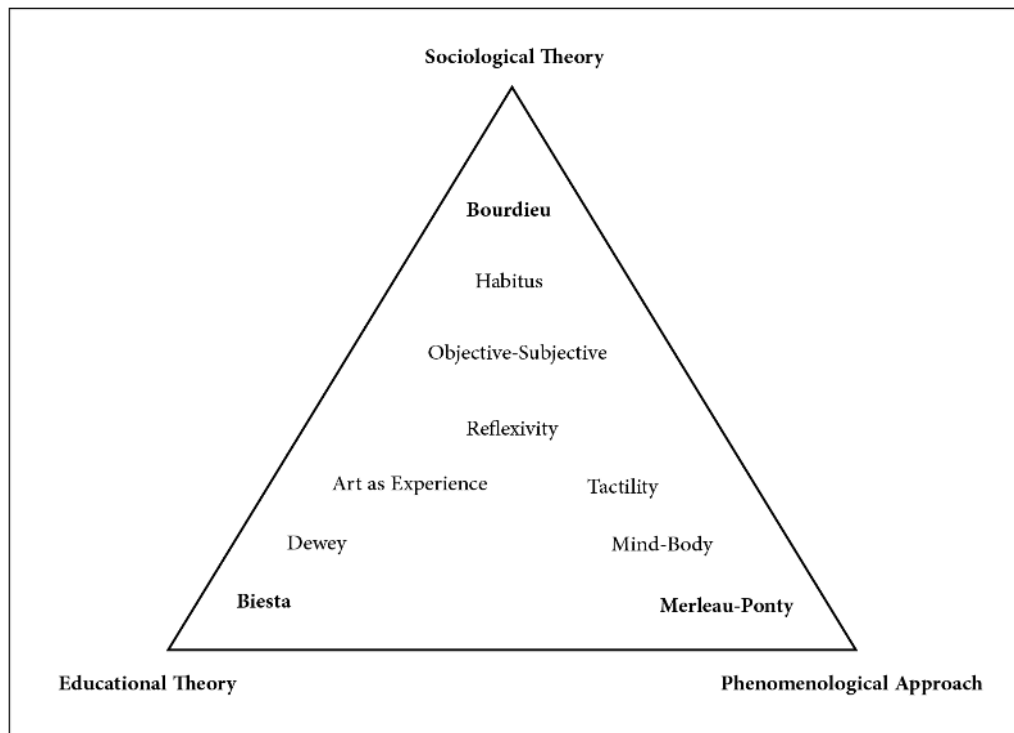


Figure 5. Triadic Theories

3.1. Educational Theory

This study builds on the educational theory of Gert Biesta and his ideas on contemporary education. Biesta (University of Australia, 2019) does not tell educators *what to do*, instead he creates a *resonance culture* among artists and educators. He often states that his ideas are not new or revolutionary, but it is especially artists that associate with his ideas, as he is able to articulate what artists often struggle to verbalise. His work is attractive to anyone working in the crossovers between art and education, and his pragmatic interpretations of Jacques Derrida, Joseph Beuys, Hannah Arendt and John Dewey are feasible to utilise in both art and educational practices. His investigations allowed him to not just be an educational philosopher, but he specifically refers to himself as an *Educational Theorist*, with a specific interest in Visual Art and Art Education. His passion for the arts, and his arguments are built around preventing the extinction or the potential disappearance of both *art* and *education* from the theory and practice of visual art and art education.

Ecological to Egological

Biesta (2017) argues for education *in and with the world*, a place which is not an imaginary construction or a fantasy world, but it has its own integrity, and that puts on limitation of what we can *do* with it, - and what we *want* from it. Some of the big crises that we are encountering are

egological which he states is one of the biggest global attitudes towards the world. Instead of referring to an ecological crisis, Biesta (2017) uses the terms *egological crises*, where we are still too self-centred and fixed in the realm of our own ego's. If we translate Biesta's notion to be applied to Art Education and the training of teachers, it relates closely to the argument in this dissertation. Artist teachers adopting a reflexive stance towards practice, is one way forward of how we can put our own desires in dialogue with the reality that exists *outside of ourselves*.

The Risk of Education

Biesta's seminal work *The Beautiful Risk of Education* closely links to the definition of *Artistic Research* and the idea of Richard Hickman's (2008, p. 22) statement of when an Artist enters the field of education, "the 'artist' is not always conscious of the complexity, richness and hidden significance of everything that is created in a given artwork". The risks we take to allow for moments of rich intuitive acts, filled with valuable, unexpected and rich experiences within the teacher and student. Biesta (2013, p. x) proclaims that the essential 'risks' we need to take as educators - and which are already inherent in art and artistic research practices - are not to be seen as the *weakness of education*, "but should rather be understood as the very dimension that makes educational processes and practices *educational*." (p. x). Furthermore, Biesta (2020, gives us assurance that artists do not have to be "turned into didacticians whose task is to deliver [objectified] art", but that the educational moment "appears inside the artistic endeavour, in such a way that art itself can and is allowed to teach." (p. 38). Students then do not only learn from *what we say* they also learn from *how we say it* or *how we do it*. The form of organisation and the form of the presentation itself has an "*educative effect*".

Biesta, (2013, p. 3) informs us that if we demand that education become secure, strong, predictable and risk-free it will miss the educational point, assuming that there are only two options available for the way we teach:

- Either to give into the desires of the child
- Or to subject the child to the desires of society

If we as educators only conform to only these two options we limit the educational experience to either giving students and yourself total freedom or either total control. Biesta (p.3) suggests that the solution is not choosing either of these options or finding the 'happy medium' or compromise between the two.

Living Material

In line with one of the arguments in this dissertation, to aim to make *a pedagogic act equivalent to that of a work of art*, it is then important to know that the students can become the *artistic medium*. Biesta (2013, p. 2) reaffirms this notion by saying that in education we work with “living material” that is human subjects, not “inanimate objects”. Biesta (University of Australia, 2019). Furthermore, we often use the term *Education* vaguely, lacking precision of what it is. *Education* is first and foremost a verb: something we *do* and that education stays a process that *creates*.

1. Engagement with the Real World	To develop an education to <i>be in and with the world</i> . Biesta (2020, p. 37) quotes Hannah Arendt to substantiate his argument. 'Reconciling ourselves to reality'
2. Egological Crisis	The <i>Ecological</i> crisis, is influenced by the <i>Egological</i> Crises- where our ego's are causing problems. (Biesta, 2017)
3. Reflexivity	We need to place our own desires in dialogue with the reality that exists <i>outside of ourselves</i> . (Biesta, 2017)
4. The Beautiful Risks	Risks we as educators need to take are not seen as a weakness of education, but every dimension that makes educational processes and practices <i>educational</i> . (Biesta, 2013)
5. Student are "Living Material"	When an educational act is rooted with an <i>Artistic Research</i> approach in a classroom setting, and the learning context transcends the materiality of the medium. (Biesta, 2013)
6. Not <i>what</i> we say, but <i>how</i> we say it.	Links to the aesthetic sensibilities we embed into our pedagogy. The way a teacher presents, how the presentation looks, and other perceivable aspects we include in the educational experience. (Biesta, 2017)
7. Letting Art Teach	Artists are not turned into <i>didacticians</i> when they enter educational context. The <i>educational moment</i> appears inside the <i>artistic endeavour</i> , in such a way that art itself can and is allowed to teach. (Biesta, 2020)
8. Education is a <i>verb</i>, as something we <i>do</i>.	Educational Creativity is a process that <i>creates</i> . The educational creative act is at best and a dialogue between one's <i>intentions</i> and the <i>material</i> one works with. (University of Australia, 2019)
9. Educational Progressivism vs. Educational Conservatism.	Creating educational settings that gives into the: - Desires of the child - Or the Desires of society (work economy) Limits the educational experience to either total <i>freedom</i> or total <i>control</i> . (Biesta, 2013)
10. The 'Expressivist' problem.	An art curriculum based on the outdated model of the studio practice of the artist. Such frameworks only create opportunities for children and young learners expressing their voice and identity, with the assumption that it is only aspects which matter educationally. Not everything that is expressed is automatically or necessarily good - neither for the one 'doing' the expressing, nor for addressing the mentioned <i>notion of being in and with the world</i> . (Biesta, 2020)

3.2. Sociological Theory

3.2.1. Theory of Practice

Bourdieu (1977) was a pioneer in developing *practical acts of theory* within the field of sociology and education. He coined the useful terms *Theory of Practice*, which influenced the development of this dissertation's *Practice Theory*. Bourdieu's main components of his theory of practice highlight pragmatic implications for education and the theories he developed in the social sciences and educational research, which discusses issues of *objectivity* and *subjectivity* (Grenfell, 1998, pp. 9). He felt that often researchers were either too personal and context-dependent or conversely, too general and distant from the people and situation they study. Bourdieu's theory of practice attempts to go beyond the objective-subjective dichotomy. His aim was to find a theory which was robust enough to be objective and yet account for the individual, subjective thought and action. For example a teaching artist keeping the balance of facilitating objective knowledge, but at the same time keep the individual needs of each student on the agenda, through forms of differentiation, for example.

3.2.2. Habitus and Reflexivity

This dissertation relies on a retrospective view of past educational experiences, and it consequently asks questions to uncover how a current Artistic Research behaviour in a classroom setting could be understood. Therefore, it is most adequate to translate and understand Bourdieu's theory of practice, as it involves the dialectical relationship between individuals' thought and activity, which he represents with this concept of *Habitus*. *Habitus* "ensures the active presence of past experiences, which are deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action" (Bourdieu quoted by Grenfell, 1998, p. 14). Bourdieu uses his concept of *structure*² to mediate between objective structures and practices, as a way to alternate between consciousness and unconsciousness. (Grenfell, 1998). The original meaning of *Habitus*, is closely related to the Greek word *hexis* links with phenomenology³. *Habitus* is also seen as "social inheritance" (p. 14) and it stems from an attempt to formulate a methodological framework that adequately captures the dynamic interplay of structure within social reality, as manifested through the application of human knowledge. *Habitus* conveys the notion of habit or automaticity in actions, representing an

² Not relating to the traditional and transcultural movement *Structuralism*, but rather Bourdieu's notion of *structured structure* and *structuring the structure*.

³ It is interesting to note that Bourdieu was a former student of Merleau-Ponty, the leading French phenomenologist "who saw phenomenological structures as being embodied by individuals". See Grenfell, M and James, D. (1998). *Bourdieu and Education: Acts of Practical Theory*. Routledge Falmer.

individual's inherent mental and character traits—objective potentialities shaped by cognitive and motivational structures (Grenfell, 1998).

Habitus is a useful and pragmatic term to understand in the context of education, as it accounts for the embodied, habituated and values inoculated through a person's formative environments. Furthermore, *habitus* is a valuable contribution to the ongoing chain of student - teacher -student - teacher relationships. Within Art Education, teachers have a major influence on the aesthetic sensibilities and taste dispositions of students, and they are profoundly conditioned by their learning environment and it is “the affordances of each person's somatic, social and cultural situation”. (Addison, et al, 2010, p. 52).

Bourdieu's concept of the *Habitus* and *Reflexivity* are two sides of the same coin. One can only become aware of one's habitus, if one adopts a reflexive stance towards practice. Bourdieu (1977) elaborates reflexivity through the relationship between the *researcher* and the *researched*, and the various dimensions and stages of reflection and reflexivity throughout the research process.

In Bourdieu's endeavour to comprehend human action, he characterised reflexivity as "a modality of posing questions on dispositions, frameworks, and patterns of thinking and action" (Buchert, 2021, p.70). This conceptualisation transcends realms of theory and practice, as well as subjective and objective modes of understanding. Diminishing the objective and the subjective divide, enables us to understand why *phenomenology* and *reflexivity* often go hand in hand, where reflexivity is when the researcher self-consciously acknowledges their identity *role* and position in their research (McLeod et al., 2018). In essence, it involves our ability to direct our conscious attention inward, acknowledging our awareness and providing us with varied narratives of ourselves. Reflexive practice, as articulated by Kaya Prpic (2005), is characterised as a reflective inquiry that establishes connections between personal life and professional endeavours. Engaging in reflexive introspection regarding the construction and continual reconstruction of one's identity is a fundamental aspect of our ethical framework. The cultivation of heightened self-awareness becomes a crucial attribute for artists venturing into the realm of education. Reflexivity functions as a tool for scrutinising the intricate interplay of individual identities, fostering a critical examination of how institutional demands shape pedagogical practices and often deviate from inherent values.

3.3. Phenomenological Theory

Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire. The emotion derives from a double contact: on the one hand, a whole activity of discourse discreetly, indirectly focuses upon a single signified, which is "I desire you," and releases, nourishes, and ramifies it to the point of explosion (language experiences orgasm upon touching itself); on the other hand, I unwrap the other in my words, I caress, brush against, talk up this contact, I extend myself to make the commentary to which I submit the relation endure⁴.

The literary theorist Roland Barthes expressed his desire for a new type of writing, as a “process of theory becoming art” (Busch, 2019, p. 185) and he was longing to develop an “aesthetic thought” (p. 190). He wanted his thoughts to unfold in the aesthetic - a fundamental of *Artistic Research*. To develop a new type of writing, Barthes allowed himself to only read literature that would “crystallise” ideas in him, and enabled him to “think in [him]self” (p. 189). In the same way, we consider Merleau-Ponty as a phenomenologist who *performs Artistic Research*. His work on phenomenology, perception, and the body influences our understanding of how artistic practices can generate knowledge. It is difficult to assume that Merleau-Ponty was merely thinking and writing; he placed embodiment at the heart of philosophy. The way he touched, felt, and lived his ideas makes his phenomenological examples imbued with sense perception⁵, as if he himself went through the process of experiencing the sensibility and tactility of the instances he describes. Merleau-Ponty is specifically referred to as a phenomenological philosopher, because he gave us insight into how meaning comes into being through creative and multi-sensory operations. Correspondingly, can we refer to the effect the reader gains when reading the work of Merleau-Ponty. Merleau-Ponty’s work is classified as phenomenology, not because he was a phenomenologist from the onset of his research, but as Roland Barthes (1977, p.148) so famously said that “the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author”. He elaborates on this notion saying that “The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unit

⁴ Excerpt from Roland Barthes’ book *A Lover’s discourse: Fragments*. (Howard. R. Trans). Hill and Wang. p. 73.

⁵ Important to be reminded that the etymological root of ‘Aesthetic’ is from the Greek *aisthetikos* "of or for perception by the senses, perceptive," of things, "perceptible," from *aisthanesthai* "to perceive (by the senses or by the mind), to feel,". Robert, B. (2010) *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. Brill.

lies not in its origin but in its destination” (p. 148). The power of interpretation literally falls into the hands of the reader and one develops “figures of thought” or as Barthes refers to “aesthetic figures” (Busch, 2021, p. 189) ultimately leading to a phenomenological state of mind. The “aesthetic figures” Barthes refers to is a type of *Figurativity*, which is something more than just representations, associations or depictions we often find contained within an analogy, metaphor or metonymy. In the true sense and root of the word, *figura*, refers to something that embodies an abstract idea. Busch (2019, p. 190) describes *figura* as “signs in the form of a real, physical embodiment, which predict something that will come” and Châtelet (2000, p. 8) suggests that the figural helps us to materialise and work out problems, and “trace contemplation” and more importantly, the figural has an embodied manoeuvre with “ontological dignity” to capture the “gestures” that give form and texture to our thinking.

The joined terms, *figural thought* reverberates Erich Auerbach’s (1938) statement that there has been a long-withstanding tension contained within the notion of *figura*, as it relates to both its *material* (plastic; concrete; physical) and *immaterial* (linguistic; abstract; symbolic) significance (Porter, 2017). Auerbach (1983) interestingly defines the sensation of the figural as *Gestalt*⁶, as something dynamic, and incomplete. Fulkova (2008, p. 32) highlights this as a non-dualist space and reminds us that *figural* should not be confused with the representational value of *figurative*. She furthermore refers to D.N Rodewick’s way of describing the tension between the *material* and *immaterial* as a ‘between-world’ where the “linguistic and plastic puncture each other”. Rodowick (2001, p. 2) formulated his definition of the figural based on Lyotard’s “chiasmus between text and figure” or as the distinction between the letter and the line - as a “force” that repositions the concept of an image. Furthermore, he elaborates that Lyotard’s figural is inextricably linked to aesthetics, but redefines the definition of art, as creations of non-ideological and objective meaning.

⁶ Auerbach’s reason to refer to *figural* as a type of Gestalt, can possibly be understood if we visualise the Danish psychologist Edgar Rubin's research into figure and ground perception in the famous two faces and vase example. The different recognitions alternating between face and vase, was what Rubin argued that images appear as something like a “shaping” or “contour effect” (etymologically con- means together). W.J.T. Mitchell refers to this effect as a “meta-picture” as a picture that grabs our attention because to their conditions of emergence, they also “inform our engagements with things and processes beholden with, through or by them”. The figure-ground principle shows us how perception and action are inseparable. You perceive because you act, and in turn, you act because you perceive. Phenomenology, Reflexivity and Gestalt recognition are inherently connected to action and part of a sense-making process. See Lury, C., Viney, W., & Wark, S. (Eds.) (2021) *Figure, Figuring and Configuration* In: *Figure: Concept and Method*. Palgrave Macmillan. p. 6-7.

The “subject” of the dream (and of anguish, and of all life) is the *one* ⁸⁹—i.e. the body as *enclosure* (*enceinte*)——

Enclosure which we leave since the body is *visible*, a “sort of reflection.”

Chiasm——Reversibility

November 16, 1960

Speech does indeed have to enter the child as silence—break through to him through silence and as silence (i.e. as a thing simply perceived—difference between the word *Sinnvoll* and the word-perceived)——Silence = absence of the word due. It is this fecund negative that is instituted by the flesh, by its dehiscence——the negative, nothingness, is the doubled-up, the two leaves of my body, the inside and the outside articulated over one another——Nothingness is rather the difference between the identicals——

Reversibility: the finger of the glove that is turned inside out——There is no need of a spectator who would be on each side. It suffices that from one side I see the wrong side of the glove that is applied to the right side, that I touch the one through the other (double “representation” of a point or plane of the field) the chiasm is that: the reversibility.——

It is through it alone that there is passage from the “For Itself” to the For the Other——In reality there is neither me nor the other as positive, positive subjectivities. **There are two caverns, two openesses, two stages where something will take place—and which both belong to the same world, to the stage of Being.**

There is not the For Itself and the For the Other **They are each the other side of the other. This is why they incorporate one another: projection-introjection**——There is that line, that frontier surface at some distance before me, where occurs the veering I-Other Other-I——

The axis alone given——**the end of the finger of the glove is nothingness—but a nothingness one can turn over, and where**

89. TRANSLATOR: *On*—the indefinite pronoun.

Figure 6. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Merleau-Ponty’s Glove*. [Digital Colour Scan]

To describe Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological text (figure 6) as *figural* is appropriate here, as it elucidates “signs in the form of a real physical embodiment, which predict something that will come” (Busch, 2019, p. 190). This could also describe what happens during a procedure of *Artistic Research*. The practitioner forms embodied and abstract ideas by seeking for answers through the

physicality of handling materials. It is in the in-between moment of realisation, that the construction of empirical knowledge begins.

The following two section discusses two question prompts given by Professor Linney Wix⁷. The student approached these questions by applying an *Artistic Research* methodology, highlighting embedded phenomenological elements. Each prompt discusses the *Stages of Learning Through Reflection* or (Reflexive learning) (Figure 7), to allow insight into the developmental spheres of praxis⁸. Based on the two stages of Schön’s (1983, 1987) Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action, leading to Bourdieu’s sociological theory incorporating phenomenology, where one enters a stage of Reflexive Learning.

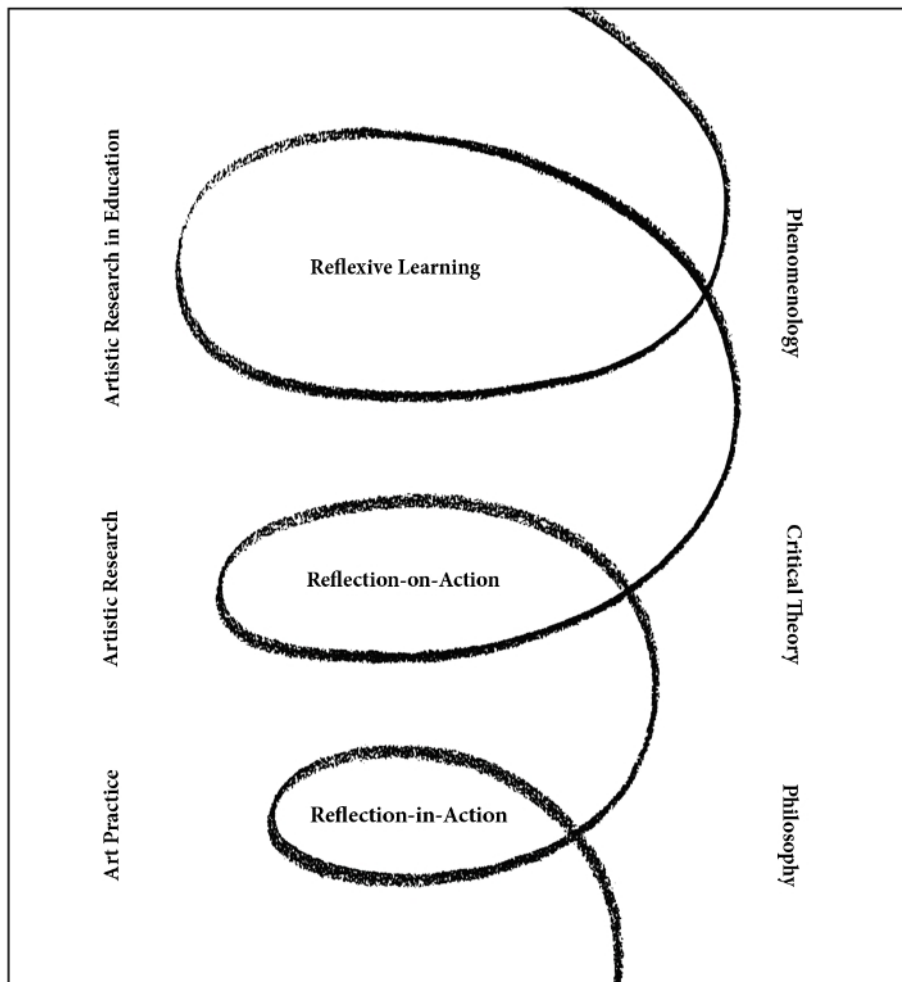


Figure 7. Stages of Learning Through Reflection (Reflexive Learning)

⁷ Linney Wix, PhD, ATR-BC, is a professor emerita of art education at the University of New Mexico

⁸ We refer here to the definition of praxis based on Baldacchino concept of *theoria* that is inherent and goes back to the original notion of thinking as a form of reflection/contemplation that remains integral to practice as both a *practiced thought (phronesis)* and as *critical practice (praxis)*. See Baldacchino, J. (2020) (Ed.) *Doing Arts Thinking: Arts Practice, Research and Education*. Brill-Sense.

Reflection-in-Action on a creative aesthetic experience may be defined as reflection in the moment, murmurs, gestures, thoughts with no formal structure of language, poetic, philosophical broken thoughts, fragments of sentences or traces. Reflective notes are often a starting point where there is a transition from raw experience into scholarly writing. Reflection-on-Action can be described as ‘thinking about’ something after the event. As Schön (1983, 1987), states it is the process in which we reflect upon our actions, and this process has the capacity to change our practice as a direct result of the reflective process. Contemplative behaviour often leads to incorporating critical theory, and as a way that theoretical behaviour develops during the investigation. The process of being reflective towards practice is - complemented by the positionality of Reflexivity. One of the crucial differences is that reflection is frequently individual, whereas reflexivity is more often relational (Tanaka, et al.). Furthermore, being reflexive means that you do not simply contemplate or look back, but you reinterpret your actions and the construction of meanings (Willig, 2001).

Reflexivity or Reflexive learning, is a transcendental stage which involves a phenomenological layer, and the dynamic of becoming self-aware. Prpic (2005) argues that it is important to distinguish between reflectivity as a general process and reflexivity as a position, moving towards deep attention, introspection and being able to locate oneself in a position in the creative, teaching or research act. Bourdieu, the leading educational sociologist and student of Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenologist, refers to this as reflexive positionality as the difference between *researcher* and the *researched*. Grenfell (2019) refers to Bourdieu’s reflexivity as it mainly deals with the epistemology of knowledge and the different ways we come to know. There is procedural, intuitive and objective knowledge. He furthermore describes that reflexivity is confrontational, as it allows us to know the status of our knowing, and it is a way of making sense of an experience. And by sense, we mean using our aesthetic sensibility as opposed to the opposite- anaesthetic which is kind of unconscious nonsensical. Aesthetic modes of learning, a phenomenological return to aesthetic experience and experiential knowing were also advocated by the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, suggesting that all attempts at experiential knowing are aesthetically oriented. Gadamer believed that since an ‘experience’, defined as an intentional act of consciousness by Edmund Husserl, can never be fully explained in any attempt to attribute meaning, we discover experiential truth by contemplating a phenomenon ‘solely by itself in its aesthetic being’. (McNiff, 1998, p. 14-15) Lastly, as reflexivity has to do with epistemological issues, and one develops an ontology out of an epistemology.

As the two prompts progress, we conclude and turn to a deeper consideration of the ontological question of *being* when working with material ontology, and Kozel (2015, p. 55) reminds us that “a phenomenology itself is performed; it is not simply a methodology applied to a performance”. These examples serve as a pragmatic approach and a research tool within an *Artistic Research* performance. The section concludes with a summarised list of the crossovers between Phenomenological acts and *Artistic Research*.

3.3.1. In what way is your dissertation autobiographical?

Autobiographical research is a form of inquiry, and in this overall study it ranges from analysing my own practice in the form of *Artistic Research*, to the didactics of my pedagogy. In other words, autobiographical research reflects my life or personal experiences. Furthermore, autobiographical writing:

Commences with a descriptive account of key-issues and develops further into reflective thinking, generating new insights and heightening the researcher’s sensitivities towards those issues, thereby enabling the researcher to see his/her research in the context of his/her biography and culture. An important goal of autobiographical writing is to develop pedagogical thoughtfulness. Another goal is moral; through the writing process we can come to understand how to make increasingly educational interactions with others who share a commitment to educating the young. (Taylor & Settelmaier, 2003. p.1)

The reason to utilise *Artistic Research* was prompted by the need to answer a question. By posing questions one immediately enters a stage of exchange between *theory* and *practice*. A practitioner who works, researches and thinks with their senses will enter a space where a textual question or contemplative thought is reasoned through a multi-sensory approach. To reverberate with what Kozel (2011, p. 204) states, “Vision is material, as is the tactile engagement with objects; concepts have their own materiality and meaning,” and research is a “phenomenological method to performance” as an alternative way to construct knowledge. She continues, “Human cognition arises through embodied action” (p. 214). This does not mean that we are actors as we do research, but rather, that questioning through motion, we think in action, and are able to reflect on our acts while we are doing it or as Kozel (2007, p 69) puts it , that a “moment is initiated by the intention to enact a reflective chiasmic loop”. The “chiasmic loop” which Kozel (2007, p. 69) refers to is that “theorising out of practice is very different from applying theory to practice”. And that “theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory” (Bolt 2007: 29).

There is a kind of overflowing excitement when one discovers a piece of text written by a phenomenologist, which involves a garment or textile reference. My attention was drawn to re-enact Merleau-Ponty's text. A few weeks prior to receiving the prompt (*In what way is your dissertation autobiographical?*) I lost a red leather glove. One glove could be seen as a useless object, unless, in this case it came in handy to answer a question. Will the procedure of mimicking Merleau-Ponty's text bring me closer to the answer if this *dissertation is autobiographical*? The experiment below, (figure 8.1 - 8.2) was an intuitive re-enactment of a theoretical text. In the same way an artist utilises *Artistic Research*, as a way to open questions that do not exist yet, or to create an awareness of topics we are unable to see yet. The re-enactment of wearing a glove on one hand and pulling it off in a reversible manner, and pulling it onto the other hand was done several times. How can such a simple, but yet not so obvious act carry so much embodied meaning? The question repeated in my head over and over as I did this reversible manoeuvre several times. It was done in a private space, as well as in public spaces, while walking the streets of the city of Salzburg. The handwritten notes below (figure 9 - 15) are the raw, reflective notes and thoughts that were transcribed from a voice recording, as well as immediate scribbles that were written down right after the experience.

3.3.1.1. Reflection-in-Action



Figure 8.1. Edwards. C.H (2021) *Chirality of Being*. [Fabric glove, Video stills]



Figure 8.2. Edwards. C.H (2021) *Merleau-Ponty's Red Glove*.
[Fabric glove, Video stills].

Walking around in the
 a rhythmic...
 ... of the effect of
 ... an experience of
 ... a red glove.
 ... my writing hand
 ... a red glove.

... created within
 ... with
 ... Penley's
 ... latent
 ... this

Choosing specifically a red glove of
 all the colours available in the spectrum
 describes the index of interpretation red holds.
 The form of a glove is another dimension
 from a tie, a hat - a pair of shoes, but
 it holds the power of visibility of red -
fabric of the visible. "A field of red things"
 signifying readiness of a revolution, power,
 blood, fossils etc. Could the choice of
 a red glove bear the same weight as
 the power relations given to the
 anthropological and semiotic significance of
 a red tie.

of intention
 nourishes a
 relaxation -
 and answer a

an artistic experience
 cost of the author, but a birth of a
 An Autobiographical text then embodies
 the same essence as a painting: Churchill
 described each stroke being a grain or
 lining of the painter's soul. position

Figure. 9. Edwards. C.H (2021) Reflections. [Ink on Paper].

Taking/pulling a red glove off your right hand with the intention to reverse it — provokes a different feeling by just taking it off. As you slowly pull each finger one becomes aware that you are loosening the contact of your skin which lines the glove — and not necessarily the fabric separating from your hand. Temporarily separating your lining from the surface it is touching. And this is completely different from the sensory feeling than putting your hand into a surface. It veils the same motion + action but it contains different surface dimensions.

Choosing specifically a red glove of all the colours available in the spectrum describes the index of interpretations red holds. The form of a glove is another dimension from a tie, a hat — a pair of shoes, but it holds the power of visibility of red — "fabric of the visible." "A field of red things signifying redness of a revolution, power, blood, fossils etc." Could the choice of a red glove bear the same weight as the power relations given to the anthropological and semiotic significance of a red tie. Choosing a red glove becomes an icon in this experimental procedure.

Figure 10. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Reversible Notes 1*. [Ink on Paper]

"writing", according to Lacan "is a trace in which is read an effect of language. It is what happens when you scribble something." - Applied Grammatology 1

Writing with a reversed red glove on my writing hand:
Am I thinking^{about} or feeling the glove? Is this instance blurring the notion of sense perception and immaterial thought?
Is it like a thought 'touched upon by affect?' (Burch, 20)
Or an impression inscribed through my senses to think?
Aesthetic thought or a sense perception thought.

Does one become what one feels? Or feel what one becomes?

Prior to experimenting with the fitting and reversing of a glove, I lost one glove - and this loss has never been so useful to open up fibres of thoughts.

Struck with wanting to experience the simple act of wearing and taking of a glove, reversing it and fitting it onto the other hand. How can something that exists contain or reveal such an unobserved existence?

The words from Merleau-Ponty "the tissue that lines them - becomes a possibility - or latency and a flesh of things"

reminding us that it is not our hand, but the tissue that lines them.

flesh - as a activation of being - a unity of inside and outside - subject - object.

Figure 11. Edwards. C.H. (2023) Reversible Notes 2. [Ink on Paper]

walking around in the streets of Salzburg with
a rhythmic question to understand Merleau-Ponty's
? analogy of a reversible glove. To the latent
phenomenological essence described in this
the experience of the extension of fibres the
reversibility of fibres from the chiral object
of a hand. (superimposable hand)

Never have I thought of the logic latent
logic behind how one glove could fit onto
my other hand.

"Between the alleged colors and visibles,
we could find anew the tissue that lines
them, nourishes them, and which for its
part is not a thing, but a possibility,
a tatenuis, and a flesh of things" MP.

Artistic Research and the intimate relationship
between theory and practice is imbedded in
the flesh of his words. The question, without
an answer is latent in the loudest form
that it is concealed and exist inbetween
a stimulus and a response. Creating
performative instances where there are moments
of intertwinedness of stimulus and response -
nourishes the "flesh of things" the phenomenological
realization - meta-moment of where question
and answer collides.

intentionality - intention ||
stimulus - response ||

Figure 12. Edwards. C.H. (2023) Reversible Notes 3. [Ink on Paper]

~~Merleau-Ponty is~~
Merleau-Ponty's work is classified as phenomenology
not because he is a phenomenologist - but as
Barthes so famously said the death of the author - allows for the birth of a reader. 2

The moment his oeuvre of writing is classified
as phenomenology, where the reader - or the
interpretation of his text allows the reader to enter
a stage of an yet undetermined process of
'becoming'. This type of text opens allows for
an embodied figures of thought.

This has an 'phenomenological effect on the reader -
and then consequently the thinker.

leaves behind, as Bunn refers to as a trace
of 'aesthetic thought' (2019, p. 188)

Barthes was seeking to read literature

As Barthes was searching for a new way of
writing - he merely read literature that "crystallized
something in him, thanks to the effect it created
in him. He was longing to find text that allowed
him to "think in himself"

MP reached a level of phenomenology through
his sense perception and experiments - MP reached
a way of experiencing a level of phenomenology
and at any level of artistic research, we can only
aspire to work towards finding these ~~phases~~ and
creating these phenomenological moments and
then be able to extract the universal issues
contained within them.

Figure 13. Edwards. C.H. (2023) Reversible Notes 4. [Ink on Paper]

Writing down an experience of the affect of
reversing a red glove.

I am writing this text with my writing hand
wearing a red glove.

The phenomenological moment ^{was} created within
me by mimicking the procedure of taking
off a glove from one hand and dressing
the other hand with a reversible glove.

A figure of thought was born by mimicking
the procedure of taking off a glove from one
hand, reversing it and dressing the other hand.
It is through this aesthetic experience - that
a "kind of thought was touched by an
affect." Where one transcends into what

|| you are feeling. A dissertation or a manifestation
of text from a real experience, and a
real experience entered from the phenomenological
text. —

Merleau-Ponty's ^{semitic} text enabled a me
mimicking and experiencing a physical
thought.

Creating a new way of writing, transcribing
an artistic experience into text - is at the
cost of the author, but a birth of a reader.

An Autobiographical text then embodies
the same essence as a painting. Churchill
described each stroke being a grain or
lining of the painter's soul.

Figure 14. Edwards, C.H. (2023) Reversible Notes 5. [Ink on Paper]

"Writing", according to Lacan, "is a trace in which is read an effect of language. It is what happens when you scribble something."

writing with a reversed red glove.

Am I thinking or writing with a red glove on my writing hand?

Blurring the notion of some perception unifying and immaterial thought.

— losing one red leather glove has never been so useful to open a fibres of thought.

The simple act of taking off a glove, departing from the surface of flesh which in an instant lined the tissue of the glove —

Piet Hein: "losing one glove is certainly painful, but nothing compared to the pain, of losing one, throwing away the other, and finding the first again"

Between the alleged colors and visibles, we could find anew the tissue that lines them, and which for its part is not a thing, but a possibility, a latency and a flesh of things

1. condition of being revealed
2. unobserved existence
3. "delay between stimulus and response"
— a state of being hidden

Figure 15. Edwards. C.H. (2023) Reversible Notes 6. [Ink on Paper]

3.3.1.2. Reflection-on-Action

The question *In what way is your dissertation autobiographical?*, opened a chiasmic set of questions:

- 1) How does a dissertation (in textual form) embody lived experiences, or portray modes of *being*?
- 2) In turn, how does textuality affect future lived experiences?

These questions led me to delve deeper into the *reversibility of being* through Merleau-Ponty's (1968) text, *The Visible and the Invisible*, in which he shows us that touching, like vision happens "in the midst of the world and within being." "That same thick reflection is what makes me touch myself touching" and makes "the *same* in me be seen and seer" (Evans & Lawlor, 2000, p. 41). Moreover, Merleau-Ponty shows us how reversibility is important to the origin of *sense*, and that it never comes to a closure. Morris (2010) traces reversibility through the interrelation in which *activity* and *passivity* reverse to one another. In the same line of thought, Sloterdijk (2012, p. 6) emphasises the empirical nature of phenomenological inquiry in what he refers to as the "reflective life". He states that we lose sight of the intrinsic value of *practice as a form of theoretical behaviour* as soon as we create a division between 'active' or 'passive' (or contemplative) behaviour. These two domains are fields of exchange: "Contemplative without relinquishing characteristics of activity and active without losing the contemplative perspective." It is worth noting that the concept of *theoria* refers back to the ancient notion of *thinking as a form of reflection/contemplation* that remains integral to *practice* as both a *practiced thought* (*phronesis*) and as *critical practice* (*praxis*). (Baldacchino, 2020). This deep entanglement of *theory* and *practice* becomes visible through Merleau-Ponty's (1968, p. 142) detailed study of *touch* through describing a *perceiver* and a *perceived*: "I can feel myself *touched* as well and at the same time as *touching*". In the case of autobiographical writing the perceiver becomes the *researcher* and the perceived, the *researched*. In other words, the reversibility of *research* is therefore autobiographical, and autobiographical *research is reversible*.

An autobiographical dissertation is analogous to two reversible surface dimensions that are dependent on each other, but not two sides of a coin. Like a hand in a mirror, theory and practice are not mirror images of each other. If something looks different in the mirror it is chiral⁹, and it cannot be

⁹ *Chirality* is a property of asymmetry and is derived from the Greek *χειρ* (*kheir*), "hand", a familiar chiral object. Chiralism: right-left handedness. "Any geometrical figure, or group of points, 'chiral', and say that it has chirality if its image in a plane mirror, ideally realised, cannot be brought to coincide with itself". Sir William Thomson Lord Kelvin (1894). *The Molecular Tactics of a Crystal*. Clarendon Press. p. 27. Interesting to note that *Chiasmus* with the same root, is a rhetorical device

superimposed. Merleau-Ponty elaborates on this type of reversibility by introducing a simple phenomenological act of the touching and touch of our two hands. Kozel (2011, p. 206) frames this notion as “I touch and the world touches me, I touch my own act of touching and am subject and object both within myself. I touch the world, certainly I do when I handle materials in the creative process, and these materials touch me back”.

Merleau-Ponty takes it even a step further by giving us a picture of the reversibility of a glove on one hand and the fact that it can be reversed and worn on the non-superimposable hand. The right-hand glove turned inside out *is* a left-hand glove, not the appearance of a right-hand glove; and the left- and right- hand gloves are not two visible appearances of some underlying, ambiguous being, but “two divergent ways of being” (Morris, 2010, p. 4). The perceiver (questioner; researcher; toucher) and perceived (questioned; researched; touched) are akin to right- and left- hand figures or gloves. In other words, it is our *being* that is reversibly the perceiver and perceived, one way or another.

Being in a state of *doing* research and *being* a researcher places one in the position of being both *subject* and *object*. In *The Visible and the Invisible* Merleau-Ponty suggests an existence of our *flesh* as a figural way of *being*. He furthermore elaborates that flesh is irreducibly a circular circuit of, inside and outside turning one another (Halák, 2021, p. 26) Flesh is not a two-fold dimension consisting of *subjective* and *objective* elements, but an “ontological dimension from which these aspects can be abstracted through specific cognitive operations” (Halák, 2021, p. 1). The *objective* qualities of the hand (texture, warmth, softness) and the *subject* are made of the same ‘stuff.’ Merleau-Ponty (1968, p. 137) states that there is no dualistic difference between the *toucher* and the *touched*, “because each of the two beings is an archetype for the other, because the body belongs to the order of the things as the world is universal flesh”. And that we are “...the touched-touching. This structure exists in one sole organ. The flesh of my fingers = each of them is phenomenal finger and objective finger, outside and inside of the finger in reciprocity, in chiasm, activity and passivity coupled” (p. 216).

Figure 16 - 18 showcases the critical theory that was coupled and investigated during the process of Reflection-On-Action. The critical theory involves a wider consideration of the act of touching hands in relation to prayer hands in religious acts, and the material-semiotic and phenomenological significance of the colour red.

in which two or more clauses are balanced against each other by the reversal of their structures in order to produce an artistic effect. The second part of a sentence is a mirror image of the first, but does not reflect each other. It is different from *anthesis*, which literally means the opposite.

would
 I have touched in my own
 are my own, that the whole operation takes
 me," within my landscape, whereas the problem is to
 another landscape. When one of my hands touches the other, the
world of each opens upon that of the other because the operation
is reversible at will, because they both belong (as we say) to one
sole space of consciousness, because one sole man touches one
sole thing through both hands. But for my two hands to open
upon one sole world, it does not suffice that they be given to one
sole consciousness—or if that were the case the difficulty before
 us would disappear: since other bodies would be known by me in
 the same way as would be my own, they and I would still be
 dealing with the same world. No, my two hands touch the same
 things because they are the hands of one same body. And yet
 each of them has its own tactile experience. If nonetheless they
 have to do with one sole tangible, it is because there exists a very
 peculiar relation from one to the other, across the corporeal
 space—like that holding between my two eyes—making of my
 hands one sole organ of experience, as it makes of my two eyes
 one sole Cyclopean vision. A difficult relation to



Albrecht Dürer
 'Praying Hands' 1508

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological
 description of touch and touching
 made me reconsider the possible
 transcendental experience the
 religious act of the touching of
 praying hands. Did this gesture
 become a custom act to reinforce
 this phenomenological account?

Figure 16. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Touched Thoughts*. [Digital Colour Scan]

its fixed structure, or if they start to wander round about again, the *quale* resumes its atmospheric existence. Its precise form is bound up with a certain woolly, metallic, or porous [?] configuration or texture, and the *quale* itself counts for very little compared with these participations. Claudel has a phrase saying that a certain blue of the sea is so blue that only blood would be more red. The color is yet a variant in another dimension of variation, that of its relations with the surroundings; this red is what it is only by connecting up from its place with other reds about it, with which it forms a constellation, or with other colors it dominates or that dominate it, that it attracts or that attract it, that it repels or that repel it. In short, it is a certain node in the woof of the simultaneous and the successive. It is a concretion of visibility, it is not an atom. The red dress a fortiori holds with all its fibers onto the fabric of the visible, and thereby onto a fabric of invisible being. A punctuation in the field of red things, which includes the tiles of roof tops, the flags of gatekeepers and of the Revolution, certain terrains near Aix or in Madagascar, it is also a punctuation in the field of red garments, which includes, along with the dresses of women, robes of professors, bishops, and advocate generals, and also in the field of adornments and that of uniforms. And its red literally is not the same as it appears in one constellation or in the other, as the pure essence of the Revolution of 1917 precipitates in it, or that of the eternal feminine, or that of the public prosecutor, or that of the gypsies dressed like hussars who reigned twenty-five years ago over an inn on the Champs-Élysées. A certain red is also a fossil drawn up from the depths of imaginary worlds. If we took all these participations into account, we would recognize that a naked color, and in general a visible, is not a chunk of absolutely hard, indivisible being, offered all naked to a vision which could be only total or null, but is rather a sort of straits between exterior horizons and interior horizons ever gaping open, something that comes to touch lightly and makes diverse regions of the colored or visible world resound at the distances, a certain differentiation, an ephemeral modulation of this world—less a color or a thing, therefore, than a difference between things and colors, a momentary crystallization of colored being or of visibility. Between the alleged colors and visibles, we would find anew the tissue that lines them, sustains them, nourishes them, and which

Figure 17. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Visible Red I*. [Digital Colour Scan of Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968), *The Visible and Invisible*. (A. Lingis, Trans). Northwestern University Press.]

for its part is not a thing, but a possibility, a latency, and a *flesh* of things.

If we turn now to the seer, we will find that this is no analogy or vague comparison and must be taken literally. The look, we said, envelops, palpates, espouses the visible things. As though it were in a relation of pre-established harmony with them, as though it knew them before knowing them, it moves in its own way with its abrupt and imperious style, and yet the views taken are not desultory—I do not look at a chaos, but at things—so that finally one cannot say if it is the look or if it is the things that command. What is this prepossession of the visible, this art of interrogating it according to its own wishes, this inspired exegesis? We would perhaps find the answer in the tactile palpation where the questioner and the questioned are closer, and of which, after all, the palpation of the eye is a remarkable variant. How does it happen that I give to my hands, in particular, that degree, that rate, and that direction of movement that are capable of making me feel the textures of the sleek and the rough? Between the exploration and what it will teach me, between my movements and what I touch, there must exist some relationship by principle, some kinship, according to which they are not only, like the pseudopods of the amoeba, vague and ephemeral deformations of the corporeal space, but the initiation to and the opening upon a tactile world. This can happen only if my hand, while it is felt from within, is also accessible from without, itself tangible, for my other hand, for example, if it takes its place among the things it touches, is in a sense one of them, opens finally upon a tangible being of which it is also a part. Through this crisscrossing within it of the touching and the tangible, its own movements incorporate themselves into the universe they interrogate, are recorded on the same map as it; the two systems are applied upon one another, as the two halves of an orange. It is no different for the vision—except, it is said, that here the exploration and the information it gathers do not belong “to the same sense.” But this delimitation of the senses is crude. Already in the “touch” we have just found three distinct experiences which subtend one another, three dimensions which overlap but are distinct: a touching of the sleek and of the rough, a touching of the things—a passive sentiment of the body and of its space—and finally a veritable touching of the touch, when my right

Figure 18. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Visible Red 2*. [Digital Colour Scan of Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968), *The Visible and Invisible*. (A. Lingis, Trans). Northwestern University Press].

3.3.1.3. Reflexive Learning

Returning to the original prompt, and to answer the question, *How is your dissertation autobiographical?* I could say that in an autobiographical dissertation, there is some part of your *being*, that is being transcribed into textual form. The artwork is analogous to the human being who is indivisible body/mind.

Going through the process of reading Merleau-Ponty's text about the colour *red, flesh, touching* and more importantly the idea of the *reversibility of a glove* - evoked an aesthetic sensibility in me. It created an urge to physically embody the text as an experience: Mimicking and going through the motion of putting on a glove and pulling it off in a reversible manner to fit the opposite hand. This experimental procedure filled with sense perception allows me to arrive at empirical knowledge, which Grenfell (2019) refers to as *phenomenological* and *objective knowledge*. The way to objectify this intentionality of the experimental sensory experience is to take a *reflexive* stance towards one's empirical research. Here we progress from the level of *reflection* to *reflexivity*: I subjectively experienced the reversible feeling of wearing a glove and taking it off in a reversible manner to be able to fit it on the other hand. To reach a level of *reflexivity* the researcher has to take an outside stance towards the researched in order to gain insight into the *phenomenological* or *objective* knowledge, in other words, to gain access to the knowledge that overcame the knowledge of what the initial experience produced.

The notion of reversibility exists between the researcher and the researched, between theory and practice, is a *figural* example of how text and materiality are in dialogue with each other. There arises a *process* of an *in-betweenness*, which does not mean going from one thing to another and back again, but a meta-moment filled with agency and materialisation. Reversibility brings us closer to understanding the etymological crossovers between text, texture, and textiles. It is in this aesthetic moment of experiencing the inner surface turned outwards to fit on the other hand, that the researcher realises the tight circles of action and reflection and the *reversibility* of theory and practice. In the same way, Roland Barthes created a new way of writing that evokes the image of figural and aesthetic thought by letting text 'touch' the reader. *Text* is here understood as "whatever articulated by *language*" (Culler, 1994, p. 8) and in this sense - by *body language*. A dissertation *becomes* autobiographical as it presents the transcription of a figural *being*, furthermore, any dissertation rooted in *Artistic Research* and aesthetic experiences creates a dialogue between the material and immaterial, and it is the researchers' goal to objectify this relationship. The dialogue between material and immaterial also translates to the context of classroom settings. Biesta (2013) reminds us that educating

students is at the centre of a dialogical process. He states that “Any act of creation (including education) is at best a dialogue between one's intentions and the material one works with, and thus a process in which both have a voice and both have a role to play” (p. xi) Furthermore, it is important to know that when *Artistic Research* is applied into an educational setting, to not forget that one is not working with inanimate objects, but that the students are the “*living material*” (p. 2). In conclusion, we need to take these raw experiences and their physicality, and avoid reducing their value when transforming them into text, (in this case in the form of a dissertation). The hope is that the birth of a *reader* can enter the textual experience and can evoke the same aesthetic sensibility.

3.3.2. How do you embody your questioning | How does your questioning embody you?

The second prompt by Prof. Linney Wix asked us to experiment with no specific material or method, but we had to proactively explore the question of “how we are what we are asking?” Or in other words, “In what ways are you what you are asking in your research?” It was also framed: “How does your questioning (research question in your dissertation) embody you? And how do you embody your questioning?”. At this specific stage of my research process, I did not have an outline, sections or overall *structured structure*¹⁰ for my large body of research. Neither was I engaging in any practical or material handling activities in my research process. The two reversible questions I developed as evident in my dissertation title and in line with the given prompt, were:

*How does one embody a **practice theory**?*

*How does a **practice theory** embody me?*

When I embarked on answering this prompt, the questions I had in mind focused on the two enjoined concepts contained within my dissertation title: *How can one develop a Practice Theory?* It is not just to develop a ‘theory’, but because theory is enjoined to practice, it stresses the importance of the interaction and the dialogue between the two concepts. How can one create a new dynamic between what is *practice* (for example, the act of teaching or an artistic practice) and what is *theory*? How does one activate the theoretical behaviour within a practice? To develop a practice theory is to first to reconsider the *etymological roots* and secondly to look at how the practice of theory is utilised in *Literary Theory*.

¹⁰ As part of Bourdieu’s notion of Habitus, *structured structures* “generates and organises practices and representations that can be objectively adapted” and structuring structure has the capacity to generate an infinity of new practices. See chapter *Structures, Habitus, Practices* in Bourdieu. P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. (Nice, R. Trans.). Stanford University Press. p. 53.

It is worth noting that both Heidegger (Ulmer, 2019) from a phenomenologist's perspective and Bohm (1990, p. 4-9), from a physicist's perspective, refer to the etymological significance of the word Greek 'theoria' which has the same root as 'theatre'. *Thea* (Theatre), is when something shows itself, or has an outward look, or to make a spectacle. Bohm goes further to say that "theories are ever-changing forms of insight, giving shape and form to experience" (p. 8). The relationship between reality and thought is far more complex than correspondence, and theories are not direct descriptions of reality. He further states that theories are a form of insight, "a way of looking at the world, and not a form of knowledge of how the world is" (p. 4). It is not to say that we are actors in theatre, as we perform and do research, but the value lies in the ability to reflect on what we are doing while we are doing it. When we perform we mediate between the inner and the outer and translate and discover. Performance is tension, perception and the mind-body in motion, it is in these in between moments where theories and theoretical behaviour are born.

Secondly, literary theorists treat theory as the subject of human experience, "particularly the ordering; interpreting and articulating of experience" (Culler, 1994, pp. 9-10) and the effects of material conditions on individual experience. It is seen as a tool that possesses the power to make the strange familiar, enabling you to conceive your thinking and behaviour in new ways.

The following sections will describe the embodied rope-pulling experience as it happened in three stages; Reflection-in-Action; Reflection-on-Action and Reflexive Learning.

3.3.2.1. Reflection-in-Action

I discovered an abandoned 10m rope on the beach (Figure 19). It attracts me. This rope is going to be useful for something, but I don't know what yet. I need to take it back home with me. That means dragging it along the beach for 5km. I lift it up. The rope is heavier than I thought it would be. There are thousands of fibres on one end. It must have unravelled in the sea for a good amount of time. There is a clear structural change from fibre to thread, and thread to strand. The length of the rope is going to work against me, I need to shorten it somehow, so that it will be easier to pull. Knotting the rope is one way to make it shorter and more compact. The rope is very heavy as it is stuffed with millions of sand particles. I start to pull the rope, moving closer to the beach. Pulling on the wet sand is slightly lighter, as it gathers less sand. Trying to find the middle ground between the wet and dry sand and not too close to where the waves are breaking. The dragging of the rope creates a long trace in the sand behind me. Every

muscle of my body is working. What is harder work, physical body action or the act of thinking?

Questions start to appear:

Why am I doing this?

I enter a stage of metaphoric thinking.

Does the weight and suffering of pulling the rope resemble the substantial weight and heaviness of writing a dissertation?

A wave washes over the rope and makes the rope immediately heavier.

What obstacles are on the research path?

I associate the water with theory and the beach with practice.

Theory and practice are separate in this metaphoric way, but it is the interaction and coalescence of the wave and beach that cannot exist without the other. It forms natural phenomena.

Does the rope conceive of meaning beyond the metaphor?

Does it transverse to a meta-metaphor, containing more figural elements?

I reached a big body of water, where the freshwater river meets the sea. The rope floats with ease for about 100 metres. I reached an area close to where I can keep it. Will it be better to knot the rope into a bundle to lift it? Over and under, under and over, knotting is weaving. I remembered an old Celtic knotting pattern. It is in my head. I handle every section of the rope. I feel and carry every section of the rope's weight. The sharp stones I am walking on hurt my feet. I can feel the pain under my feet increasing as I lift heavier sections of the rope. My body manipulates the rope, the rope manipulates my body. There could not have been a knot without me in this 'system' of knotting. I reach a point of confusion while creating the knotting pattern. My mind and body are in a knot. The rope followed my action in motion. The rope expressed the pattern of my body's intention, and the rope in turn touched me. I unknot the rope, the rope unknots me. What is the difference between the beginning and the end? I left the rope in two the form of two symbols: Alpha and Omega.



Figure 19. Edwards. C.H. (2020-2022) *Fibre to (W)hole* [Video Stills]

See the full video here (point phone camera to the QR code:)



In the second stage, before the researcher enters a stage of reflection-on-action, contemplative questions appear:

- 1) Why did the rope attract me in the first place?
- 2) How did this ‘nothingness’ become ‘something’?

3.3.2.2. Reflection-on-Action

Reflecting on the process of pulling and handling the rope enticed my interest to delve deeper into critical theory and to analyse what I unconsciously gained through this embodied experience. The following text is a transcript of a presentation given to a group of PhD students during an online discussion to reflect on the action. It incorporates critical theory and a synopsis of feedback I received. The text was read to a group of students, while presenting the photos and video of the rope-pulling experience:

The beginning of *form* which embodies my question is made up of multiple **fibres**. These fibres are the traces of being and the surface of becoming. Multiple fibres and the joining of fibres, make up a **thread**. A thread depends on the human hand’s distinct precision of grip which allows it to be manipulated between thumb and forefinger. Twisting fibres into threads was among the most ancient of human acts. Multiple threads joined together creates a **strand**. This specific object has three strands which form a rope. This rope can pull the Artistic Researcher in any direction and it can take on any scale of operation. I quote from the chapter *Intertwining* by Merleau-Ponty (1968, pp. 130-131): “It is as though our vision were formed in the heart of the visible, or as though there were between it and us an intimacy as close as between the sea and the strand.” If *theory* were the *sea* and the *strand* the *practice*, we know that the two never become one, but the dynamic of their interaction will always be there.

What gives research creation form, is **knotting**. Knot-making is a paramount figure of thought and a process of understanding the relation between practice and theory. As the anthropologist Tim Ingold suggests, “knots are contrary forces of tension and friction, as in pulling tight, is generative of new forms [...] one can never determine what is on the inside or on the outside. Knots don’t have insides and outsides; they have

‘interstices’¹¹. (Ingold 2016, p. 6). Caroline Cambre (2020, p. 89) refers to the *Inca khipu (quipu)* knots that were not figures of *containers for messages*, but rather performative operators or generators of messages. My body created the *space between* the inside and the outside of the rope, performing and generating containers for messages. As early as the year 4600, the Inca quipu knots existed “at the juncture of memory, language, visual signs, and tactile processes”. The fluid operability of knots allows it to be done, undone and re-done, as a way to record, remove and reflect sensory information. Ingold refers to the novelist Italo Calvino, and reminds us of the endless list of practitioners engaging in the physical act of knot-making:

“...from the sailor to the surgeon, the cobbler to the acrobat, the mountaineer to the seamstress, the fisherman to the packer, the butcher to the basket-maker, the carpet-maker to the piano-tuner, the camper to the chair-mender, the woodcutter to the lacemaker, the bookbinder to the racquet-maker, the executioner to the necklace-maker...”

Knot-like processes are an action that allows for research creation and discovering knot-like insights between practice and theory. Knots are fundamental elements of woven structures; what gives knots form is the flow from knotting to weaving. The anthropologist Tim Ingold (2016, p. 6) suggests that knotting is the fundamental “principle of coherence”, it is a way form is held together, he furthermore makes a valuable statement suggesting that this boundedness applies as much to *forms of knowledge* as to *physical material* things.

To make sense of a creative process is to engage in a triangular act. In the chapter *Substance and Form*, Dewey refers to how an artist can have a phenomenological and self-reflexive stance towards a creative process, where the artist becomes the creator and the receiver. Dewey (1934, p. 106) opens up a discussion about the communicative value of an artwork highlighting what logicians would call the triadic qualities:

¹¹ Early 15c., from Old French *interstice* (14c.) and directly from Latin *interstitium* "interval," literally "space between," from *inter* "between" (see **inter-**) + stem of *stare* "to stand". See Barnhart, R. K., (Ed.)(1988) Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology. H.W. Wilson Co.

There is a speaker, the thing said and the one spoken to. Even when the artist works in solitude all three terms are present. The work is there in progress, and the artist has to become vicariously the receiving audience. He observes and understands as the third person might note and interpret.

The reflexive and phenomenological moment appears in the fact that the artist has to take an 'outside' and 'objective stance' to be able to interpret their own experience of the artwork objectively. Self-reflexivity is enabled when the awareness of a particular knowledge overcomes the knowledge it produces. And in this project, the knowing/learning was the combination of having a question in combination with an embodied experience, and this embodied experience with composition and the stages of formation of a rope is what informed my knowledge. Knowing also remains true to the material, that it doesn't make a clear distinction between what is *literal* and what is *figural*, but rather how to translate from one domain to the other. This '*knowing*' will then have become a '*becoming*'. It is the procedure that continues to influence the way I engage with theoretical creation.

Feedback from Linney Wix and a PhD. students after the text was read:

Linney Wix

[.....] Those stones. Those stones were very hurtful under your feet. They look like sharp little rocks. So that's part of it, too, the pain.

[.....] It feels like it's how you handle things. This chapter, it's also how you're handling it. And that's that piece of materiality, the physicality of it.

[.....] It's so intertwined with everything. Even if you only show the part of you actually on the sandy beach, dragging that rope and seeing the sea. I don't know how you can do your dissertation without showing it.

Stefanie Singer

[.....] It just struck me how powerful a metaphor can be. And I don't know how you feel about the language of metaphor in terms of this process, because I don't want to put that word on it if that's not how you're sort of defining it. We forget sometimes in the *thinkingness* of our brains, we forget sometimes that experience is oriented, and that thought is oriented in *physicality* and is oriented in *memory of experience*. And so I thought what was so powerful about this is that we get really far from that in words and language and metaphor. This really brings you back to the idea that all thought is born of a sensation and a physical experience of one's body in the world, and then we attach words and meaning to it. And I feel like in the same way that you visually organised books (Figure. 20) , and even in mentioning that this early teacher of yours kind of invited you to get a look away from the meaning of the words, but to look at the structure or the physical presence of the object and the material. [.....] Just the materiality of it alone, of watching you labour with that material, almost nothing could be said. And that would be enough in some ways just to see your body going through that process.



Figure 20. Edwards. C.H. (2022) *Finding Visibilities*. [Digital Photograph]

My response to the feedback:

It's interesting, Stefanie, that you mention metaphor in relation to the embodied experience I presented, and it is similar to the response I received during my state exam entry: "the metaphor is clearly visible". I don't want to say that the rope-pulling experience is exclusively metaphorical, but at the level of PhD. practice based research, we could find more than just metaphoric value in embodied, Phenomenological and *Artistic Research* experiences. Derrida (1974) defines "the theory of metaphor a theory of sense" (p. 32) and calls our attention to this very idea where he says we need to 'avoid treating metaphor as an imaginative or rhetorical ornament, and come back to the inner articulation of philosophical discourse" (p. 22). Furthermore, he explains that metaphors are worn out if it is reduced to a method of "expressing" an idea. Metaphoric qualities put limits on the embodied experience, as it is often limited to *visuality* and *language*. Aristotle defined a metaphor as a concept to have a lively effect which he associated with the notion of *energeia*. (Derrida, 1974, p. 39). As mentioned previously, bodily perception goes beyond mere registration of visual semiotic signs. The semiotician, Umberto Eco, believes that works constructed in line with an open aesthetic, in other words, have multiple interpretations or reflections connected to it, are inherently didactic, and contain the quality to be "epistemological metaphors". (Ulmer, 2019, p. 308).

What are the epistemological and didactic qualities of a metaphor? *What makes a metaphor a metaphor?* Jackson notes that it is the "internal relation of similarity (and contrast) which underlies the metaphor (Dubnick, 1980, p. 407). By juxtaposing two dissimilar objects or revealing hidden similarities, making the two objects seem to fuse or coalesce. Culler (1981, p. 43) draws our attention to the fact that the relationship between the metaphors and its meaning is already present in the system of language and rhetoric, and that it is not a radical or inaugural act but a manifestation of a pre-existent connection.

What is it exactly that makes the rope-pulling experience metaphorical? No direct signification links the structure of a rope specifically to the structure or body or research or dissertation. In Saussurean terms, we would say that the signifier and the signified are arbitrary, which leaves a space or a gap for the *figural*. The *reality* and the *structure* of the rope is similar to the *structure* of this dissertation. But the connection permitted a

more *figural process*, where there was an active synthesis of predicting something that will come, a traced contemplation and an embodied manoeuvrability.

Stefanie Singer

I feel like it implies, as you're saying that, I was thinking when I was talking to students, we were talking about embodiment and embodied practice and just the primacy that has developed over history of language and cognition over emotion. But the idea that metaphor almost implies that an *image's purpose* is to serve the greater intellectual understanding of something versus that the image and experience in and of itself is enough. The idea that we have to always try to make the distinction, to refer to the duality between the thing or the thing that's representing the thing, versus the thing represents the thing is a thing. I realise the limitations of this idea of metaphor.

Linney Wix

Yes. It can just bring in one more complication. And one thing I think that can work imagistically without taking away and without distinguishing literal, figurative, metaphorical, is to do some analogising. Like, the knot is like a memory. The knot is the wrapping. The fibres are. . . so that you're analogising rather than saying it is or it isn't, or it is like, or it is not like.

Stefanie Singer

That speaks to that gap in between, like with the glove, this idea that the gap exists between the mirror image of or the copy of or the thing that is like the other thing. There's always this sort of space between.

3.3.2.3. Reflexive Learning

The embodied experience unknowingly helped me to answer the question of the importance of the relationship between *practice* and *theory*. The kinetic process of coming to know of the formation and the composite structure of a rope, translated into something else, through material and bodily experiences. The process and tight circles of action and reflection and the relationship between *theory* and *practice* allowed for *figural* and *phenomenological* translations between materiality and text, creating a *materiality of text*.

The embodied and phenomenological experience I described consequently informed the structure and sections of my dissertation. Each section of the dissertation (fibre, thread, strand, knot, and (w)hole) has a figural correspondence to the structural composition of a rope. For example, the root of the 14th-century word *introduction* (which etymologically means “bringing into existence”) correlates to the structural elements of multiple fibres of the rope. (Figure. 21). The introductory section (including the current section - A Phenomenological Approach) of the dissertation describes all the aspects of how multiple experiences and theories brought together the existence of this study. Consequently, each subsequent chapter is integral to the elements that link the physical composition of a rope to the theoretical content. In other words, the theoretical dissertation structure, the nature of the research and the writing process were informed by the truth in material understanding. The stages of formation of the medium (rope) and the dissertation sections can be described as a transcendental process of *being*.

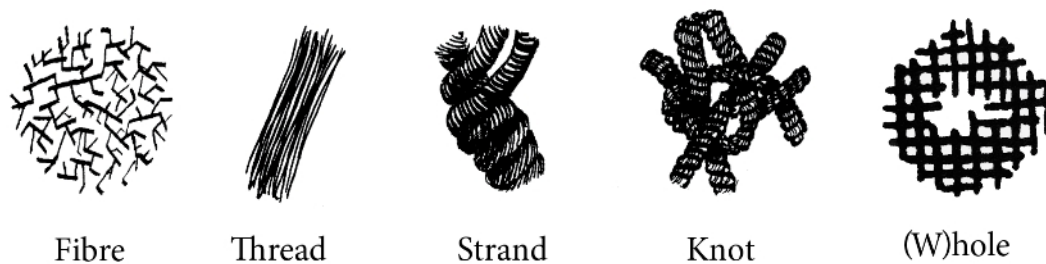


Figure 21. Edwards. C.H. (2023) *Structured Structures*. [Ink on Paper].

The process of engaging and pulling the rope highlights the pivotal need for any researcher, especially at a doctoral level of research, to give theory a new kinetic approach, and to not lose touch with the material world. Any stage of empirical research continues to value the process of material handling as a dialogue between *theory* and *practice*. As mentioned before, Sloterdijk’s (2012) notion is vital, as he manifests us not to create a division between ‘active’ and ‘passive’ (contemplative) behaviour, but instead develop practice as a form of theoretical behaviour.

Artistic Research is not bound to time and longs for open-ended situations, and it initiates an ongoing flow. The unplanned discovery and handling of a 10m-long rope, washed out on the shore of Buffalo Bay in South Africa happened over two years ago. First the pulling, and a year later the knotting. The ‘magic of handling’ experience, not only helped me with structuring the structure of my research, but awakened the flow of *creating*, and the urge and ideas of things to create. It is the theory-practice-theory-practice loop, which any artist longs for in their practice.

The aesthetic experience of the structure of a rope *became the figural for the way* to link practice and theory and an answer to “how do I embody my research?” Literally, not figuratively, the rope-pulling experience became the ultimate *figure* of the *figural*. The rope became more than a slippery signifying metaphor, because it did not have any predictive value as to what to associate it with. But rather, the embodied rope experience contained meta-qualities in the sense that it did not just allow for a linguistic or iconographic interpretation, but instead carried a material-semiotic quality, that can be said to be *figural*, where the material and immaterial “puncture each other” (Rodowick, 2001, p. 2). An excellent example of a ‘puncture’ is to refer to Roland Barthes’s idea of *punctum* in relation to photography. The *punctum*, or a prick or puncture that disrupts one’s everyday experience with things, and thus animates them in a prelinguistic way not subject to linguistic or verbal discourses. (Bass, 2017.) The *punctum* has the ability to move someone in a deep, emotional way, carrying over meaning unrelated to any cultural code.

Concluding Remarks

Reversibility and the transferability between elements, objects and concepts, puncture each other, both states highlight a certain in-betweenness and ontological state which characterises our being in the world, the same way that *Artistic Research* and Phenomenology bleed across to one another. It could not have been said better but by Deleuze (1994) himself, that if there is an ‘opening’, a gap or as he refers to an “ontological fold” (p. 64) that relates *being* and the *question* to one another. In this relation, *being* is *difference* itself. Additionally, for Deleuze nothing is ever the same, there is only difference, and reality is a becoming being. He furthermore states that: “Between things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to another and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 25). It is the powerful middle, in between ground is where the paradigmatic state of being comes to the front, and develops into insightful meaning to the researcher and researched. The semantic definitions of ‘in-between’ is wide, embracing concepts such as entanglement, mediation, translation, and states of ambivalence, ambiguity, liminality, double-consciousness, a relational space and hybridity, space of networks and conjunctions (Bass, 2017). In other words, in-betweenness enables us to understand the nature of research and reality differently. In Betweenness activities a better understanding of reality in the mind and body, interrupting or prickling our habitual assumptions and beliefs, opening a fast range of potentialities and possibilities.

The two prompts started off with contemplative thoughts, and progressed to a transcendental transfer of the state of being. If one has the question in mind, and the hungry artist searches to answer it through creating or initiating an aesthetic experience that is led by *intuitive* decisions and behaviour, in these cases, the choice to handle one glove and a piece of rope. Piet Mondriaan called the faculty of *intuition* the “capacity to perceive essence” (Cheetman, 1991, p. 44). Deleuze (1994), the new materialist and Arnheim (1986), the art psychologist both stress that *intuition* and the intellect are two cognitive procedures, and that both relate to perception and thinking. Arnheim states that all thinking requires a sensory basis and that “intuition has a share in every cognitive act” (p. 14). In the same light, Deleuze refers to the way that instinct and learning along with sensation and perception and intelligence and memory are measured by the combination of forms of repetition, and it is in the relationships of these levels of active syntheses with passive syntheses. (Deleuze, 1994). My body became the mediator and vessel between theory and practice, which reverberates the aforementioned notion of Spinoza that the thoughts we *gain* through creating an embodied experience (in the simplest definition - to experience or give a visible or tangible form to an idea), are often created through the *unknown of the body* (Deleuze, 1988, p. 19). It is not always possible to know what the unconscious body translates as an experience through our thoughts. We can describe the sensory perception of smooth, rough, hot or cold. But it is not a communication path of describing how unconscious sensory input into the body transcribes into ideas, experiences and theory creation. Like Ingold (2013, p. 6) suggests, “materials think in us, as we think through them”. Deleuze gives us food for thought regarding the meaning of *Body Language* by comparing learning to swim and learning a new language, giving us food for thought as he reminds us that above all the body must remain a language. (Deleuze, 1994).

Both prompts highlighted the hybrid relationship between theory and practice, and that practice embodies both practised thought (*phronesis*) and *critical practice* (*praxis*), and it is therefore crucial not to mistake artistic thinking as abstract thinking, but rather to adopt the idea of a *theoretical behaviour*, as kinetic form of practice. Furthermore, we pose a risk of losing the essences of different things being analogised, if we default to assigning experiences as metaphors. If we consider these *Artistic Research* experiences as *epistemological metaphors* in other words, metaphors with the aim of expressing knowledge, the *value* of the metaphor goes deeper than association, likeliness and meaning. Instead it focuses on the *value* which is yet to be determined through a *figural* and *phenomenological* process.

The two acts discussed formed a cornerstone of the *theoretical framework* of this dissertation and the aspects discussed are embedded within the case studies that will follow. Both prompts showcase how the magic of handling materials serves as a portal for *Artistic Research* and phenomenological experiences. This section concludes by summarising and highlighting the crossovers between and *Artistic Research* and **Phenomenological acts**. Both approaches:

- Allow us to question and understand embodied ontology as something we pragmatically experience.
- Encourage taking a break from your experience. (A day, a week, even a year in this case).
- Enable us to question and reason through material thinking, and the handling of materials.
- Bridges the gap between theory and practice; objective and subjective.
- As (Bolt, 2007, p.34) states, it is not just a creative arts research method, but rather a revealing mode of art that produces praxical knowledge, *as the practical action of doing with a reflexive learning process*.
- Set in motion a process of translating, transposing, or transgressing lived experience into writing.
- Produce drawings, scribbles, murmurs, or gestures, no formal structure of language, poetic, fragments of sentences or traces.
- The act of taking notes is more important than the notes themselves.
- Are a transition from raw experience into scholarly writing.
- Disrupt *subjectivity*, which opens a space for creativity (Kozel, 2011, p. 211).
- Are present in a performer's personal journals or notes as part of a working process.
- The outcomes are not *whole and complete*, but a type of *process philosophy*, which is rather messy at first. (Kozel, 2015, p. 54-74)
- Are *performance research*, and helps to diminish 'dead' academic and 'pure intellectual research' which casts off one's body (Sloterdijk, 2012)
- Are rooted in *sense perception* and have *knowledge-building properties* which stem from aesthetic processes.
- Reversibility is an ontological state which characterises our being in the world, the same way that *Artistic Research* and phenomenology bleed across to one another.
- Are a circular flow from performing as phenomenology or phenomenology as performance.



PART I: PRACTICE IN THEORY

THREAD

Unthreading a Social Fabric: Weaving New Materialism and Ecology in Design Education

Summary of Chapter

This study unthreads the didactic elements of a community-based design curriculum in South Africa. It is aimed at asserting that New Materialist approaches and embodied learning are deeply rooted in ecological theory and serve to be the most influential school of practised thought to overcome dualist doctrines. The Social Fabric components involve engaging in a *material thinking* activity and an *embodied learning* situation that will lead to the co-creation of sustainable and ergonomically designed garments for cancer patients in palliative care. The paper suggests that in order to address material understanding and embodied learning experiences towards addressing ecological issues, educators of student art teachers have two responsibilities: firstly, we must develop an accessible curriculum that incorporates relevant art *theory* that addresses ecological issues. Secondly, we must create a methodological framework for art teachers to know how to turn theory into educational *practice*. In conclusion, the chapter aims to elucidate that art educators should not strive for sustainable development as a goal in itself. Instead, it has to be implicitly and naturally threaded through the fabric of every didactic procedure.

Keywords: Ecology, Embodied Learning, New Materialism, Social Fabric.

There are increased pressures to include *ecological* theory in higher education in order to address issues related to critical citizenship, decolonisation, racism, economic inequality and climate change. How do we educate future art teachers to incorporate ecological theory into their pedagogic practice? The way forward would be to turn to the *ecosophical* through the New Materialist, Felix Guattari (2014, p. 18), as he reminds us that ecology is a three-strand entanglement between the “environment, social relations and human subjectivity”. To render a union between Guattari’s three tenets and to create a correspondence between ecological theory and educational *practice*, we turn to the Beuysian notion of a sculptural activity as a *self-reflexive* theory of practice. Joseph Beuys, was a pioneer of radical ecology in the 1970s, and his artworks and theories epitomise what ecological projects should strive towards today (Adams, 1992). Beuys developed the term *Social Sculpture* to embody art’s potential to transform society and provide solutions to ecological and social problems. He advocated that every human being possesses the creative capabilities to fabricate a utopian society. Was he reviving the *movement* of the modernist artist and craftsman in an avant-garde existence? Beuys embedded material-ontological processes into his art, fusing the notion of aesthetic creation and utilitarian principles to the capabilities of the everyday person. He therefore revived the notion of the Bauhaus’ *Gesamtkunstwerk* but instead spoke of an *Ecological Gesamtkunstwerk*. This type of artwork was “to be created through democratic participation of all citizens in reconstructing a social organism as a work of art” (Adams, 1992, p. 28). Thus, one could say that his development of an *Ecological Gesamtkunstwerk* and *Social Sculpture* are analogous concepts. In parallel to what New Materialists believe, Beuys advocated that *thought* does not only occur in our heads, and the Cartesian division between mind and body is the leading cause of the ecological crises we are experiencing. (Adams, 1992). “Abstract intellect” within our heads needs to be balanced with the “revitalising forces of feeling from the *heart* and active will from the *limbs*” (Adams, 1992, p. 29). Beuys believed that embodied experiences are deeply rooted in ecological philosophy, allowing one to overcome dualist doctrines of the human versus nature. New Materialism reminds us that the process of materialisation or embodiment is the mediating process to overcome dualist thought. In the instance of *making* or *creating*, there is no independent functioning of the mind and body, but rather a collaborative action where the mind-body works and learns in unison.

The *material turn* has informed new debates about man vs nature, and Spinoza’s ideas of this human-nature relationship and different kinds of realities have venerable pedigrees going back to Plato (Hübner, 2019). Deleuze’s (1988) re-reading of Spinoza offers a practical connection between environmental concerns and man: “Interacting with things and understanding things cannot be

separated”. Spinoza rejects the superiority of mind over body, and he elaborates that to have an *experience*, the mind and body need to work together. “What is an action in the mind is necessarily an action in the body as well, and what is a passion in the body is necessarily a passion of the mind” (Deleuze, 1988. pp. 18–19). Spinoza does not devalue the *thoughts* we gain in experiences but draws our attention to the fact that an *unconscious thought* is just as profound as the *unknown of the body*. (Deleuze, 1988. pp. 18–19).

In the same embodied pragmatist tradition, it is necessary to mention Shusterman’s (2011, p. 208) somaesthetics as a field not only combining theory and practice, but also deconstructing the separation of mind and body. The common ground between pragmatist thinkers Deleuze and Shusterman stems from Spinoza’s wisdom. In the context of this study, we will return to Shusterman’s practical implications of “the various things we know (or can learn) about embodied perception (aesthesis) and action and about socially entrenched body norms” (Shusterman, 2012, p. 188).

Textile Analogies

Social fabric is often used to refer to the composition, coherence and social system of a society. Within the domain of human development, the definition branches off to include the socio-geographical aspects, such as the demographics of an area, level of education, ethnic composition, and rate of employment - all combined regional values to create a resilient social texture. The subject matter discussed in this paper aims to go beyond marginality and a geographical context. Instead, it aims to shed light on the symbiotic relationship that exists between human geography and social practices, which can lead to the production of culture and critical citizenship.

What are the material and practical consequences of textile-derived analogies? Textile theorist Joke Robaard (2011, n.p) states that:

In language, we pretend to execute a material act; in reality, we execute a technological instruction. Somewhere between *fabricated language* and the *real fabric*, there is a tear, a gaping hole.[...] The gap, in fact, is a perfect place for testing the consequences of literary and concrete matter. The gap is the very essence of weaving.

If we consider that the social fabric texture we refer to in this case study is woven, we are inclined to reiterate the weaving paradigm Plato introduced in a dialogue in the Statesman. In politics, the craft

of weaving was employed by Plato as an analogy of statesmanship (Sampson, 2020). Plato studied the craft (or *technology* from the Greek: *techné*) of weaving before transforming his knowledge (episteme) to refer to the same motif needed for *Statecraft* (Robaard, 2014). The actual and virtual life of material systems has been emphasised by contemporary New Materialist philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987, p. 475) in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. They introduced the technological model of fabric and referred to Plato's weaving paradigm as a "royal science". To sustain or create a resilient society, the government can perform the same act, by joining diverse threads and interweaving its citizens into a cohesive unity. (Sampson, 2020). Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy makes no arbitrary distinctions between nature and culture and claims that „humans are co-extensive with all other objects and subjects of a complex, dynamic, autopoietic system". (Semetsky, 2006. p. XIII)

We can learn from Plato's vision for a cohesive society as it was rooted in *understanding materiality*, which is one of the foundations of what New Materialist philosophy is built on today. If *weaving* provides us with paradigmatic values, as mentioned above, *undoing* a weave or 'unthreading' a fabric similarly serves two levels of phenomena in this study. Firstly, 'unthreading' a *Social Fabric*, refers to 'loosening' or taking apart the composite threads that were woven to create this educational experience, and secondly, it comments on the New Materialist notion of material thinking. If we consider all the didactic elements of this project as threads, the *social fabric* is constructed by specific theoretical inputs and the interaction between teacher-student-community. In other words, unthreading the composite parts of this fabric aims to describe the transformative power of art-making processes and the embodiment of learning opportunities that community-based projects offer.

Aims and Objectives

The study is part of the AMASS Acting on the Margins, Arts as a *Social Sculpture* project and serves as an example of field research to provide examples of alternative didactic systems for Art Education with a social impact. The AMASS project refers to Joseph Beuys' metaphor of a Social Sculpture, and the project discussed in the case study to follow aims to create a comparative concept to provide examples of the workings of a *Social Fabric*. In parallel with the objectives of the AMASS Project, this study aims to:

- Develop multidisciplinary methods for capturing, assessing, and harnessing the societal impact of the arts.
- Valuing and learning through alternative knowledge systems with the purpose of decolonising institutions.
- Depart from the perspective and the physical positioning of the marginal.

To address the above-mentioned aspects, this study will unthread the didactic elements of a community-based design project initiated through a final year of Visual Communication Design, Bachelor of Arts Degree, in South Africa. The outcome resulted in an *embodied learning* situation of co-creating sustainable and ergonomically designed garments for cancer patients in palliative care. The patients' physical interactions with the garments were intended to ease their body movements, and the material and aesthetic details were aimed at evoking a positive *mindset*. What theoretical, artistic and pedagogic approaches led to facilitating this project? How did this project allow the students to participate as critical citizens and experience ecological responsibility?

Context

The historical backdrop of South Africa's colonial past, multilingual population, and apartheid regimes, together with an economic disparity, enforces a vast amount of social, political and environmental problems. With a long-standing history of the problems mentioned above, the country is still in the process of reversing the negative result of racial domination and discrimination. The Design Education Forum of South Africa (DEFSA) argued that human-centred design principles need to aid the negative results and should be incorporated in design research and design education in South Africa (Cassim & Bowie, 2016). Designers “need to acquire ‘a broader humanistic point of view’ that will help them understand the complexities surrounding these problems” (Buchanan, 2001, p. 38 cited in Cassim & Bowie, 2016). In comparison to South Africa, Bishop (2012) draws our attention to a different response to political agendas and what *Social Art* under the regime of *Socialism* is, with the historical backdrop of communism in former Czechoslovakia. The uniform cultural policy and Socialist Realists' effect upon the performance-based art of solitary individuals placed emphasis on the body in space, performed with the minimum of materials. The criterion for inclusion existed in an atmosphere of near and constant insecurity and surveillance, and participation was an artistic strategy deployed only amongst trusted groups of friends and not the general public. Artists did not regard their work as political but rather as existential and apolitical, committed to ideas of freedom and the individual imagination. Jiří Kovanda's artistic responses made participatory art with the general public, but excruciatingly pared-down works testify to the restricted nature of public space and social interaction. Bishop (2012, p. 130) informs us that the criterion for inclusion existed in an “atmosphere of near and constant insecurity and surveillance”. Participation was an artistic strategy deployed only amongst trusted groups of friends and not the general public.

The Subject

The advanced fourth year of the Visual Communication Design programme involved an expanded self-motivated research project to solve a social, cultural, environmental or urban problem. (See Appendix 3) Projects included working with real-life clients such as NGOs (Non- Governmental Organisations) and communities in and around Stellenbosch.

Theoretical Principles

Social and Ecological Design was the first theoretical principle introduced to this project. Students were introduced to the anthropological approach and to the design principles of Victor Papanek (1973). His book, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, marked a turning point in understanding a design approach that demands of us to rethink processes that reflect *responsible* design. The second theoretical aspect introduced was the practice of *Psycho-geography*, as elaborated by a group of artists of the Situationist International. The Situationist practices included *dérive* (literally meaning *drifting*). *Dérive* was an experimental, psycho-geographic method and “a new mode of behaviour” (Debord, 1958. p. 40) linked to discovering a condition in urban society. Through the act of walking, Psycho-geography is the science that uses humans as instruments for learning about their environment (Wood, 1998). The demand for novel and urban environmental experiences can reconnect us to our environment and community.

The Teacher’s Practice

After the initial two weeks of independent research and theoretical introductions, Prof. Elmarie Costandius initiated a task that was meant to *foster the conditions for creative concept development*. The task, which will be described, has been a concept she has used in several workshops, and it has been proven to open situations for „bodily and cognitive engagements and become a way to be/think/act differently (Costandius, 2019. p. 1). Linking with Shusterman’s Pragmatic ‘somaesthetics’ (Shusterman, 2000b. p. 272; Shusterman, 2000a. p. 142), we can ask ourselves: How can we materialise our thinking through action or develop a somatic performance? In other words, how do we create embodied forms of knowledge with our body and mind in action? Costandius (2019) firmly believes that art processes naturally include the use of materials and that the body is part of this process of self-directed learning, where one can explore ideas without any boundaries. Furthermore, the entangled process when thought and action collide, through working with materials,

allows for experimentation, and mistakes; it is these instances that allow for new understanding. Costandius (2019) also asserts that:

Artists know from experience that matter can be social agents and possess agency. Working with paper as matter (or even text as matter) could bring the artist to a new understanding. Text, as printed in a book, can be used as thinking with theory, but also as matter: using the paper on which the text is printed in addition to what its content conveys. The shape of the text, the letter type/font itself, and how the paper is wrinkled, can influence the flow of thinking and doing while working with text as theory and matter at the same time.

To set this experimental art process into action, Costandius asked the students to choose any book from a pile of discarded old library books. The topics of the books were unrelated to our research themes, which led the students through a process of linking unrelated concepts and experimenting in a material, tangible and embodied way. (Costandius, 2019). The students had to use this object and create something that would link it with their current research. In other words, we had to give our thoughts a *form*. The creative act was meant to give insight into our research and ideas to ultimately lead to concepts.

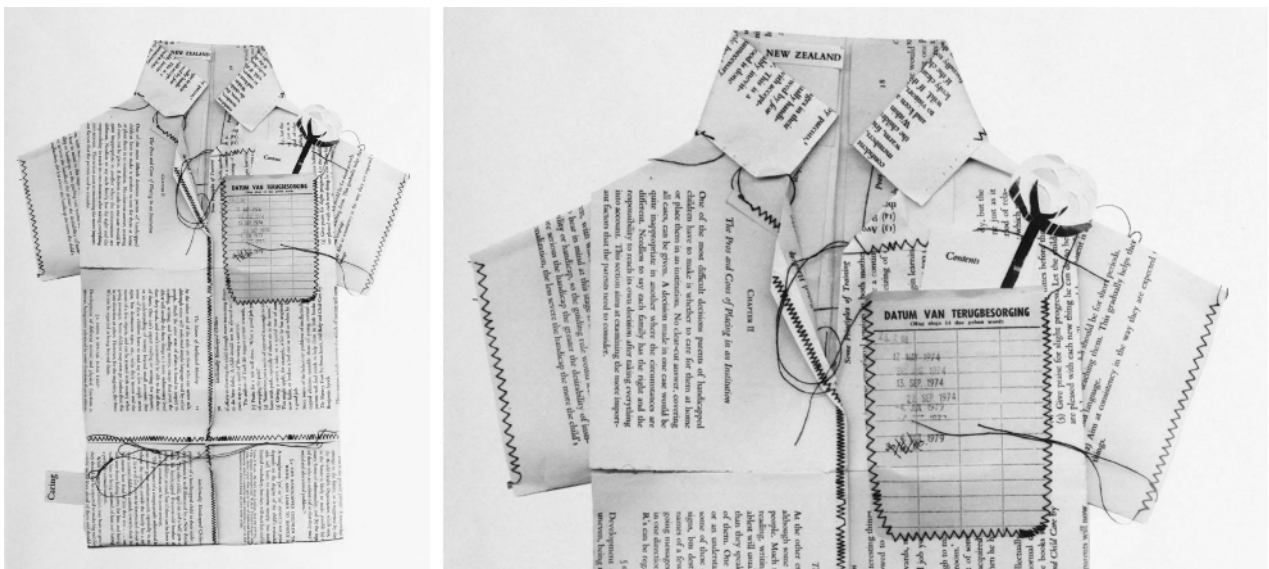


Figure 22. Edwards. C.H. (2009). *Material Thinking*. (Book transformation by student). [Discarded book, thread. 35cm x 20 cm].

At this stage, the research of the student was centred around the problem and effects of local clothing consumption among university students. To then transform a physical book with printed text, the student went through a process of experiencing *visual* and *tactile* form, perceiving the material properties of paper and reading the printed text. The student was inspired by the supple paper, which was reminiscent of fabric, to construct a garment. (Figure 22). Secondly, the text located in various places of the book provided insight and another layer of meaning to the garment. For example, the word *Contents* on the contents page recalled thoughts on the contents of fabric. The note with rows and columns with the borrowing history dates was associated with the previous owners of garments (for example, recycled or second-hand clothing) and the idea of creating a circular economy.

The pedagogic approach mentioned above not only opened the idea of working with material in an experimental way, but it also gave way for *immaterial* thoughts to *materialise* in physical form, leading to further and new insights. Engaging in this activity established the importance of the hybridity between *thought* and *form* when working with *matter*, which allows for a shifted experiential perspective. Frayling (2011, p. 133) accordingly recasts this notion as „a convergence of the head, hand, and the heart in a think and do tank“, and echoes what Beuys advocates, that to overcome dualisms and arrive at knowledge, our thoughts (*heads*) need to be balanced with the “revitalising forces of feeling from the *heart* and active will from the *limbs*“. (Adams, 1992, p. 2)

The Student

The next phase of the project involved linking the classroom to a community. To achieve this, the students participated in a psycho-geographic walk that would allow them to explore their *immediate* social environment (Figure 24) and potentially lead them to create a *situation*. It is essential to mention that it is the exploration of one's *immediate* environment, as it is not about creating “exotic marginalised groups” (Lind cited in Bishop, 2006, p. 181) outside our living environments. On foot, the student discovered the Hospice second-hand clothing store.

Discovering the Hospice on foot created a *situation*. In this situation, the student could positively intervene with a project that would run parallel with the circular model of the Stellenbosch Hospice. The first thing the student did was to create an awareness campaign and concept called *Kottonree* (wordplay meaning recycled cotton). The campaign involved various campus installations to make students aware of their clothing consumption behaviours, and the benefits of recycled cotton, while also promoting the Stellenbosch Hospice's circular infrastructure.

Receiving vast amounts of recycled clothing was not the end of solving this problem. One of the

questions that arose was, how can one increase the value of recycled content? If one wants to make a difference within the circular economy, one must position one's body within the Hospice's palliative care unit where being in this situation could allow for an embodied experience. Apart from the conscious observation of the patient's needs, the notes, photographs, and interviews with these patients, there was also an unconscious bodily memory, which made this project worth reflecting on.

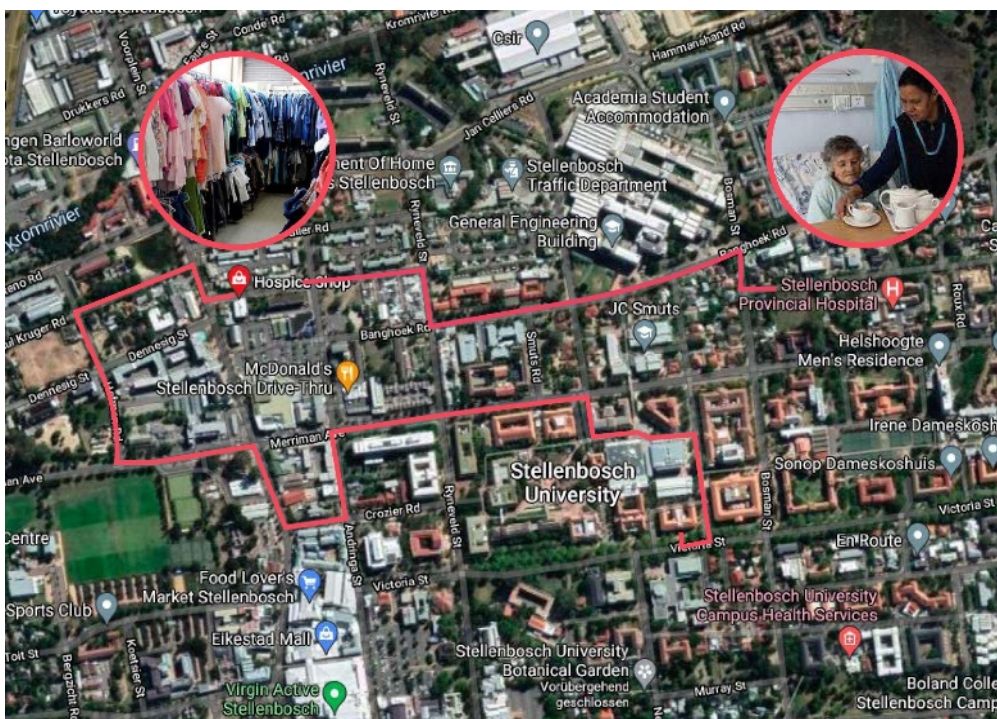
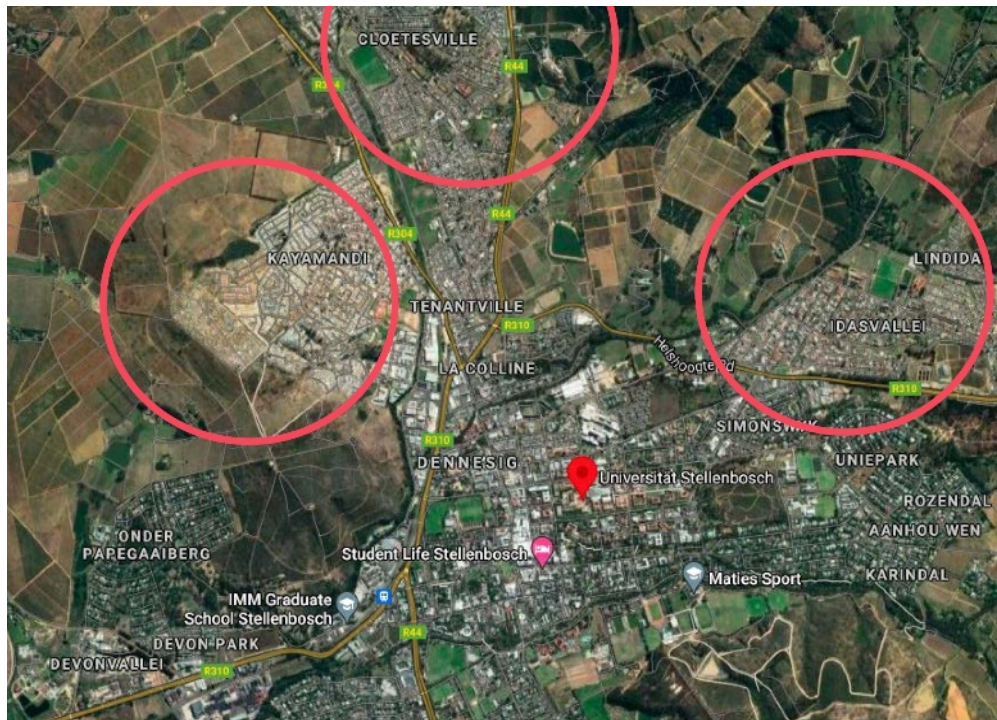


Figure 24. (Top Photo) Stellenbosch University is shown pinpointed in red, and the circled neighbourhoods are often considered as ‘marginalised’ communities. (Bottom Photo) Zoomed in photo to show the student's walking route in their immediate environment, to discover the proximity of the Stellenbosch Hospice clothing store and collaboration with the Stellenbosch Hospice.

Outcome

This student’s creative outcome (figure 25-26) consisted of a range of garments that incorporated various social design aspects. Each garment was co-designed with cancer patients who often face physical challenges of getting dressed and general movement. This led to an investigation of the fundamental principles of ergonomics and how deconstructing existing garments can enhance the comfort and mobility of patients. For example, if the patient showed difficulty in raising their arms to put on a jacket, the student designer solved it by deconstructing an existing jacket, and inserting an open-ended zipper down the 'spine' of the jacket so that the jacket can be put on, one side at a time. A second example involved inserting long velcro openings at the end of the arm of a jacket, to easily enable the procedure to take a patient’s blood pressure. The collection was also made with aesthetic principles in mind to see how far the design solutions can be extended visually to enhance the target group’s psychological well-being.



Figure 25. Edwards.C.H (2009) *Kottonree*. [Reworked clothing from Stellenbosch Hospice]



Figure 26. Edwards.C.H (2009) *Glove Knit*. [Reworked knitwear, gloves]

Palliative Care Ward, Stellenbosch Hospice Hospital, South Africa. The garment was co-created after close bodily observation and conversations with palliative care patients with neurological Essential Tremor (ET) disorder. This disorder causes your hands to shake rhythmically. The *Glove Knit* is designed to keep the hands warm, calm and in a stable position.

Conclusion

The study showcases the relevance of implementing ecological and New Materialist approaches into Visual Communication Design didactics. New Materialist approaches teach us that material understanding leads to tactile cognition, which is the first step towards understanding complex concepts. In the context of art education, it is a method which art educators and students can use to turn *theory* into *practice*. In Plato's dialogue, we are struck by his material understanding of weaving and how this knowledge led him to the idea of composing a resilient community and creating a *Social Fabric*.

The *Kottonree* project illustrates that working with a community involves much more than just visuality. Co-creation is a two-way experience aimed to fulfil both the designer's and society's needs. Within the field of *Visual Communication Education*, Ingold (2018, p. 4) reminds us that *communication* is a two-way act, and more specifically, communication by noting the affinity between the terms *communication*, *community* and *common*. Dewey sees this affinity as the vital aspect that strives to reach an accord on how people with different life experiences could live in consonance. While the student gained situated bodily knowledge in the process of arriving at the creative outcome, the target group gained what Shusterman calls embodied perception (aesthesis) in experiencing the specially constructed garments.

This case study serves as an example of how one can involve people as the material of the work and how the participatory aspect *becomes the work of art*, more than the product itself. In this instance, the work of artists takes on new forms that are often experimental acts through which the artist takes on the role of social worker, educator or activist (Fulkova, 2019). Helguera (2011) reminds us that artists don't act like amateurs in these disciplines mentioned above, instead, their actions may become meaningful for others as evidenced in the examples given in this paper. Our physical realities and experience of the *real* are affected by enhanced screen proximity. Therefore, we need to turn our attention to the kinaesthetic tactile dimensions at hand. "Like works of art, people (and objects) lose their aura when kept at a digital arm's length. Art is lifeless when it can't resonate with bodies". (Gielen & De Munck, 2020, p. 3). Art educators should not strive for sustainable development as a goal in itself. Instead, it has to be implicitly threaded through the fabric of developing a didactic ecology as an entanglement between the social environment and human subjectivity.



STRAND

Intertwining a Four-Strand Rope: A Dialogue between Artist, Teacher, Researcher and Student.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter delves into the implementation of *Artistic Research* by an artist, teacher, and researcher, illustrating how *pedagogy becomes a work of art*. Notably, the concept of art takes on a dual significance as the artworks created by the teacher and the student are integrated within the didactic context. The teacher, a textile theorist and archivist, infuses artistic sensibilities into her practice by orchestrating artistic experiments in collaboration with her students. Her insights are acquired through documentation, substantive discussions, video recordings, and a deep engagement with the creative process. The student *Artistic Research* projects, born from the prompts provided by the teacher, materialise as 'open' artworks, serving as unfolding touchstones that lay the foundation for the student's subsequent practice as teaching artists. The methodology employed in this chapter is *Artistic Action Research*, guided by the *Research in Didactics model*. The method used was the transcription of a semi-structured dialogue between the former student and teacher, as they retrospectively explore their shared journey during a Masters in Design degree program. A key conversation with a former teacher is too worthy to be placed in the appendix. Within this chapter, particular parts of the dialogue are included to emphasise the teacher-student relationship. Moments of Schön's (1983) Reflection-In-Action, Reflection-On-Action and Bourdieu's (1990) Reflexive Learning are incorporated. Ultimately, this chapter elucidates the performative nature of *theory* and its activation in *practice* and how a reflexive stance towards one's formative education can later influence and form part of one's frameworks and patterns of thinking and action as a teaching artist.

Keywords: Artistic Research, Textile Theorist, Archive.

Context

The Master's degree under discussion was undertaken in the Netherlands in 2010. During this time the Art-based research climate was dominated by two seminal theorists, placing *Artistic Research* on the global map. Firstly, Henk Borgdoff's (2012) seminal thesis *The Conflict of Faculties: Perspectives of Artistic Research and Academia* opened many arguments in the field. He proclaimed that *Artistic Research* or *Artistic Knowledge Production* is an endeavour in which the artistic and the academic are connected, in other words - a form of knowledge production. Although the knowledge is not always made explicit, it is up to the artist to articulate the pre-reflective, unfinished thinking of the embodied content.

The second theorist and director of this specific Master's degree program under discussion is Henk Slager, a professor in *Artistic Research*. Slager (2015) has been a prominent figure in the field of *Artistic Research* and his contributions include advocating for the integration of artistic practice and research, emphasising the importance of critical reflection within artistic endeavours. His main point of departure for developing the curriculum for the Master of Arts course is rooted in the tension between knowledge production and artistic thought. He compares this tension to the semiotics debate of the 1970s and the role of Roland Barthes' (1975) seminal statement that *textuality escaped the discipline of semiotics*. Barthes suggests that not everything in language and verbal communication is neatly contained within the confines of traditional semiotics. He implies that textuality, (being textual or pertaining to texts), cannot be fully contained or limited by the principles and boundaries set by traditional semiotics. It indicates a recognition that the interpretation and understanding of texts involve complexities and nuances that extend beyond the framework provided by semiotic analysis. In the same way, artistic creations are not merely limited to one meaning, or just seen as representations or appreciation, but as tools and processes for knowledge production for example.

Furthermore, Henk Slager (2015) underscores the shared features of the 1970s Semiotics debate and *Artistic Research*, highlighting their *interdisciplinary nature*, *evolving terminology*, and the *importance of dialogue and debate* in advancing knowledge and understanding within their respective fields.

Interdisciplinarity and Boundary Crossing:

Both the 1970s Semiotics debate and *Artistic Research* are marked by their interdisciplinary nature. Slager highlights how both domains challenge disciplinary norms and encourage scholars and artists to think beyond traditional boundaries. In the Semiotics debate, scholars from various fields discussed the nature of signs and symbols in language, culture, and communication. Similarly, *Artistic Research* combines elements of artistic practice and academic research, often crossing the boundaries between these traditionally separate domains.

Evolving Definitions and Terminology:

In both the Semiotics debate and *Artistic Research*, there has been ongoing debate and evolution of key terms and concepts. In Semiotics, scholars have grappled with defining fundamental concepts like 'sign,' 'semiotics,' and 'meaning.' Similarly, in *Artistic Research*, there's an ongoing discussion about what constitutes 'research' within artistic practice. Slager points out that both domains involve a continuous reevaluation and refinement of terminology and definitions.

The Role of Dialogue and Debate:

Lastly, Slager emphasises the role of dialogue and debate in both domains. The Semiotics debate involved extensive discussions and disagreements among scholars. *Artistic Research* often involves dialogues between artists and researchers, as well as debates within academic and artistic communities. Slager highlights how both contexts thrive on intellectual exchange and discourse.

Subject

The Master's Degree program focused on Design with a specialisation in Fashion Communication, all within the larger scope of a Master of Arts program. (See Appendix 4). The program's approach is experimental and with a practice-based focus on the designer as a researcher. The course is geared at creating a reflective design practice, evoking a research attitude where design in a strict sense becomes contextualised in the larger world of involvement and commitment. The course required students to develop and enrich their practice-based research by incorporating visual and theoretical aspects and enhancing critical reflection to deepen knowledge and insight. In this context, fashion was viewed as a form of communication that inherently carried cultural and political significance, rather than being neutral. Fashion is rich in meaning, symbolism, allusion, and citation. The course

encouraged students to explore how concepts like interconnectivity, interactivity, and performativity could pave the way for innovative directions in fashion theory. The programme aims to couple theoretical creativity and discipline exceeding vision with artistic power. The final thesis and design project are counselled as an entity, creating an interaction between practice-based research and theory-based research.

Teacher's Theory

Describing Joke Robaards' methodological approach to *Artistic Research* and knowledge production is intricate. Her fashion, garment and textile knowledge can be traced to the fibres of a piece of fabric, spanning from the origins of capitalism as told through the story of Karl Marx's coat¹² to the ancient weft patterns of the indigenous carpets. From her textile knowledge, you learn that it has another reality, another action. Her research serves as a dynamic reference point grounded in theory-driven experimentation. As a participant in her open-ended pedagogic experiments, one could always walk away knowing and experiencing that the garment is connected to a bodily experience. She adeptly conveys critical theories in textile theory and the sociological aspects of visual culture. Her practice operates at the intersection of various domains where she conducts didactic experiments that inform her artistic work. In the realm of art and fashion Robaards' investigations result in the creation of what has been said to be "fold-like contours and stylistic models, moving in an elliptical manner between commodification and emancipation" (Slager & Balkema, 2010, p. 14). Her archive is far from a static repository; instead it aspires to be a dynamic "garment cartography" (p. 13). Collaborating with her students she activates her textile theory and fashion advertisement archive representing garments and their contexts through various media including a series of maps and books. Her projects with students aim to impart knowledge about the "social garment" within the broader context of visual anthropology, politics and philosophy. Robaards' work highlights the lack of comprehensive texts that thoroughly document the evolution of everyday garments despite their endless variations that reveal the behaviours and identities of individuals. She creatively interprets that if fashion is a language, it must possess a grammatical structure. Robaards' teaching encompasses the "Language of Fashion" through the lens of semiotics influenced by Roland Barthes and the overarching metaphor of the "Smooth and the Striated," as exemplified by Deleuze and Guattari. This theoretical knowledge serves as the foundation of her didactic frameworks.

¹² In an essay by Peter Stallybrass discussing Marx and materialistic perspectives in art history. Stallybrass posits that Marx's coat played a role in prompting the philosopher's reflections on capitalism. See Stallybrass, P. (1997). Marx's Coat in Spyer. P. (ed.), *Border Fetishism: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*. Routledge. pp. 183-207.

Teacher's Practice

The following section showcases a dialogue between a student and a teacher. It highlights the projects that were done almost a decade before this conversation, emphasising the lasting impact of this educational *habitus* that was created.

Student

I'd like to begin by focusing on the *workings* of your archive. Your archive takes on many forms, in the form of a book¹³ and through activating your archive through your art and teaching. I can recall that during one of our studio sessions, you provided us with a seminal text to read¹⁴ (figure 27). This text is from the chapter titled *Life as a Work of Art*, written by Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze wrote this text two years after the passing of Michel Foucault. For me, it is very much connected to how you activate your archive and how you've been finding visibility in things not visible yet. Please tell me as well how this text is in connection to your idea of your archive.

Let's take these areas in order. What's the "archive"? You say that for Foucault the archive is "audiovisual"?

Archaeology, genealogy, is also a geology. Archaeology doesn't have to dig into the past, there's an archaeology of the present—in a way it's always working in the present. Archaeology is to do with archives, and an archive has two aspects, it's audio-visual. A language lesson and an object lesson. It's not a matter of words and things (the title of Foucault's book⁵ is meant ironically). We have to take things and find visibilities in them. And what is visible at a given period corresponds to its system of lighting and the scintillations, mirrorings, flashes produced by the contact of light and things. We have to break open words or sentences, too, and find what's uttered in them. And what can be uttered at a given period corresponds to its system of language and the inherent variations it's constantly undergoing, jumping from one homogeneous scheme to another (language is always unstable). Foucault's key historical principle is that any historical for-

Figure 27. Excerpt from the chapter *Life as Work of Art*.

¹³ Robaard, J and Van Winkel, C. (2019) *Archive Species: Body, Habits, Practices*. Valiz. The book is a discursive compilation of Joke Robaard's visual archive, dynamically categorised in an 'anthropological cartographic' way, to represent clothed bodies as seen in print media since 1979. If one carefully 'read' the images in the book, one will become aware of the "double backgrounds" often portraying embedded social, political and historical information.

¹⁴ Deleuze, G. (1990) *Negotiations*. (M. Joughin, Trans.). Columbia University Press. Part Three: *Michel Foucault: Life as a Work of Art*. pp. 94-101.

Teacher

I think you probably start an archive from necessity, because why would you start an archive? I'm an artist slowly digesting philosophy concepts, and I always integrated it into my lessons at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy - and I became a *theory* teacher. Very weird. But every time, every treatment, every lesson or project about concepts and *theory* had to be expressed in a very *open way*. So never a *dry* understanding of text but I always had to find experimental ways of immediately joining others and talking about it or using imagery or body expression. Yes, the thing is that I think you could say that this dealing with the archive is never fixed. If I die in one week then there are only all these boxes and maybe a few projects I did. And for me, the archive is not a volume which consists of boxes of images. So I'm continually changing it, and now I am mapping it, instead of describing it. I describe it and map it.

Student

I recently gave a lecture titled *Finding Visibility* about archiving to the Master of Art Education students at The Charles University in Prague. I showed them examples of *Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas* and *André Malraux's Imaginary Museum*. However, what distinguishes your archive and archiving approach is its active engagement with individuals. Your archive remains vibrant and actively integrated within your students, which I can attest to.

Teacher

The thing is that I'm still chewing on the text of Deleuze on Foucault, and I'm so triggered by it. I also read Tom Conley¹⁵, a professor at Harvard, whom I've met two times. He is the most precise in talking about Deleuze, talking about Foucault, - it's triple! And it takes me a lifetime. How Deleuze describes his ideas about Foucault's notions on history and archives, is so hugely important for me. I learnt a lot and that's my most severe push and learning process is to understand how Foucault talks about history. Because you could say that archives are somehow a kind of history. Foucault

¹⁵ Tom Conley holds the position of Abbott Lawrence Lowell Professor of Visual and Environmental Studies and Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, where his academic focus centres on the interplay between space and writing within the realms of literature, cartography, and cinema. Books include *Film Hieroglyphs* (1991, new edition 2006), *The Graphic Unconscious in Early Modern Writing* (1992), *The Self-Made Map: Cartographic Writing in Early Modern France* (1996, new edition 2010), *L'Inconscient graphique: Essai sur la lettre à la Renaissance* (2000), *Cartographic Cinema* (2007), *An Errant Eye: Topography and Poetry in Early Modern France* (2011) and *À fleur de page: Voir et lire le texte de la Renaissance* (2014).

always admitted that any kind of object and text or whatever particle, these things can be assembled and worked out into something historical. It's an assumption that history is *folded time*. If we talk about a coat and we talk about the lining at the double, we know that somewhere there it clicks together, but its effect is one, but it's double, it's folded. So if history is folded, it depends on how you bend over this idea of history. It's all history - no! It's your folding system, but what do you take out of it? Deleuze has this idea, that within this amount of facts you take into account in historical time, you have to try and create a kind of diagram or scheme and try to make a new assumption, a new statement about it, it could be crazy. But that means that it's a proper, not a reproduction of an assumption of a line, but a double line with new facts, new things emerge, urgent things emerge. And you connect it to an idea of yourself. I am currently working on a difficult project combining many images in my archive. So it's the assumption that the archive is maybe only the archive if I connect some important concepts, and I connect it to images, into a new urgent *map* and *being* together. That's the archive, - and not all these boxes (Figure 28) with pieces with text and carpets - it is only *names*. I must put it on the boxes, but I need those names to find it. But it's meaningless.



Figure 28. Archive Boxes in the studio of Joke Robaard.



Figure 29. Domino setting of students' books.

Student

I'd like to share a statement from Jean Baudrillard's 1976 text in *L'Échange symbolique et la mort* with you. This statement emphasises the significance of documenting and photographing process work. I'm particularly reminded of one of your lessons where we arranged books on the floor like a domino setup (figure 29), took photographs and later discovered new meanings and insights from it.

In the exact duplication of the *Real*, preferably by means of another reproductive medium - advertisement, photography, etc.- and in the shift from medium to medium, the real vanishes. But even in its moment of destruction it exposes and affirms itself, it will become the quintessential real and it becomes the fetishism of the lost object. (Buchloh, 1999).

Teacher

I like the duplication of the real. I'm talking to you through examples. That works best. For the last couple of years, I've been doing three archive projects with groups of people. This project is called *Small Things That can be lined up* (Robaard, 2016) (figure 30-32).

The film *SMALL THINGS THAT CAN BE LINED UP* (2016). It documents the process by which eight students from the Cygnus Gymnasium High School in Amsterdam make contact with material from the archive. In the beginning, we see selected pages from the archive arranged on the ground in a two-dimensional plane. Gradually this flat horizontality is disrupted, as the bodies navigating the space begin to isolate images and hold them up vertically for interpretation while reciting excerpts from one of two texts that were selected - Vilém Flusser's, *Our Images* which explores the ways in which we read images and texts, or Plato's *The Statesman*, in which weaving is proposed as a metaphor for the construction of a stable society. Through this process of selection, recitation and response, the material becomes rearranged and new relations are animated across its surface.

Figure 30. Description of Joke Robaard's *Small Things That Can Be Lined Up*.



Figure 31. Video Still from Joke Robaards project: *Small Things That Can Be Lined Up*.



Figure 32. Video Still from Joke Robaards project: *Small Things That Can Be Lined Up*.

I wanted to do something with my archives with young 16/17 year old students incorporating text from Vilém Flusser and Plato. I created a kind of play. So there were three things, 100 photos on the floor, mixed photos, I think roughly from a few boxes. I even don't know exactly which ones. I wanted a system in which they were not asked to react to the images because that is a burden. I do think so. That's also something Foucault and Deleuze tried to say, to *see and speak is to know*. “But we don't see what we are speaking of, and we don't speak of what we are seeing” (Conley, 2014, p.195). Of course, we have a tradition of teachers saying to students: “Tell me what you see?” And then we get a lot of stuttering. And then we suppose it could be this or that. Foucault wonders with which background knowledge, historical, phenomenological, artistic, psychological, whatever background are you looking at these images? For instance, the medical students of the university were asked to look at the 17th-century paintings at the Rijks Museum. They were asked to describe the condition, what they were supposed to be, and the physical condition of the people portrayed. And of course, as medical students, they say, oh, this woman just looks very pale or yellow, probably. So that you know immediately this from this perspective of medical knowledge, probably you don't see what you see, but you trace through one filter into this painting. So that's why Deleuze and Foucault propose that

between seeing *and talking*, there's a gap, a vulnerable gap, and we have to be aware of it also, probably because we learned - *to tell it like it is*.

Student's Outcome

Reflection-On-Action

Student

Let's discuss the projects you worked on with us, and more importantly how they continue to influence my teaching practices today. Regarding the exhibition project *Horizontal / Vertical* (see figure 33-36) I recall that the lessons began with a reference to architecture, and for this specific project, to the Guggenheim Museum and Frank Lloyd Wright. You described Wright as the creator of utopian never-ending spirals that originate from the very core and ascend. It was only much later that I fully grasped the connection between architecture and textiles when I encountered Ingold's (2015) text. Ingold referred to Gottfried Semper who proposed that the interlacing of fibres in net-making and basketry represented one of the most ancient human arts from which all other forms of art and craft including textiles and buildings originated. Semper argued that the inception of buildings coincided with the inception of textiles. Much like how we initiated the *Horizontal / Vertical* project which ultimately evolved into an exhibition and spatial design based on textile principles. An impactful approach that served as a precursor to conceiving this exhibition concept involved each participant selecting a significant book from their research, and arranging them on the floor akin to a domino setup (figure 29). Students were asked to place their books on the floor one by one, and we had to think about which book our book 'connects'. Subsequently, distinct roles were assigned to individuals, such as an architect, researcher, material explorer, visionary, sociologist, photographer, and so forth. I was given the role of *The Researcher*, and at that time I was reading the book edited by Janneke Wesseling (2011) *See It Again, Say It Again: The Artist As Researcher*. When I was asked to reflect on my role as a researcher the following conversation occurred:

Teacher:

Research. That's a magic word these days. Can you help us to look at the word fresh again?

Student:

Well, research is a systematic investigation of facts and new conclusions. I am reading a book, *The Artist as a Researcher*¹⁶ and there is a big buzz around the concept of ‘Artistic Research’, about the fact that *practice* and *theory* should go hand in hand to provide new knowledge.

Teacher:

I like how you think about *Artistic Research* but do you know the Greek word *theoria* is already a combination of practice and theory? Back then *theory* was considered as a *practice*.

Other Student:

I was thinking about what you said about the *Artist as a researcher*, I think it can be the other way around. *The Researcher as An Artist*. What you produce from your research is what you do. Some researchers create art with their research. Discussing the *Researcher as An Artist*, the whole discussion comes up about what an artist is. I think it depends on how your research is and how you present it.

Teacher:

There are still different domains. That can be negative: many artists are seduced to be subsidised to do research but lose their connection with their work. You need to be full of knowledge, which can be concluded in a work where you can communicate and when you speak or write, where you can spread those theoretical words. The research is sometimes so connected to the work that it becomes art. I like the idea that research is something you have to find something, research, de-sign, and re-sign.

16 Wesseling.J. (Ed.)(2011) *See It Again, Say It Again: The Artist as Researcher*. Valiz



Figure 33. Horizontal / Vertical Exhibition entrance poster.

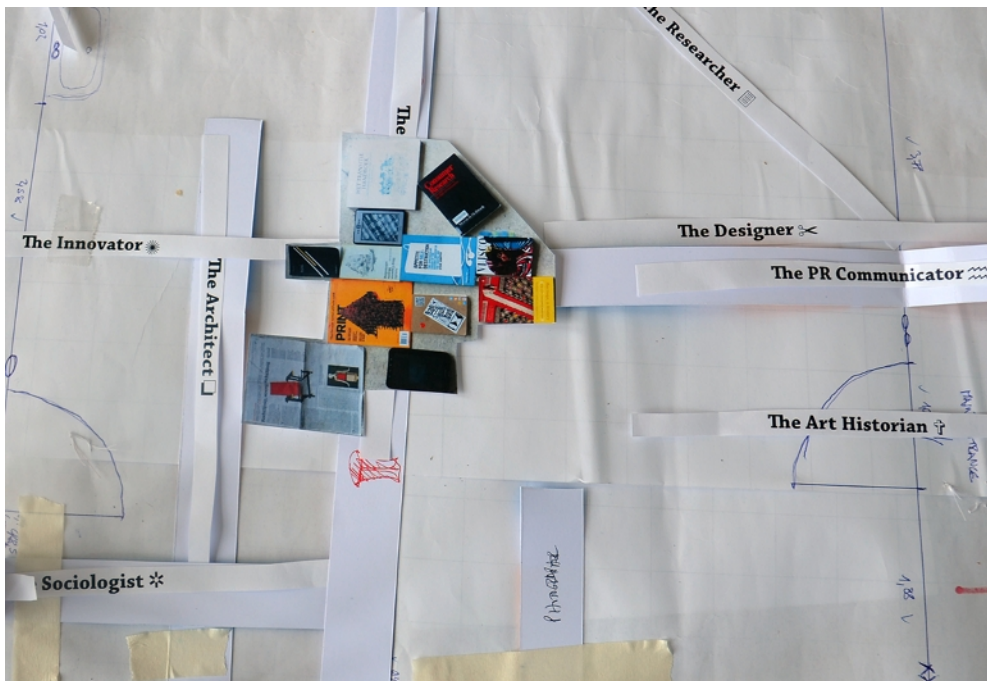


Figure 34. Domino/weaving setting of students' books, to plan the exhibition space.

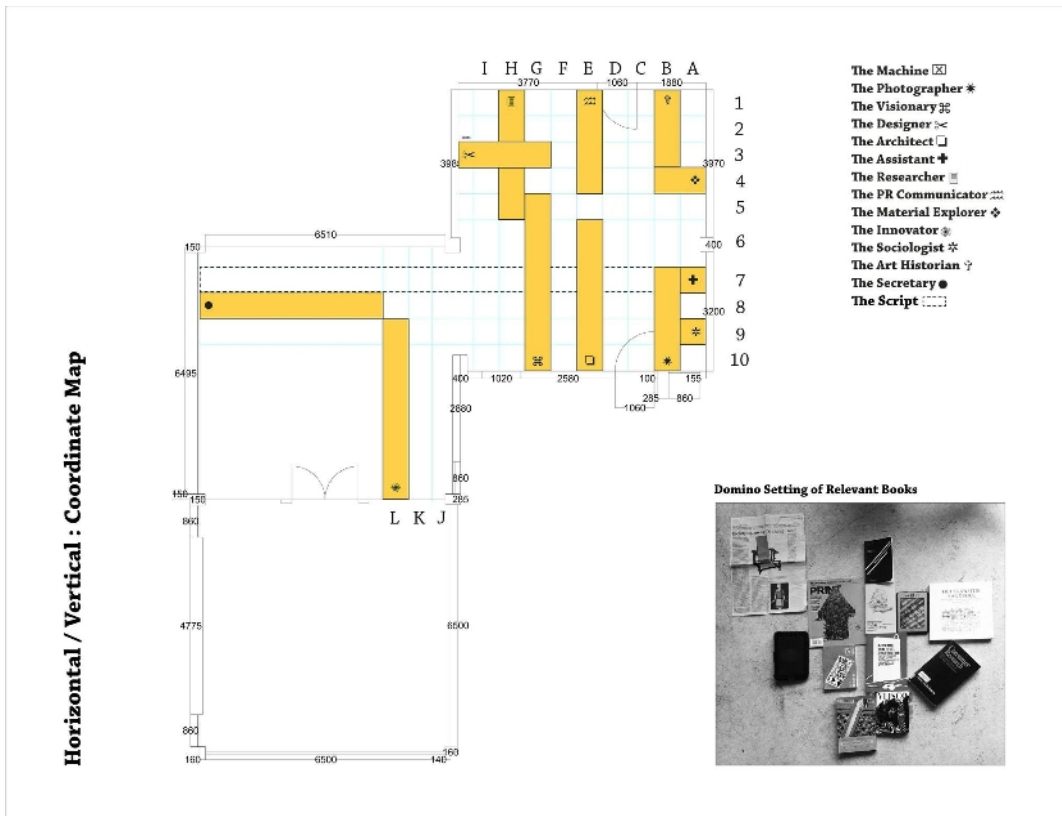


Figure 35. Horizontal / Vertical Exhibition Floor Plan



Figure 36. Horizontal / Vertical Exhibition.

Reflection-On-Action

Artists have meta-moments of arriving at an idea, and cannot always immediately, and rationally describe why they created something because it arrives from multiple fibres of processes, visual exploration and theory. For example, *Tie(d) Conversation* (figure 37) was developed and exhibited during the *Horizontal / Vertical* Exhibition. I chose a red necktie to research and develop. At this time my research was focused on the *physical* and *psychological* effects of a garment. I was fascinated by Umberto Eco's (1983) '*Das Lendendenken*' text. He was in despair, not because of a lack of ideas, but of suffering from tight-fitting jeans, which prevented him from real thinking. Suddenly he questions what happens to the wearer's mind of certain clothing. Eco pondered how warriors lived a constrained, harsh and exterior life, contrasting to how monks' clothing left room for freedom of thought. At the time of the exhibition, I presented the following conversation occurred:

Reflection-In-Action

Student

How can a garment with a semiotic code, force a physical behaviour? I invite someone from the class to come and stand inside the tie, to experience a different physical effect. This tie is a crucial garment in my research. It's a semiotic garment. In this installation, I played with the logical understanding of a tie by putting it upside down. Next to the tie are the notes from one of our classes, which reads as a story. This whole installation is about the definition of a researcher: that practical work, thinking, and research should go hand in hand.

Teacher

We like to play and interact with this highly symbolic tie. It's emblematic. Robert Longo made an artwork of a businessman tumbling down from a skyscraper, almost strangled by a tie.

Reflexive Learning

The following section will extract the knowledge that overcame the knowledge when the student initially reflected on the artwork. The psychological and physiological impact of wearing a red necktie is reminiscent of Bourdieu's examination of the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of internality (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 72). Merleau-Ponty who was influenced by Bourdieu and acted as his teacher further informs us that even the redness of a tie has a dual effect. Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) argued that our perception of red extends beyond the visual realm and is profoundly interconnected with

our bodily sensations, emotions and the surrounding environment. Essentially, Merleau-Ponty's concept of the colour red underscores the inseparable link between the perception of the body and the environment in our experience of colour. Furthermore, the act of wearing a red necktie carries a multitude of hybrid meanings. Symbolic-anthropological studies have demonstrated the tie's evolution from symbolic associations with the male anatomy (Langer, 1991).

The necktie is a potent symbol of authority and masculinity drawing an analogy between its elongated form and the phallic symbolism that characterises male anatomy. An intriguing perspective emerges when considering Lacan's (1957) examination of the phallus which vacillates between its role as a signifier and its relation to the real and the symbolic organs (McGowan, 2018). The material-semiotic dimension of the necktie embodies a symbol of power and a common association with political figures and other individuals in positions of authority. Moreover, the physical or material aspect of a necktie is often connected with the constrictive quality of uniforms such as those worn in educational settings. Many of us can distinctly recollect the relief of loosening a tightly worn necktie at the end of a prolonged day. The necktie as a symbol of authority and masculinity draws intriguing parallels with phallic symbolism reflecting a complex interplay between the material-semiotic aspects of power and the physical constraints of uniformity.



Figure 37. C.H. Edwards. (2012). *Tie(d) Conversation*.
 [Cotton fabric, colour photograph, newsprint paper, 2200 cm x 90cm].

Student

I often get asked why I became a teacher. I have to honestly say it is because of the effect your teaching had on me. It was an eye-opening experience to be involved in lesson experiences where one felt part of a *work of art*. The artworks I produced resulted from your deep theory-driven prompts, which are still present in my way of working with students today. Here it is appropriate to use Bourdieu's (1990) useful term *habitus*, to say, that your teaching formed part of my *habitus*, and that there are "active presences of past experiences" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54) in my current practice

as a teaching artist. Having these “active presences” as a teacher, one realises that one continues with the chain of influencing the *habitus* of the students involved in your teaching experiences. Especially working in the arts, artist-teachers can generate experiences that inform a student's aesthetic sensibility and somatic experiences that inform these crucial formative sensibilities, often overcoming barriers in social and cultural division.

When I talk about the *Lumbar Project* (figure 38-42), I always refer to it as a *pedagogic work of art* that changed my definition of *art*. It is an *art* because of the life-long unfolding influence it had on my future art and teaching practice. The project started with three crucial prompts by you, and the whole project can be summarised in these steps:

Lumbar Cartography

This project seeks to explore the impact of clothing on our physical well-being and, by extension, our cognitive processes. It involves experimenting with the semiotic elements of both material (such as fabric and jeans) and non-material (like low-waist and tight-fitting) aspects in relation to the human body.

1. Draw your lumbar area (waistline) to represent a contoured map or a border of a spatial area.
2. Discuss the lumbar body part as a concentrated area of experience. Consider referring to some of the associations of the lumbar: abdominal, sexual organs, waistline, belly button, uterus, fashion etc.
3. Read and discuss Umberto Eco's text 'Lumbar Thought' (Das Lendendenken), where he refers to his personal experience of how his jeans hurt his crotch area and how it consequently influenced his thoughts.
4. Think of your earliest memory of your mother's clothing behaviour. Find a photograph portraying this clothing behaviour. What impact did it have on you?
5. Link and put this clothing behaviour in context to Roland Barthes' Variants, Chapter 9-10, in 'The Fashion System'.
6. Develop a mode of artistic research and create and experiment with materials to visually combine and communicate all the concepts explored above.
7. Re-present your visual creation by combining text and image.

References

Umberto Eco's 'Das Lendendenken' was published in Wolkenkratzer Art Journal 1986/4, and is part of Joke Robaard's ongoing Archive Intersections project: www.jokerobaard.nl.

Also available in Eco, U. (1983) *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays*. (W. Weaver. Trans) Brace, & Company. p. 194. and in Eco, U. (2007). *Lumbar Thought*. In Barnard. M. (Ed.) *Fashion Theory: A Reader*. First Edition. Routledge.

Barthes. R. (1990). *The Fashion System*. (M. Ward and R. Howard Trans.) University of California Press.

Figure 38. *Lumbar Cartography Project Overview.*

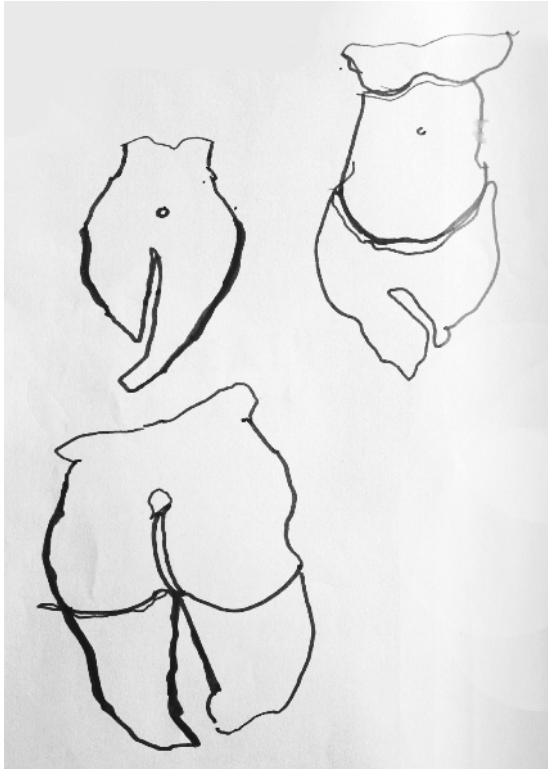


Figure 39. Edwards, C.H. (2012). *Lumbar Contours*. [Indian Ink on Paper, 20cm x 30cm].

Figure 40. My Mother's 'Puffed waistline dress'. [Analogue photograph, 15cm x 25cm].

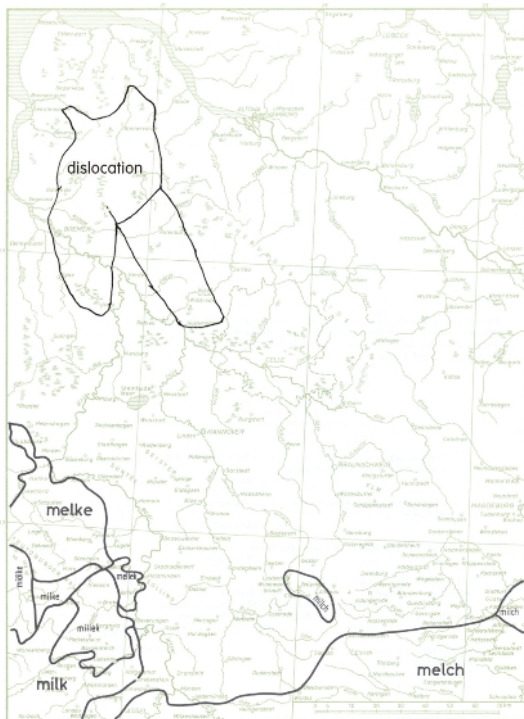


Figure 41. Edwards, C.H. (2012). *Dislocation & Conceptual Trip*.

[Indian Ink, found map, 40cm x 20cm].



Figure 42. Edwards. C.H. (2012). *Lumbar Cartography*. [Plastic Fabric, Digital Photograph].

Student

The way you intertwine theory with practice in your teachings *is a work of art*. It inspired me to pursue the pathway to becoming a teacher, knowing that it is possible to create artworks *through students* and that they can literally and figuratively become your *artistic medium*.

Teacher

Thank you for saying this because this is something I found out the moment I stopped teaching. And it's very good for my work, so it's fine. But in the end, I made a lot of projects in which all these things were so embedded, and then I thought I didn't show anyone, only the guests who were there at the presentations. And so I still thought, yeah, why is everything so segregated? Yeah, it's not. It's always an outside assumption. There's no outside, but it's an assumption to say there's a separation between this and that.

Student

When I initially created and reflected on this artwork, I was influenced by the idea of psychogeography and the relationship between *geography* and the *superego*. The map-

like fabric cutouts around the lumbar (waistline) area were a way to represent the steady process by which the child becomes untied from parental control. When the child grows older, it becomes less dependent on its parents and takes a further step into discovering geographical locations. A child's birth is intimately attached to the geographical location of the mother. Then it progresses in stages. First, it is only the mother's womb, next it is the home, then the street, the playground, the school, the neighbourhood, the city and eventually the world.

Teacher

The moment you start talking about this project, it touches me. I think it was such a very, very basic, basic experience. You stress the importance of these notions of what is inside, what is outside, and how it is connected. And the thing is that while people are dressed in a dozen ways the hemline is higher, and people don't feel ashamed anymore. They are bulky and that they have these tight pants, but still, I think there's a lot of how-to-say-it-self experience now. I think there's also shame concerning the body. So you could look great and say, I don't care. But I have to say that for me this (figure 42) is still very interesting because it's the diagram or the map realised on the body as a fabric, I think that's so important. The thing is that the moment we talk about clothes I remember a lot of students always having problems dealing with the fact that they propose a garment or a design or object into the world. Still, they generalise a group of people. The moment you talk about your niece or your grandmother or your mother you have to stop making abstract connections. That's really because that takes years and years and years and then you're stuck with your generalities.

Reflexive Self-Reflexivity

This chapter showcased different states of awareness of knowledge by analysing an intertwining of reflective and reflexive behaviour, as portrayed through artistic, teaching and researching practices. Reflection is needed to transform a mere search for something into research. The reflexive element emerges as a crucial source of comprehension representing a unique interaction between conception and production, providing insights into the content. Staying true to the definition of Self-Reflexivity, this section will highlight the knowledge that overcame the knowledge that was initially reflected upon when the artworks were produced during the Masters program.

The reflexive insight derived from the *Lumbar Cartography* (Figure 42) project indicates that Joke Robaard's theoretical framework and instructional approach including her lesson prompt were influenced by Tom Conely's (1996) exploration of creative cartography. Conely's research illuminates the historical evolution of maps from objects of fantasy and creativity in the pre-17th century to scientific artefacts subsequently shaping behaviours related to colonial desires, exploration and citizenship and transitioning away from being objects of fantasy. Upon later contemplation of an introductory lesson conducted with students, I discerned a predisposition framework and cognitive pattern within myself. I initiated a lesson (Figure 43) by encouraging students to exercise their 'imagination muscle' and create something unprecedented: "Draw your face as if it were a continent, island, or landmass" (Figure 44). This imaginative cartography permeated through the work of my teacher Joke Robaard and consequently shaped my habitus and teaching.



Figure 43. My shadow on the preparation material for 'Face Cartography' lesson.

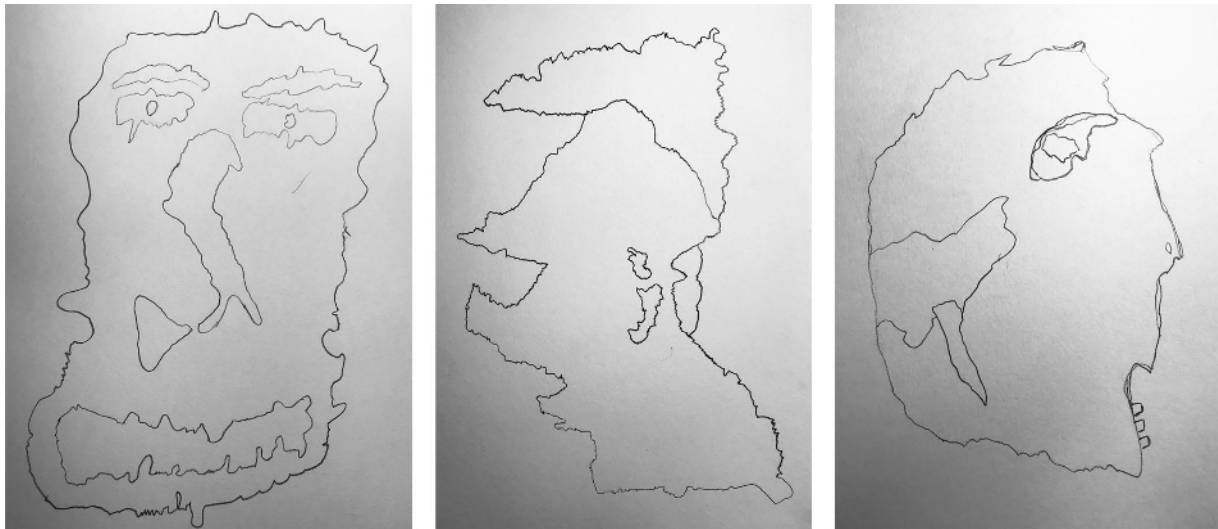


Figure 44. 8-Year-old students ‘Face Cartography’ drawings. [Pencil on paper, 20cm x 30 cm].

The *(T)ied Conversation* (Figure 37), *Striped Uniform* and *Folded Stripe Uniform* (Figure 45-46) projects were both initiated with the research question of how a garment can influence your physical and psychological behaviour. Firstly, *(T)ied Conversation’s* reflective insight involved a deliberate exploration of the semiotic significance of a tie, manipulating its scale, position, and consequently the way of interacting with it. The reflexive understanding acquired pertained to the anthropological and material-semiotic values associated with a red necktie. The embodied impact of the colour red and the tie's evolutionary link to indigenous cultures, with connections to phallic symbolism, became apparent through this exploration.

Secondly, the *Artistic Research* project *Striped Uniform* and *Folded Striped Uniform* (figure 45-46) was developed with the question of how a garment can have a physical and psychological effect on the wearer. The striped garment, a visual system of order and disorder is closely related to human behaviours. Striped garments were associated with individuals situated at the peripheries or outside the established social hierarchy, exemplified by occupations such as jugglers and prostitutes; furthermore, medieval artworks frequently portrayed the devil donning striped clothing. Throughout history, the Western tradition persisted in clothing its slaves, servants, crew members, and convicts in garments featuring stripes.

The initial reflected knowledge gained through the artwork *Striped Uniform* and *Folded Striped Uniform* was that *semiotics could indeed escape textuality*, as Roland Barthes (1975) noted. A positive photograph (on a black background) and the inverted, or negative version (on a white background), with the same textual description, have a different visual outcome. Furthermore, if these two images are

printed and folded the visual semantics are even more different. Semantically both represent the same thing - a folded striped garment, but visually the outcomes are different. Is it then true that language represents reality?

The reflexive knowledge gained through this artwork, was when I reflected on a foreground-background exercise (figure 47-49) I did several years ago with sixty secondary students in design. The gestalt image was taken from Rudolf Arnheim's (1974) seminal *Art and Visual Perception: The Psychology of the Creative Eye* book. I removed one-half of the image and asked students to complete the symmetry. The intention was how their eyes alternate between looking at the foreground and background to complete the image. Mitchell (2008) draws our attention to the core understanding of visual literacy. It is not having the analytical skills of a connoisseur in front of a famous painting. Being visually literate is to have a basic threshold in the visual-spatial world which means to have "the ability to distinguish objects from the space in which they are located, to track a moving object, and to distinguish foreground and background, figure and ground" (p. 13). What Mitchell refers to as a 'visual language' is what Bishop Berkely calls the "universal language of nature" in contrast to the *spoken* and *written* languages which are arbitrary and influenced by cultural constructions. The historian Michel Pastoureau (2001) noted that the medieval eye found surfaces in which a background could not be distinguished from a foreground, unsettling. One cannot help to wonder what the 21st-century eye with all its exposure to screens finds disturbing, or even more how screens have caused our vision to evolve to find it difficult to distinguish between foreground and background. An interesting observation was noted. The only two students, (out of sixty who participated in the experiment) who could not complete the symmetry (middle and right image of figure 48), were interestingly enough on the school's list of students who had learning difficulties.



Figure 45. Edwards. C.H. (2012). *Striped Uniform*. [Recycled Fireman Uniforms, Black Paint, Digital Photographs, 2m x 0.9m]. The uniform on the left was a white uniform, which I then painted with black stripes and took a photo on a black background. The image on the right is the negative, inverted version of the photograph.

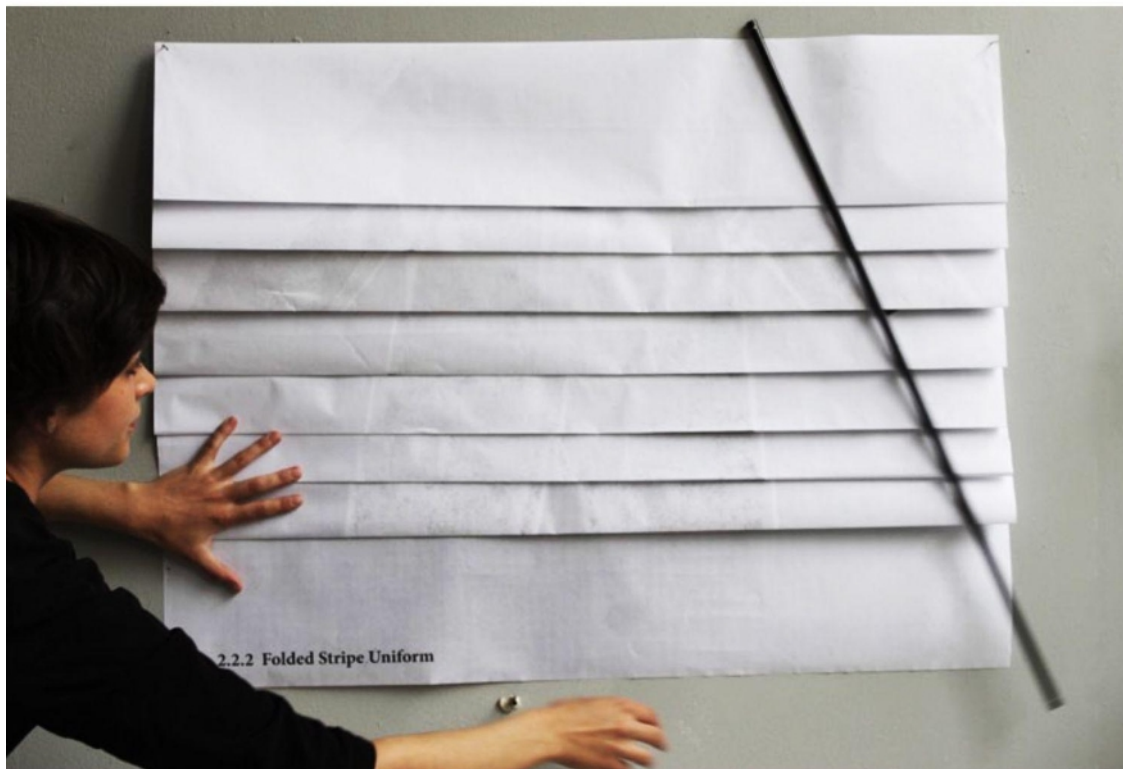
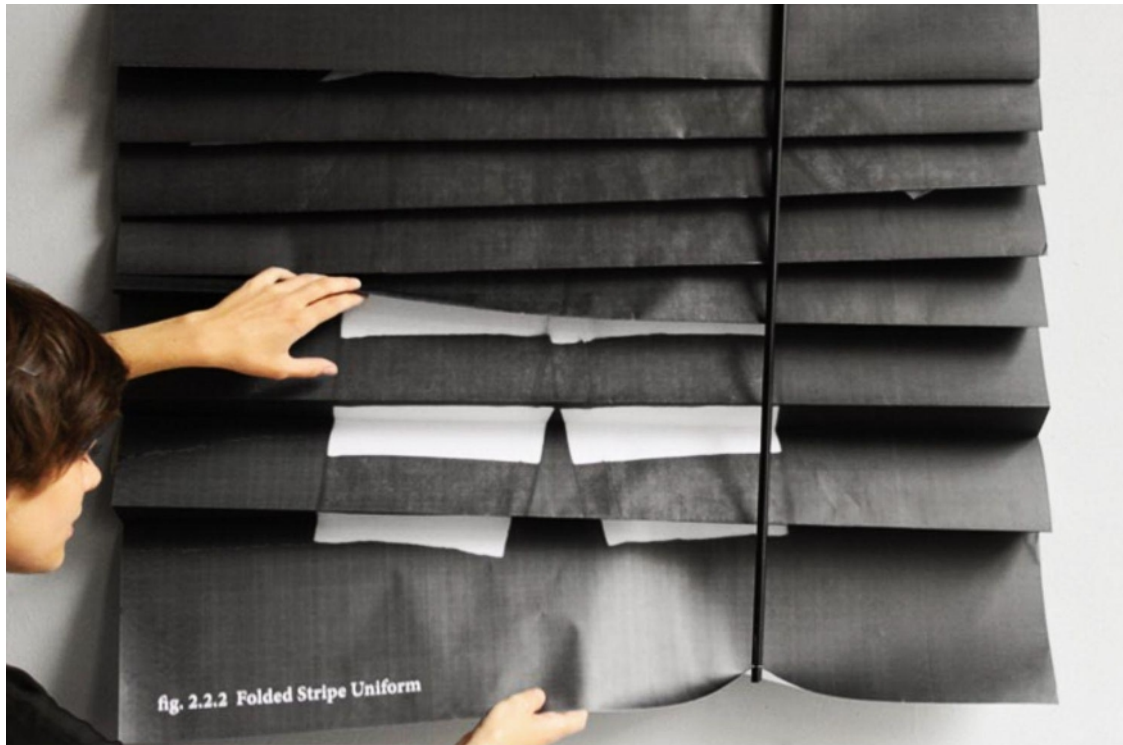


Figure 46. Edwards. C.H. (2012). *Folded Striped Uniform*. [Paper, Digital Black and White Print, 2m x 0.9m]. The above image comprises two printouts of the two uniform photographs in Figure. 45.

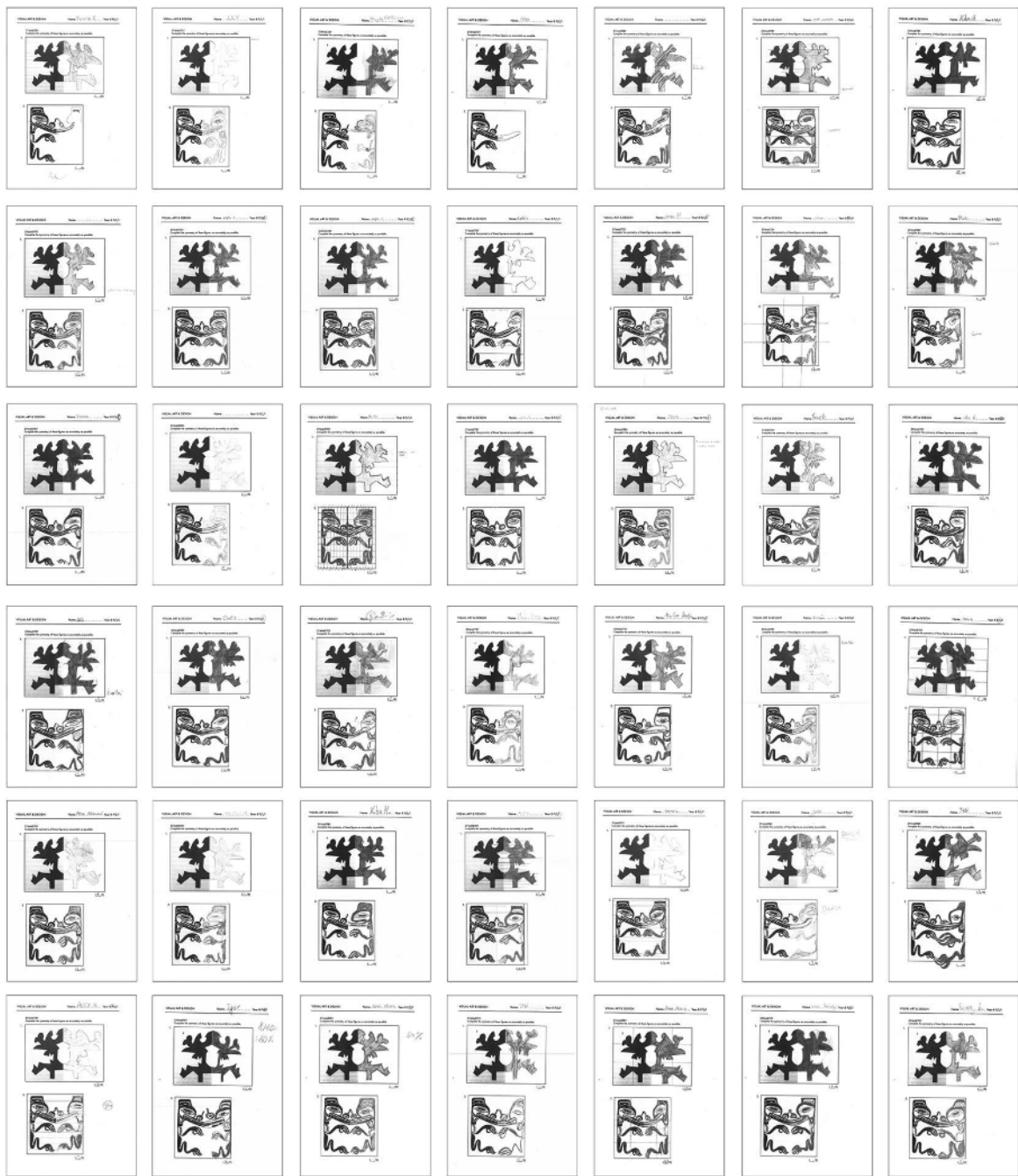


Figure 47. Foreground-background symmetry exercise overview.

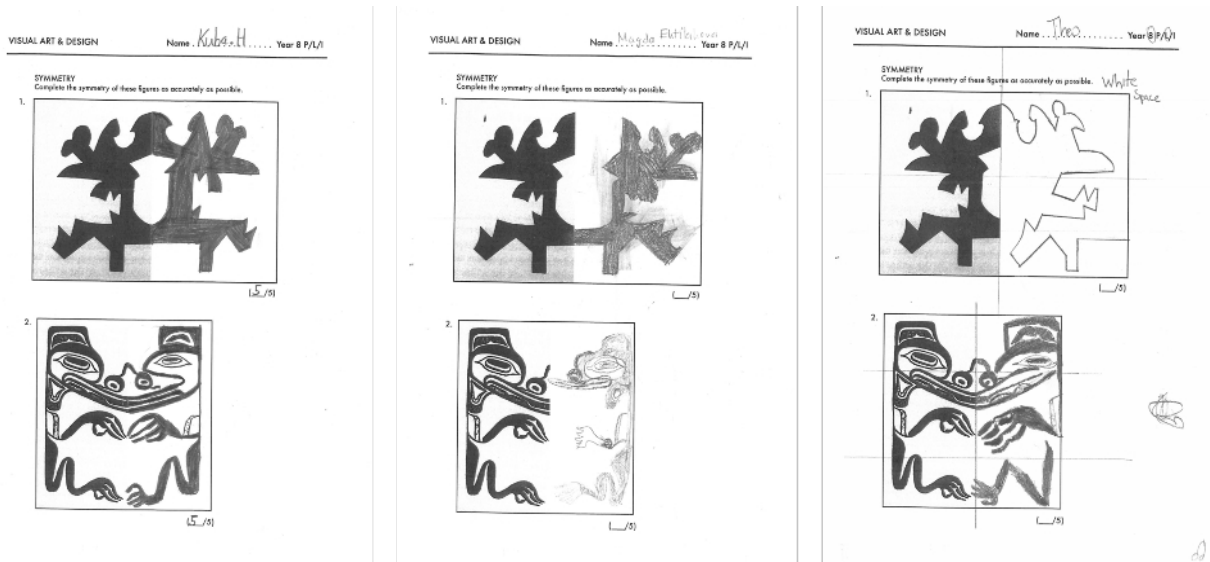


Figure 48. Foreground-background symmetry exercise.



Figure 49. Students looking and thinking about foreground-background symmetry exercise.

The fifth *Artistic Research* project to discuss was done as a practical response to the theoretical text of Roland Barthes' two books *Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography* (1980) and *The Fashion System* (1990). The research question was: Can a garment force physical behaviour? The

consequence was the creation of a *Spectator Vest* (Figure 50), made out of felt, which is considered by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to be an anti-fabric. A grey felt¹⁷ vest was made with several holes the size of an analogue camera's 'pinhole'. An analogue camera was placed inside the vest in a small pocket at the position of the belly button. The vest was worn to take several photographs (Figure 51) under surveillance in different fashion stores to be a 'spectator' of what buying behaviour 'looks' like. The *Spectator Vest* was created to look at a *garment* from a *garment's* perspective exploring Roland Barthes's (1980) notions of the *punctum and studium*. The *studium* according to Barthes, refers to the intention of the photographer, where the viewer can determine the *studium* of a photograph with their logical, intellectual mind. However, with the spectator vest the photos were not directly taken by the eye, but from the perspective of the waistline area. Furthermore, the *studium* signifies historical, social, or cultural meanings discerned through semiotic analysis. The *Punctum* denotes an incidental yet personally resonant detail in a photograph that profoundly affects a specific viewer, giving rise to a private significance detached from any cultural code. The *punctum* directs attention to elements within a photograph that appear to generate or convey meaning without relying on any identifiable symbolic system. Such meaning is inherently subjective, intimately tied to the individual viewer's response to the image.

The reflexive knowledge is to consider that Roland Barthes was first a *Structuralist* but in *Camera Lucida*, he has become a *Post-structuralist*. Within Structuralism "the real is the effect of a system of signification, whereas in the post-structural *Camera Lucida* the real is what patterns light and is opposed to the significant and the semiotic" (Wiseman, 1989, p. 5). In Barthes's Structuralism, the magical and real were opposed; in his post-structuralism, they are in line. Understanding and looking at photography through the lens of Barthes is complex. One way forward, and the reflexive knowledge gained was translated into implementing pinhole photography (*Camera Obscura's*) with students, as a way to understand the different perspectives by creating a camera that disconnected from their normal eye's view, and where the *real patterns light*.

¹⁷ See chapter *The Smooth and The Striated* in Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press. Deleuze and Guattari describe felt as an anti-fabric, with no intertwining, separation of threads, but only an entanglement of fibres, infinitely, open, and unlimited in space. p. 475.



Figure 50. Edwards. C.H. (2012). *Spectator Vest*. (Felt vest, Disposable Analogue Camera, Steel Tripod).



Figure 51. Edwards. C.H. (2012). *Spectator Vest Photographs*. [Analogue photo prints]

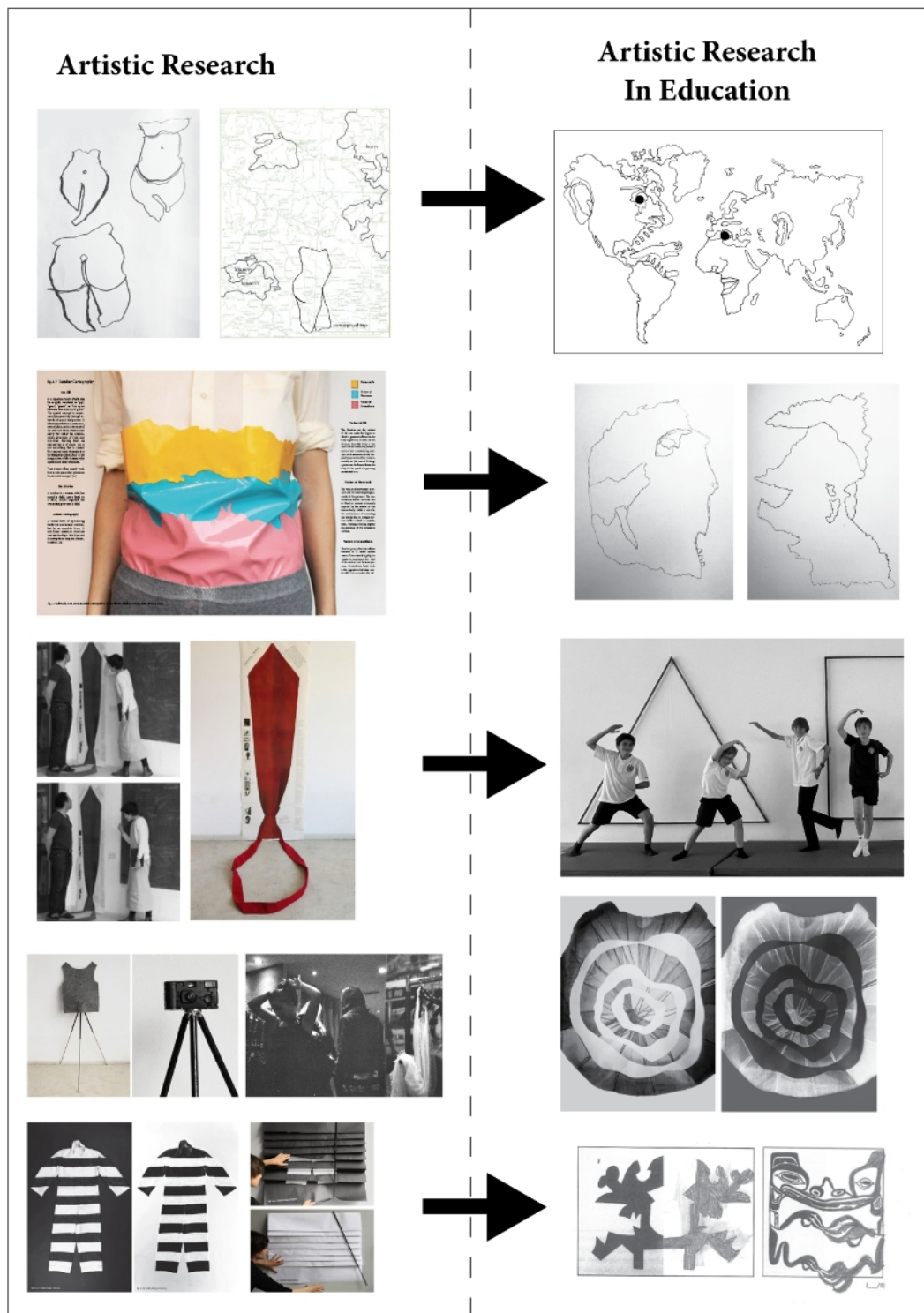


Figure 52. Reflexive knowledge extracted from *Artistic Research* projects and translated into pedagogic projects.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has shown the intricate and complex interconnectedness of theory and practice. It serves as an aspiration to elucidate the practices of a teaching artist by retrospectively examining my past education. The metaphorical use of 'intertwinement' suggests a weaving together of different threads, emphasising the inseparable connections between the practice of a teacher, researcher and artist and it signifies mutual influence, suggesting that the elements involved affect each other and cannot be fully understood or appreciated in isolation. Only through adopting a reflexive perspective towards practice can one reveal knowledge and I became aware of the underlying structures in thinking, actions, and behaviour—essentially, our my *habitus*. The *Artistic Research* artworks that I, the student, produced, arose from prompts provided by the teacher, and materialised as 'open' artworks, serving as evolving touchstones that established the groundwork subsequent roles as teaching artists (Figure 52). The ultimate meta-moment of reflexivity was that my projects were influenced by Roland Barthes, delving into various aspects of semiotics in each endeavour. In hindsight, the meta-element is that the Master's degree curriculum was also constructed upon the foundation of the semiotics discourse of the 1970s, as Barthes asserted, the escape of semiotics from textuality.



PART II: THEORY IN PRACTICE

KNOT

Nodes of Knowledge: Figural Knowing Through The Avant-garde

Summary of Chapter

The final visual chapter is categorised under *Theory In Practice* as it threads through the *theoretical* findings from Part I and shows how it is implemented in *practice*. It showcases and reads between the lines of the theoretical inspiration, process, and complex, intertwined and *knotted* way the way an artist thinks and works. It aims to show the parallels between the creation of an *artwork* and a *pedagogic work of art*, and how the artwork and research unfold *in and through* the acts of creating and performing of the students. The teacher and students both perform and engage in an experimental, inventive and somatic experience as they attempt to embody the notion of *Avant-Garde*. It aims to show how a personal and highly subjective interest of the teacher transforms into a pedagogic experience, to prioritise and value the educational needs of young learners, as well as the school curriculum. The case study attempts to answer the research question of how a practice theory of *Artistic Research* can thrive *pedagogically* and *artistically*. If the dissertation would be read backwards, it will be evident to trace in this chapter the underlying structures in thinking, actions, and behaviour - essentially, my *habitus* - that was embodied inoculated through my formative educational experiences in Part I. It concludes and showcases the reflective notes of students, and aims to show how this lesson experience could continue to influence or at least form a part of their growing *habitus*. The chapter scripts moments of *reflection-in-action* of the teaching artist and reflection-on-action for the students. The visual essay uses some parts of *Research in Didactics Model*, and describes the visual content, which is in the pre-reflective and reflexive state.

Keywords: Teaching Artist, Embodied Knowing, Theoretical Behaviour, Avant-Garde.

Context & Subject

This pedagogic act was implemented in a design class for the year groups aged 12-16. The primary objective was to familiarise students with design theory, a domain often perceived as a static body of knowledge within the subject. The word *theory* tends to evoke associations with text alone in students' minds. The purpose was twofold: first, to reposition theory closer to its etymological roots, emphasising its theatrical nature. Second, the initiative aimed to acquaint students with the foundational principles of Bauhaus Design, considering it a cornerstone in design theory. To comprehend one of the most influential schools and the mindset of the individuals shaping these theories, an understanding of Avant-Garde was deemed essential.

Teacher's Theoretical Nodes

The following section highlights a set of theories that influenced the teacher's practice and theoretical behaviour through the pedagogic act.



Figure 53. Set of books that were consulted at the beginning of planning the unit.

Etymology

The word *knot* derives from the Latin *nodus* which means "a knot or lump," from Latin *nodus* which was originally borrowed from Latin in the 1400's meaning "lump in the flesh." Meaning "point of intersection" (originally in astronomy, of planetary orbits with the ecliptic) is recorded from 1660s. (Barnhart, 1988)

Handwriting and Facial Gestures

Pariser, D. A. (1984). Max Wertheimer, one of the fathers of Gestalt psychology, asked Rudolf Arnheim to investigate the correlation between human facial expressions and handwriting. He examined the degree to which individuals interpret expressions when observing a face and what information they derive from a person's handwriting, exploring the relationship between the two.

Body Language

“Speech must not only translate thought. Thought of course, already must be speech, but above all the body must also remain a language”. Rational knowledge should not be the initial expression in verbal communication. According to Levinas, at their core, Husserl and Heidegger acquiesced to the traditional hierarchy of language over thought and the body as a form of language (Katz & Trout, 2005, p. 113).

Acquiring the skill of swimming or mastering a foreign language involves harmonising the unique aspects of one's own body or language with those of another form or element. This process both challenges and separates us, yet it also propels us into a previously unfamiliar and unexplored realm of challenges (Deleuze, G. (1994).

Lines and Writing

*Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida*¹⁸, Ulmer theoretically reasons how Derrida is a philosopher who dances with his pen, testing all the limits of language in all its forms, and highlights the way Lacan operated as an educator. He mentioned that Lacan contemplated the intersections between knots and handwriting. A letter can be conceptualised as a flattened knot. One distinction between handwriting and a topological diagram of a knot lies in the fact that the two-dimensional space of writing incorporates intersecting lines, whereas the three-dimensional space of knots encompasses lines that overlap (Ulmer, 2019).

Donna Haraway who writes in *When Species Meet* about how: “Figures are not representations or didactic illustrations, but rather material-semiotic *nodes or knots* in which diverse bodies and meanings co-shape one another” (2007, p.4).

¹⁸ See the chapter *Knots*, discussing how Lacanian knots serve as a visual metaphor for the intricate relationships between the psychological, linguistic, and social dimensions of human experience within Lacanian psychoanalysis. Lacan dedicated extensive time to sketching Borromean knots, composed of interlocking circles, on the blackboard prior to each lecture. Ulmer, G. L. (2019). *Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys*. Johns Hopkins University Press. pp. 214-215.

Stage Language

Figure 54. Shows selected words and phrases taken from the research paper by Witkovsky, (2005)

Staging Language: Milča Mayerová and the Czech Book "Alphabet".

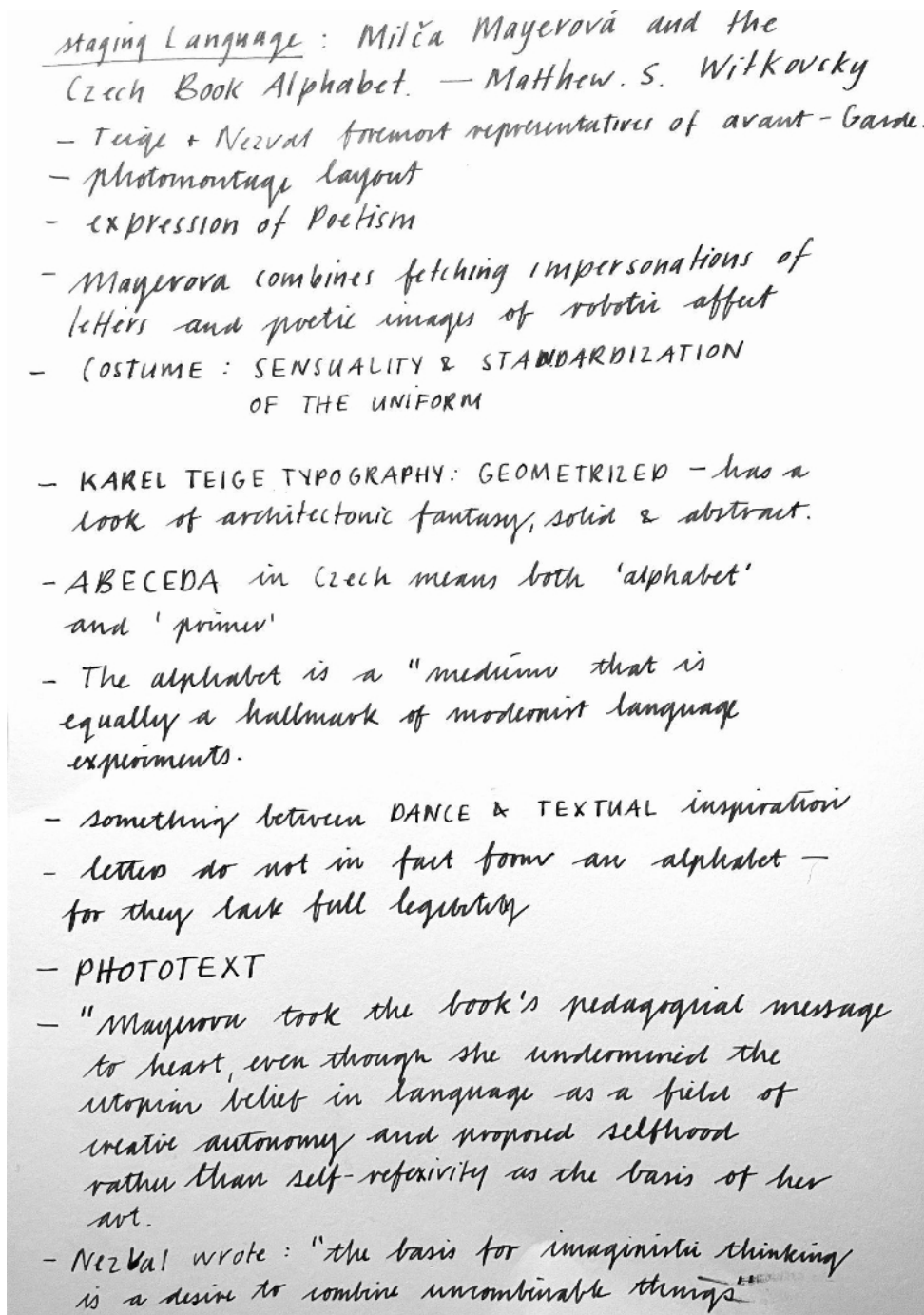


Figure 54. Staging Language notes.

Teacher's Artistic Research Practice

The structure and content of the artistic/pedagogic experiment took place over 6 weeks, and followed the following chronology:

[Figure 55] Introduce *theatre* as the etymological root of the word *theory*.

[Figure 56] Present an overview of the Bauhaus Design School and the three seminal shapes, square, triangle. Ask students to recall the design theory from the presentation and engage in the colour/shape psychology test Wassily Kandinsky did with students before they entered the Bauhaus School.

[Figure 57] Teacher enters the classroom wearing an Avant-Garde like jacket and one red glove. Teacher asks students what Avant-Garde means, and shows them a range of synonyms.

[Figure 58] Teacher introduces the Czech artist and designer, ex-student of the Bauhaus School, Karel Teige and the collaborative Alphabet¹⁹, “Abeceda” he did in collaboration with dancer Milča Mayerová, and poet Vítězslav Nezval.

[Figure 59] Introduce avant-garde *movement theorist* Rudolf Laban, and discuss his underlying geometric structures of the bodily movement he embedded in the “Abeceda” dance. Discuss how he based the body movements on the five Plato solids or crystals.

[Figure 60] Ask students to take a piece of rope to use and to re-enact the tetrahedron shape.

[Figure 61] Divide the class in three groups. Assign a shape to each group. Triangle, Circle, Square. Give them a text written by Bruno Munari²⁰, that dissects each shape in its scientific, cultural and physical form.

[Figure 61] Ask students to read the text, to highlight key words that resonate with them.

[Figure 62] In their groups they have to work together and make a sentence from each student's words, or take an existing sentence from the text. Assign word(s) to each member of the group.

[Figure 63] Ask students to carefully look at the “Abeceda” and draw simplified bodily figures by looking only at the dancer's body. (This should help the students to learn and memorise the body movements]

¹⁹ See Nezval, V. (1926). *Abeceda*. Nákl. J. Otto.

²⁰ Munari, B. (2015) *Square, Circle, Triangle*. Princeton Architectural Press. Abeceda ('Alphabet') was crafted in 1926 by Czech artist Karel Teige (1900-1951), drawing inspiration from a collection of poems dedicated to the alphabet composed in 1922 by Czech poet Vítězslav Nezval (1900-1958).

[Figure 64] Teacher stands in front of the square and moves her body to mimic the angles of each side.

[Figure 65-67] Inform the students that they need to memorise the consecutive letters of their chosen word(s) and perform their word(s) according to the movements of Milča Mayerová. When they perform their word, before fixing your bodily stance to match the gesture of Mayerová, your movement:

- need to embody the meaning of your chosen word and/or
- show *structural elements* of your given shape.

For example:

- If your shape is a *square*, your word is *stable* your bodily moments need to embody the elements of the shape and the meaning of stable. Teacher demonstrates the letter “T” by making rigid and strong movements mirroring the same angles of the big square on the wall.
- If your shape is a triangle, and your word is repetition, you can jump to three different spots to portray the corners and repeat your action, all while forming the letter ‘i’ for example.

[Figure 65-67] Ask students to practise and ‘think’ with their bodies as they prepare to perform their sentence in front of the class.

What is your definition of the word *theory*?

In my eyes theory is something that someone has discovered ^{or discovering} and ~~write~~ wrote it down. ~~It is also one of the disc~~

Create a mindmap to show your understanding of the etymology of the word *theory*:

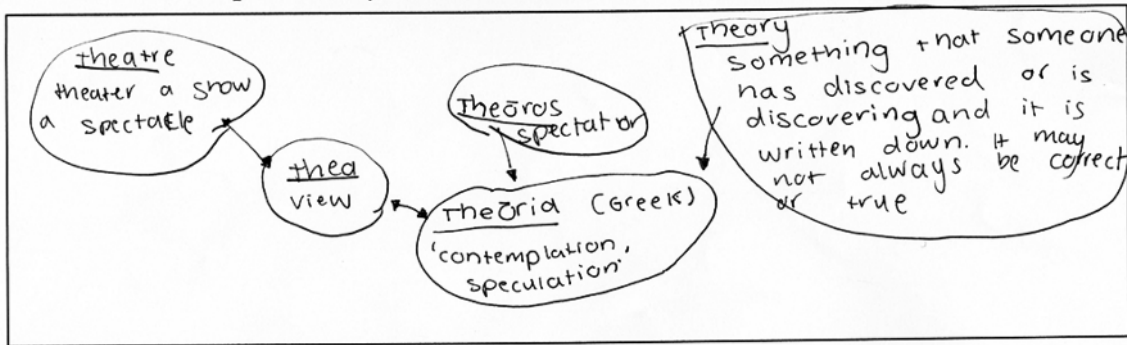


Figure 55. Theatre is the root of the word Theory.

Reflection

Name: _____

international → cultural & open
 patterns → colour and shape theory
 experimented a lot
 ↓
 own style → different arts

avant-garde school

shapes & colours
 (red, blue, yellow / triangle, circle, square)

*bauhaus - there shouldn't be a difference between an artist & a craftsman"
 ↓
 international 1919-1933 → nazi

sustainability
 ↓
 no mass production

aesthetics + function = good product

1. interior bauhaus design
 2. senses and knowledge
 3. italian futurism
 3. theoretical design

bauhaus influenced the modern design
 - meaning of ergonomics
 - the constructivism in vienna russia

Three things you learned today?

Four aspects you would like to explore further?

What aspect(s) of the lesson content did you not understand?

notes

vienna circle (senses) → senses → scientist → ernst mosch
 quibism → architect
 futurism (italy) → clothing
 constructivism (russia) → propaganda & flyer design
 constructivism

Figure 56. Student Reflection, and colour / shape experiment of Wassily Kandinsky.



Figure 57. Teacher's outfit to introduce the notion of Avant-Garde.



Figure 58. Student exploring the *Abeceda* printout.

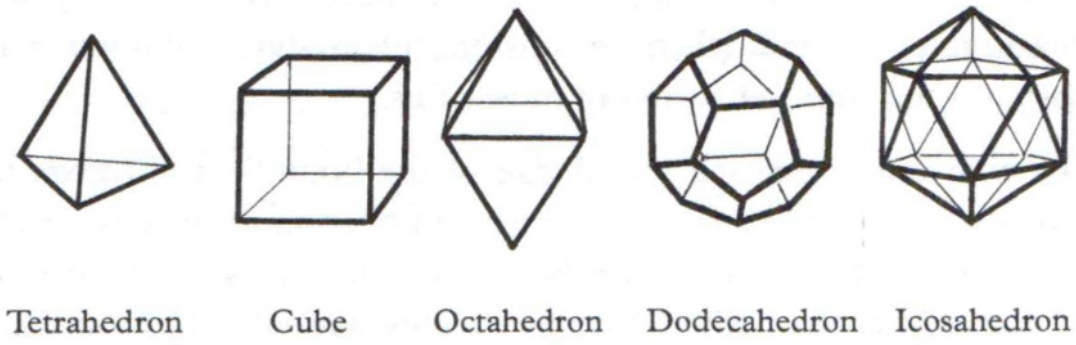


Figure 59. Plato's Five Crystal Forms.

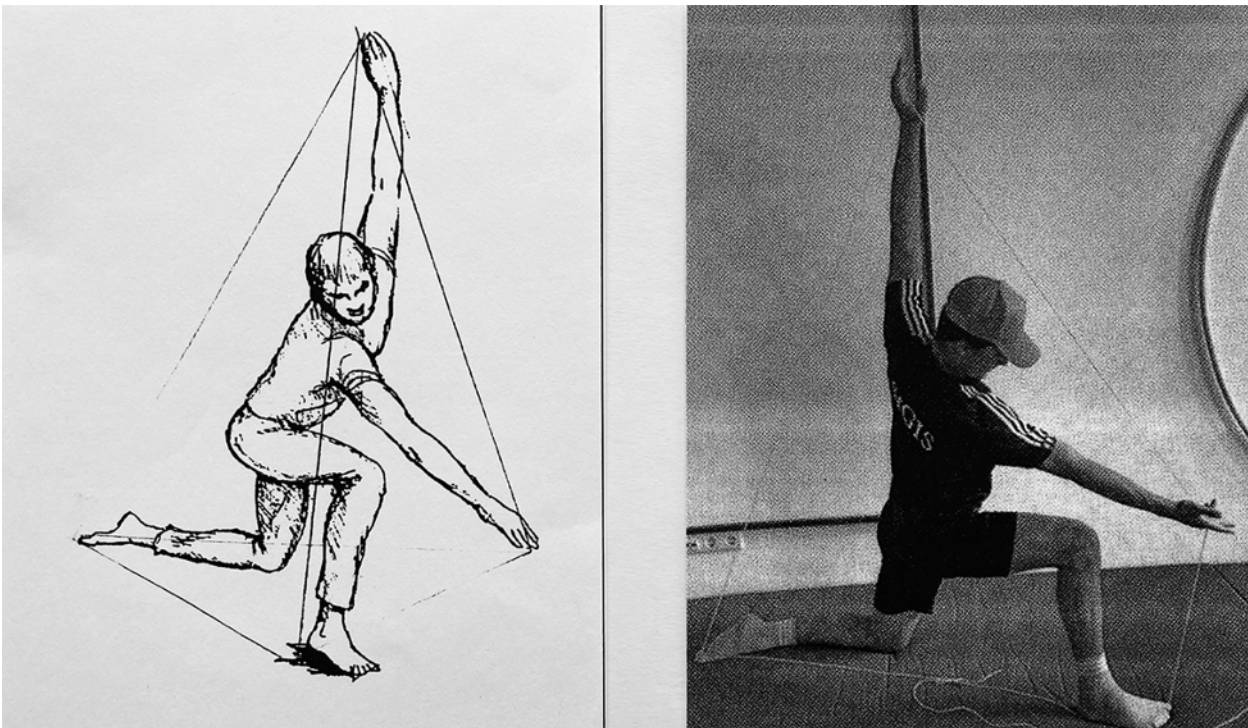


Figure 60. Student re-enacting the tetrahedron shape with a piece of rope.



Figure 63. Students interpretation and drawings of Milča Mayerová body gestures in “Abeceda”.



Figure 64. Teacher becoming a square.



Figure 65. The whole class practising their letters.

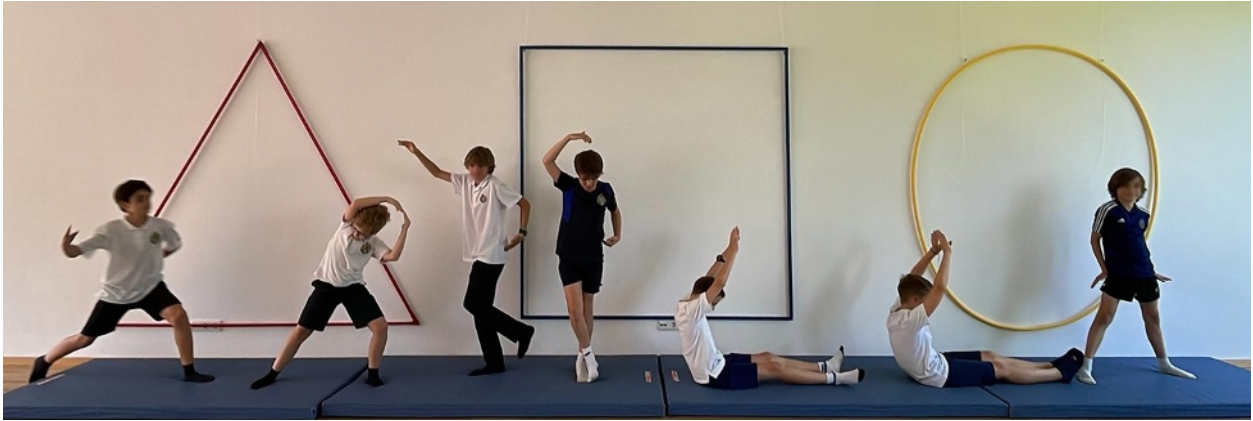


Figure 66. The whole class practising their letters.



Figure 67. Becoming Figures of Knowledge



Figure 68. Edwards. C.H. (2022) *Bodies of Knowledge*.
 [Wood, Acrylic paint, Digital projection. 3m x 3m].



Figure 69. Edwards. C.H. (2022) *Avant-Garde Bodies*. [Wood, Acrylic paint, Digital projection. 3m x 3m]. Final performance of the word 'Avant-Garde' filmed and projected on top of the seminal shapes.

Figures 68-69 denote the conclusive presentation of student performances on top of the three large shapes. These installations were made by the teacher, and it is considered to be *pedagogic works of art*. These 'open' artworks, possessing an "aesthetic transfer" (Duh & Zupančič, 2011) effect on the teaching artist, inviting reflective behaviour. The aesthetic contribution originating from the teacher undergoes a transformation *through* the students, resulting in outcomes endowed with paradigmatic significance.

The educational merit for the teacher lies in the inherent 'openness' of these works to perceptual effects. This quality aligns with Eco's perspective, positing that artworks adhering to an open

aesthetic, characterised by the capacity for multiple reflections, not only engender new theoretical insights but also embody the potential to function as "epistemological metaphors" (Ulmer, 2019, p. 308).

Reflection-in-Action Notes and Questions

My teaching delivers bodily signs.

I felt an *artistic rush* standing in front of the class wearing an avant-garde jacket.

The same kind of feeling when you are exposing your artwork to an audience.

A whole design lesson where the 'instruction' was done with my body.

Gestural writing?

What is the difference between Body Language and Written and Verbal Language?

Is the body a kind of hieroglyph?

The students talked about the lesson content during their 5-min break.

The whole class laughed, one student stood in front of the circle making almost 100 spherical movements with his arms...the word he was embodying was *Infinity*.

Another student kept on falling over while doing their movements, the word he was embodying was *Unstable*.

One student who is an professional ice-hockey player said: "My letter is physically impossible to do"

The shy girl is conscious of moving her body in space.

Students who chose the word "embodiment" are struggling with the meta-metaphorical portrayal.

Can one consider the grammatological characteristics of our actions?

Do our bodies have figures of speech?

Students' Reflection-On-Action

The students were asked to reflect on their performances, and the question was to get insight into how they perceived how their mind and body worked.

Did you experience a combination of your mind (memory) and body (movement) working together when performing your words? Elaborate.

- *Yes, because I had to come up with certain movements, remember them and then perform them with my body whilst remembering my next move.*

- *I worked together with my brain. While I performed the letters. I thought about the next letter until each performance was done.*
- *Yes. As I looked and performed the movements at the same time, which helped me to remember.*
- *Yes. Even though I did not have a visual memory of the movements, my body remembered them.*
- *Yes I did. I managed to see the word in front of me and so I could perform it.*
- *I experienced a combination by repeating the body movements.*
- *Yes but it is not new to me due to dance. But I remember it by practising many times and my muscle memory helped me.*
- *Yes, I've experienced a great memory and body combination. Using different movements and memorising the alphabet.*
- *Yes, I did because my body used a beat to combine with memory, because I feel like that is easier. (Muscle memory).*
- *I memorised my moves by doing them over and over again. I memorised the sequence, not the individual letters. (Through body/muscle memory)*
- *I memorised the easiest when I performed the letters first. The movements made it easier to memorise.*
- *I memorised through doing it as I was looking at the letters trying to use movement to memorise.*
- *I have to think about what my body is doing. I had to memorise a letter and express them later.*
- *Yes, my body became my memory. My mind and body worked together. It was a combination that made it easier.*
- *I think I experienced the combination because of my muscle memory.*
- *I think you really need to get into the correct mindset and use your body in synchronisation with your mind.*
- *When I did this, my body became part of my memory and it was easier for me to do, rather than just drawing it on paper.*
- *Both of them at the same time. You need to represent your body embodied. Your body is one part of your memory.*

How did you feel after engaging in this activity?

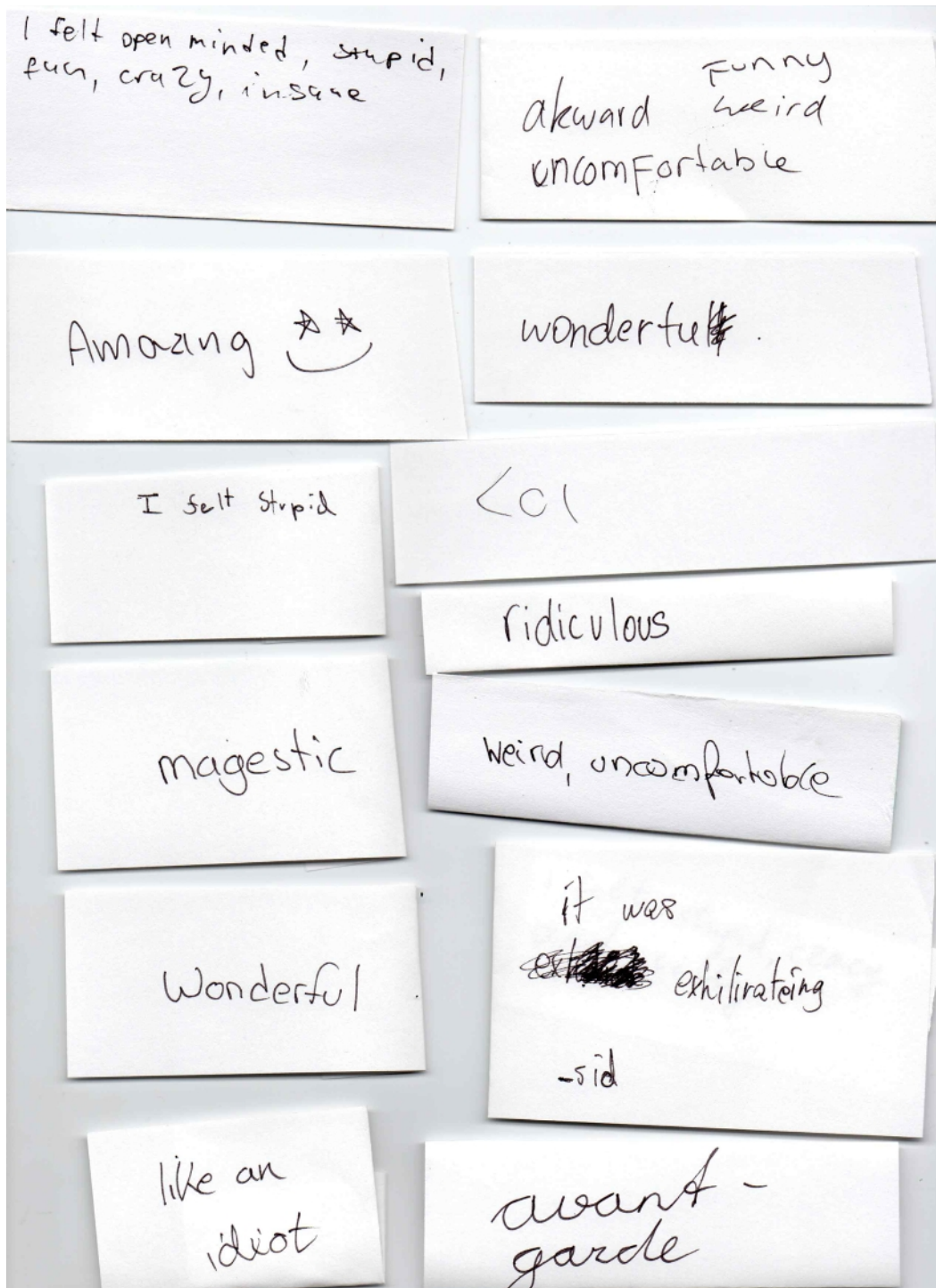


Figure 70. Student Feelings.



(W)HOLE

The Texture of Artistic Research: Weaving a (W)hole of Becoming

Conclusion

The journey undertaken in this dissertation has been one of discovery, innovation, and intellectual growth. In this final section, I will synthesise the diverse threads of inquiry woven throughout this dissertation, highlighting their interconnectedness and implications for the future of *Artistic Research* in Education. The journey undertaken in this dissertation has been one of discovery, innovation, and intellectual growth. In this final section, I will synthesise the diverse threads of inquiry woven throughout this dissertation, highlighting their interconnectedness and the implications they hold for the future of *Artistic Research* in Education.

The study started with the section *Fibre*, bringing together all the multiple filaments and connection points of *theoretical* groundwork, subsequently manifesting in practical application across ensuing chapters. Within **Educational Theory**, Biesta (2017) argues for education *in and with the world*, with multiple positive implications of being less egoistic to engage in a reality *outside of ourselves* and embrace the *risks* and *intuitive* perspectives in education. He reminds us that when artists enter the education field, we are not turned into didacticians, but that the educational moment appears inside an *artistic* endeavour (Biesta, 2020).

To substantiate Biesta's notion, Bourdieu's **sociological theory** of *habitus*, *self-reflexivity*, and *theory of practice* became fundamental principles throughout this study. The useful and pragmatic term helped me to understand the embodied values inoculated in my formative educational environments. In the context of this dissertation, it was through the act of self-reflexivity, that enabled me to become aware of the inoculated structures, behaviours, and thinking patterns visible in my artworks, and then later on pedagogic acts. The self-reflexive stance diminished the objective and the subjective divide, and it enabled me to understand my *role* and *position* in my research.

Bourdieu's teacher, Merleau-Ponty's **Phenomenological Theory** opened my sensibilities and awakened the "signs in the form of a real physical embodiment, which predict something that will come" (Busch, 2019, p. 190). In other words, meaning comes into being through creative and multi-sensory operations. It was a sensory and phenomenological experience of the structural and tactile understanding of a rope that informed each dissertation segment—fibre, thread, strand, knot, and (w)hole.

The retrospective exploration commenced with the integration of **Practice in Theory in Part I**, delving into the analysis of my formative education to uncover the foundational structures shaping my current teaching habitus. In the initial segment, *Thread*, I unravelled a community-based project originating from the final year of my Bachelor's degree in Design. The study posited that New Materialist approaches and embodied learning find deep roots in ecological theory, emerging as influential schools of thought to challenge dualistic doctrines. The underlying curriculum of this design program echoed certain aspects of the Bauhaus' *Gesamtkunstwerk*, but we redefined it as an *Ecological Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The second investigation titled *Strand* looked at *Practice in Theory*, and pinpointed the essentials to create a *pedagogic work of art*, while a teacher and her former student engaged in a reflective dialogue discussing the projects they did together during a Master's in Design degree. This chapter elucidated the performative nature of *theory* and its activation in *practice* and how a reflexive stance towards one's formative education can later influence and form part of one's dispositions, frameworks, and thinking patterns and action as a teaching artist. It is not to say that these influences "determine who we are, or fix our identity" - but as Foucault (1990, p. 95) would say - it is what "we are in the process of differing from".

Part II, the *Knot* section of the dissertation, took the crucial theoretical findings of **Part I**, and it became part of the teaching artists *theoretical behaviour* in a teaching practice. In this project the avant-garde artist enters the classroom. The artistic-pedagogic project is complex, and the artist still needs to be conscious of the complexity, richness and hidden significance of everything that was created in a given artwork. But in a moment of reflexivity, it is clearly evident that underlying structures from the artist's formative education (discussed in Part I) were activated in and through the students. Elements such as Bauhaus principles, embodiment, figural representation, semiotics, and knotted memory, among others, await the teaching artist's self-reflexive engagement. The reflexivity and extracted knowledge prompts an enriching chiasmic loop, embodying the idea that "theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory" (Bolt 2007, 29). In this pedagogic experiment, the

teaching artist's body serves as the mediator and vessel bridging theory and practice—a concept echoing Spinoza's notion that thoughts emerging from embodied experiences often arise through the unknown of the body (Deleuze, 1988, p. 19). The teaching artist experiences an artistic elevation through interventions in the classroom, elevating the pedagogic act to the equivalent of an artwork.

Throughout the dissertation it was evident that when engaging in reflexive practices concerning the construction and reconstruction of selves constitutes a vital component of our ethical engagement. The heightened awareness of self-knowledge emerges as a critical attribute for artists and educators venturing into the realm of education. As Popoveniuc (2014, p. 205) reminds us that “Reflexivity is one of the most conceptualised terms in the philosophy of social sciences, and yet one the less used in daily academic writings and practice”. To establish a robust and continual relationship between *theory* and *practice*, it is imperative to move beyond a mere reflective stance toward artistic and educational outcomes and embrace a heightened mode of reflexivity.

The culmination of this extensive research journey has illuminated new vistas in the field of *Artistic Research*, when applied in Educational context, exploring to what extent a *pedagogic act* can become equivalent to a *work of art*. Through a retrospective procedure the study offered insights and aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge of art-based procedures on a PhD level. It is evident that the exploration of *Texture* has uncovered multifaceted dimensions of materiality. Whether it was an embodied and phenomenological experience to understand the structure of a rope, or working with “students as living material” Biesta (2013, p. 2).

In conclusion, I am drawn to refer to the Moravian born physicist, Ernst Mach (1914) who laid the foundations of empiricism and gestalt theory. In his seminal book *The Analysis of the Senses*, he refers to a *tear* (or hole) in his coat. The very manner of a physicist expressing this notion of materiality shows his inclination to make us aware that we are preoccupied with the sum-total of *permanency*. Instead he says we should embrace the “changeable element” (p.3) to allow for a more instinctive consciousness of *becoming*. In the same vein, we should embrace the state of in-betweenness. Whether it is an in-between state of theory-practice, artistic-research, artist-teacher or art-pedagogy - it is this state of *becoming*.

Throughout the course of this study, I engaged in a continuous process of drawing holes with a pen on paper (Figure 71). This practice evolved into somewhat of a fetish, perhaps due to my perpetual state of becoming. A hole, I discovered, is never truly complete; the interrupted lines guide the eye as if beckoning to either close or open. Dissatisfaction loomed over each hole drawing, as none seemed to

capture that elusive gestalt feeling. I realised the precision required to depict imperfection, a realisation that mirrored my status as an Artistic Researcher and Teacher. My objective was not precision but rather an embrace of the imperfect in-betweenness. Embedded in my artistic journey was a lingering phrase from a mentor, and it fueled the creation of *(W)hole* (See Figure 72)—an outcome of a textual interpretation suggesting that “somewhere between fabricated language and the real fabric, there exists a tear, a gaping hole”. This in-between space, I contended, serves as a perfect arena for testing the consequences of the literary and the concrete. The gap, I concluded, is the very essence of weaving, a profound exploration that defines my identity as an Artistic Researcher and Teacher.

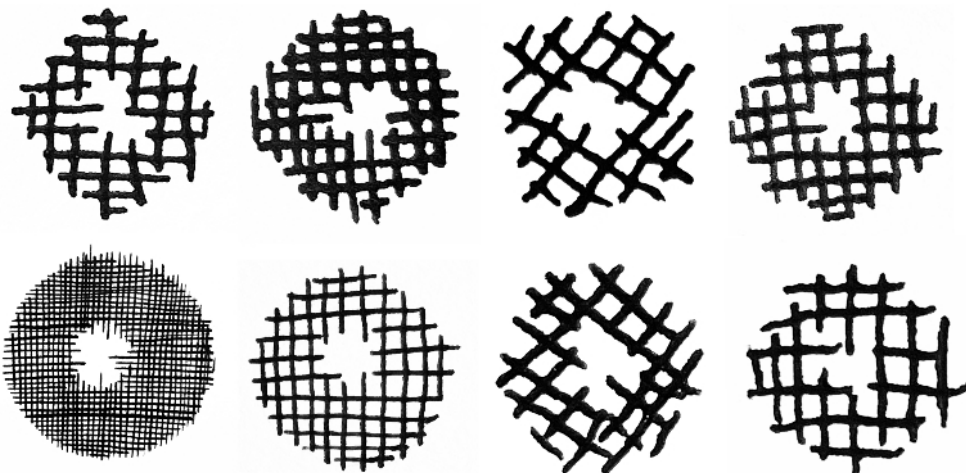


Figure 71. Edwards. C.H. *Holes*. [Indian Ink, Paper, 20cm x 10cm]

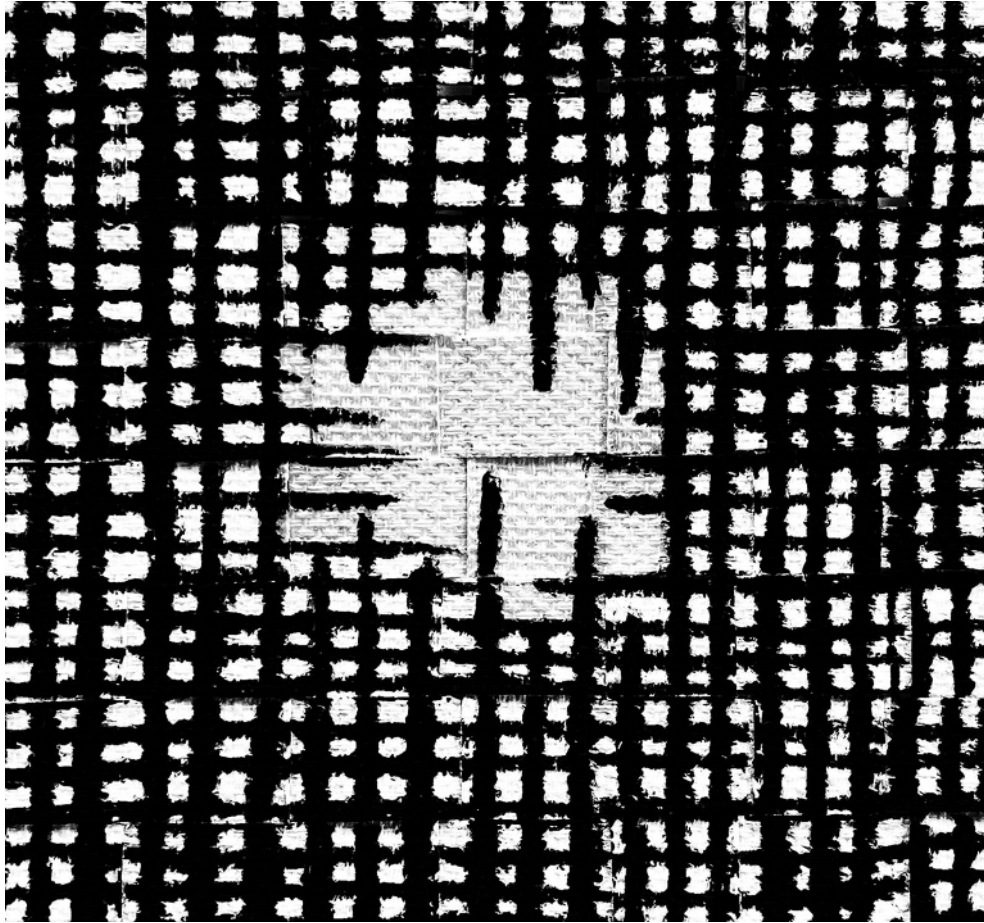


Figure 72. Edwards. C.H. *(W)hole*.

[Woven Canvas strips, Indian Ink. 10cmx10cm].

In order for an Artist to enter a teaching profession, it is important to cultivate the potentialities of the 'gap' between your *practice as an artist* and your *professional teaching career*. It is best expressed by Deleuze (1994) himself that the 'opening', 'gap' or ontological fold, establishes a relation between *question* and *being*. According to Deleuze, nothing remains the same; there is only difference, and reality is a continuous process of becoming. He asserts, "Between things does not designate a localisable relation going from one thing to another and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 25). The potent middle ground, the in-between space, becomes the focal point where the paradigmatic state of being unfolds, giving profound meaning to both the *researcher* and the *researched*. In essence, in-betweenness offers an alternative understanding of the nature of research and reality. Engaging with in-betweenness fosters a richer comprehension of reality in both the mind and body, challenging our habitual assumptions and beliefs and opening up a broad range of potentialities and possibilities of art educators. In closing, though this work can be seen as a static body of *theory*, the hope is that readers

will embrace the textual within, and bring to fruition a living practice inside and outside of the classroom walls.

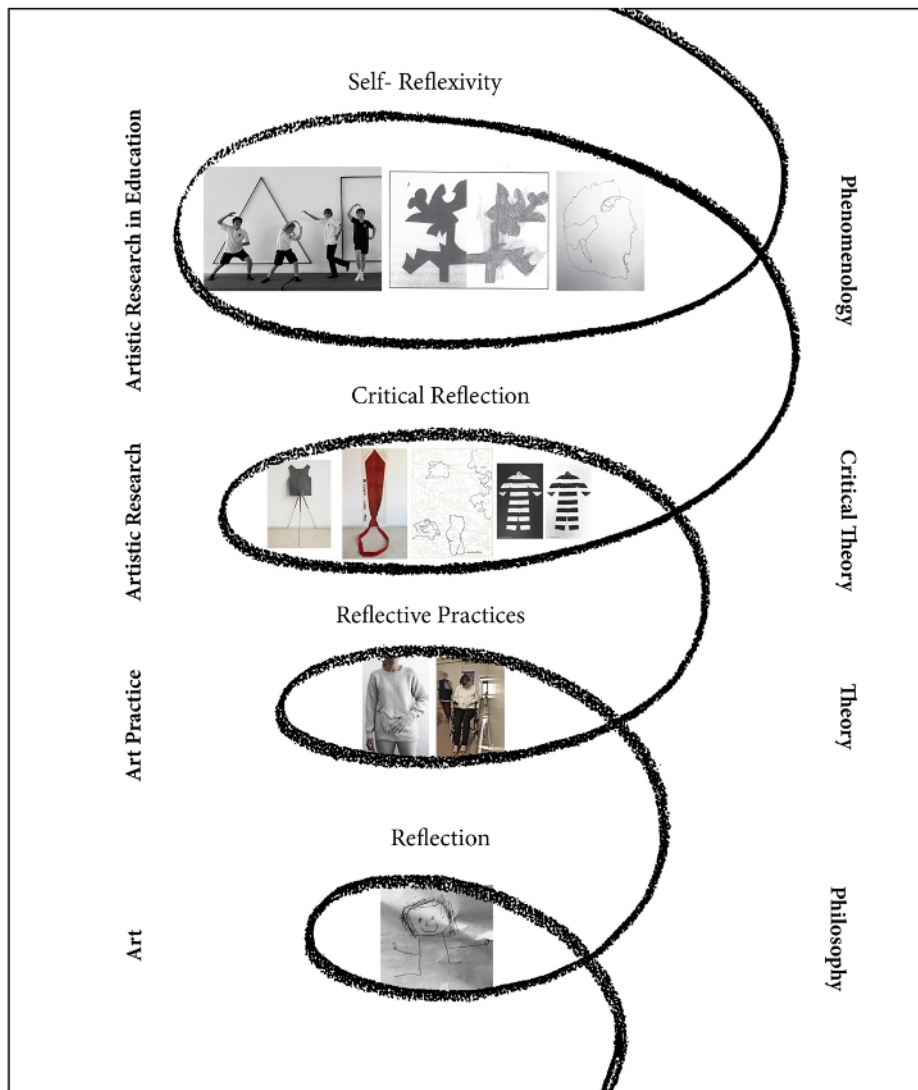


Figure 73. Stages of Reflection to reach an optimum level of Reflexivity.

If this inquiry succeeds its goals, it firstly attempts to show that adopting the attitude of self-reflexivity enables one to have an awareness and outside perspective of how your learning takes place through a continuation of reflective practices, to reach an optimum level of reflexivity at the level of PhD research (Figure 73). Secondly, the proposed practice theory of self-reflexivity allows for a sustaining and enriching practice as an *Artistic Researcher*, which consequently influences the production of quality of teaching material to allow for potential experiential learning situations with students. Thirdly, it substantiates the notion that a *pedagogic situation* can be seen as the equivalent to that of the work of *art*.

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Appendix 1

GDPR Consent Form

Dear [Parent's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to request your permission to use your child's work as a part of my Ph.D. dissertation research. My dissertation focuses on the development of an innovative educational methodology, and I believe that the inclusion of your child's work would significantly contribute to the research.

The purpose of my research is to improve educational practices and create more effective teaching methods. By including your child's work, I aim to showcase real-world examples of the methodology's impact on students' learning experiences and outcomes. Your child's contributions to this research will be handled with the utmost care and respect for their privacy.

Please be assured that:

- All personal information related to your child will be anonymized, ensuring that their identity remains confidential.
- Their work will be presented in an aggregated and non-identifiable manner.
- Your child's participation in this research is entirely voluntary, and there will be no negative consequences for them or their educational journey should you choose not to grant permission.
- To give your consent for the use of your child's work in my Ph.D. dissertation, please complete the consent form (second page) and return it to me at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at cornelia.edwards@pedf.cuni.cz.

Your support in this research endeavor is greatly appreciated, and I believe that your child's participation will make a valuable contribution to the field of education.

Thank you for considering this request, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Cornelia Edwards
Charles University, Prague
Faculty of Art Education

Consent Form

I, _____, the legal parent/guardian of _____, hereby grant my consent for the use of my child's work in Cornelia Edwards' Ph.D. dissertation research. I understand that the research focuses on the development of an educational methodology and that the inclusion of my child's work is intended to improve educational practices.

I acknowledge and accept the following terms and conditions:

- I acknowledge that all personal information related to my child will be anonymized to ensure confidentiality.
- I agree that my child's work will be presented in an aggregated and non-identifiable manner.
- I understand that my child's participation is voluntary, and there will be no negative consequences for my child's educational journey should I choose not to grant permission.

Parent/Guardian Information:

Parent's Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Email: _____

Student Information:

Student's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School/Institution: _____

Consent:

I, _____, have read and understood the terms and conditions outlined in this consent form. I hereby grant my consent for the use of my child's work in Cornelia Edwards' Ph.D. dissertation research.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this completed form to cornelia.edwards@pedf.cuni.cz. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

Your support and participation are greatly appreciated.

Case Study Protocols

Background	<p>a) Identify previous research on the topic.</p> <p>b) Define the main research question being addressed by this study.</p> <p>c) Identify any additional research questions that will be addressed.</p>
Design	<p>a) Describe logical links between case studies and research question(s).</p> <p>b) Identify sub-questions derived from each research question and the measures to be used to investigate the proposition.</p>
Case Selection	<p>a) Criteria for case selection Instrumental case (i.e. the case discussed is not used to analyse the design outcome but instead used to study and interpret the didactic elements that led to the design outcome.</p>
5. Data Collection	<p>a) Semi-Structured Interview</p> <p>b) Curriculum Analysis</p> <p>c) Document Reviews</p> <p>d) Student Process, and Artistic Outcome</p>
6. Analysis	<p>a) Identify the criteria for interpreting case study findings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use and implement Research in Didactics Model to structure ● Transcript of Interview Recordings. ● Consider the range of possible outcomes and identify alternative explanations of the outcomes, and identify any information that is needed to distinguish between these.
7. Plan Validity	<p>a) Identify the domain to which study findings can be generalised; investigate outcomes in different contexts.</p>
8. Study Limitations	<p>a) Specify residual validity issues including potential conflicts of interest (i.e. that are inherent in the problem, rather than arising from the plan).</p>
9. Reporting	<p>a) Identify target readership and relationship to larger studies.</p>
10. Appendices	<p>a) Include the applicable appendices used in the case study.</p>

Appendix 3

The Department of Visual Arts at Stellenbosch University offers a four-year BA degree in Visual Arts and Design with the option to specialise in **Visual Communication Design.**

The Visual Communication Design course offers an environment that allows for an exchange of ideas and cross-fertilisation between the different study streams in the Department of Visual Arts, and other departments and faculties on campus. This creates a rich and rewarding learning experience for our students.

Visual communication design is a broad term encompassing graphic design, information design, instructional design, visual storytelling and various products of cultural and visual information.

What is visual communication design?

In today's competitive and information-rich world, visual communication design is indispensable. From the moment we wake up most of our experiences, actions, perceptions and decisions are informed and controlled by design. On a daily basis, the faces of clocks, our street signs, magazines, books, posters, advertisements, package labels, logos and branding, ATM interfaces, film, television and websites help us to access vital information about the world around us.

Featuring a broad range of media and formats, each of these visual messages is designed with a specific function, purpose and audience in mind. This is the creative domain of designers of visual communication.

Knowledge of both historical and contemporary developments in art and design thinking as well as visual and cultural theory assist students to understand a larger world of ideas and to challenge their own assumptions.

Our pursuit of excellence involves focusing on user-centered design and understanding how to work collaboratively with specialists from other fields.

Students master both hand (analogue) as well as digital techniques of production.

While technological developments are constantly advancing design tools, the real pursuit for designers remains the same: To create content and meaning, and to make a positive contribution towards society.

The Visual Communication Design course

Our aim is to develop a broad understanding in students of the role, purpose and possibilities of design. Our Visual Communication Design course focuses on teaching students to generate meaning by organising and shaping information within specific social and cultural contexts. A multi-disciplinary approach to design directs these processes.

Our course aims to educate visual communication designers who can contribute to the advancement of the discipline as well as the development of social and cultural contexts and environments. We also encourage students to express themselves in their own specific language and to use their work to engage in dialogue and adopt an investigative and reflective approach to media. Taking up a critical position empowers students to conduct their art-making and design practices with necessary confidence and accountability.

Our Visual Communication Design programme evolves continuously while also preserving the core design methodology of critical thinking, theory, practice and exploration. Both traditional and emerging technologies are integrated into the broader studio experience. This will help you to focus on your particular strengths, as well as to nurture your individual design interests, sensibilities and vision. Solid grounding in design principles, visual language skills, and a range of methods and techniques will enable you to confidently work with open boundaries while questioning the consequences and sustainability of design at the same time.

Dedicated lecturers bring decades of teaching and professional experience to the programme, and visiting designers and critics add varied and global perspectives to the studios.

We teach a comprehensive set of visual, verbal and textual approaches as core foundation to the field.

Our approach to design will allow you to acquire a broad set of transferable skills like critical thinking, creative problem solving, visual, cultural and social literacy as well as social innovation.

What will you learn?

Our approach to design is to tackle real-world and abstract problems hands-on, hearts-on, and minds-on. There are no shortcuts or ready-made solutions to great design. You will learn to embrace an intensive design process: in-depth exploration, experimentation, research and even play. By asking questions, and trying out different combinations and possibilities, you will learn to design through doing.

Such an immersive approach will help you to think in terms of concepts and to take a critical approach to content. It will also teach you to give form to your ideas, developing your own visual language, and to take responsibility for your chosen points of departure.

Our course offers extensive opportunities to investigate the various possibilities of expression available to designers, including the full potential and applications of a range of media. The course also allows opportunity for acquiring know-how in terms of finishing and crafting designs professionally. **You will work on both individual and group projects. Group discussions and formal presentations develop confidence and will help you to motivate your design decisions as well as to engage in constructive debate and dialogue.**

Throughout the four years of study, our focus remains on design for sustainable future change. Foundational to our programme is design for social innovation through embracing transdisciplinary, participatory approaches.

In the advanced **fourth year** of the programme you only have two modules: **Visual Communication Design and Theory of Art and Design**. At this level, the Visual Communication Design course culminates in the integration of theory and practice, and the various disciplines and subjects. Through an expanded self-motivated research project you will respond to a social, cultural, environmental or urban problem of your choice. A research article that relates to your practical work will add further rigour and depth to your visual communication design solutions.

Throughout the course, you will have ample opportunity to select and choose your own themes and topics within strict creative parameters of projects. From an early stage in the Visual Communication Design course, this flexibility empowers each student to take initiative in honing his or her own language, vision and identity as a designer.

Final year students in the Department of Visual Arts work together closely to curate the annual **GradEx** exhibition to showcase their work in celebration of their graduation.

Appendix 4

2. Student Information

Programme

The handbook of the Master of Arts in Design programme at Utrecht's MaHKU has not only been composed to familiarize you with the various aspects of the programme. Its goal is also to demonstrate the ardor and commitment of the MaHKU Design staff to the quality of the programme. I do hope that the eagerness of the school to share that quality with you will be inspirational to you while you follow the programme, its courses and its units. As you can read, the description of the courses (chapter 7), the logistics of the pathway curriculum (chapter 3), and the full-time and part-time trajectories (chapters 5, 6) all focus on a clear and distinct passion for the field of design.

In our challenging curriculum, the MA Design programme reflects the experimental and laboratory-like approach of its four pathways, i.e., editorial design, fashion design, interior design, and public space design. All pathways stress interdisciplinary research and the creation of novel interconnections (see chapter 3, the philosophy of the programme). Consequently, in both its theory and discipline-related seminars, the MA Design programme pays much attention to topical debates including both individual and group discussions with theorists, designers, artists and critics. Clearly, the major purpose of individual sessions is to reflect on your own practice-based design research and essay project and to explore, analyze, and elaborate its presentation and contextualization. Ultimately, the encounters with a range of professionals will provide you with novel and more profound insights in the methodologies and practices of your own discipline. At the same time, sufficient space and time is created in the MA Design programme for you to deepen and expand your individual research projects.

During seminar days, staff will be present for the greater part enabling you to stay in touch in an informal way and to speak about the progress of your work and your research. The program leader monitors your course progression. He or she is also the person to turn to in case of any problems, whether related to your studies or playing on a more personal level. The programme leader is always available and, if needed, he or she can refer you to the specialized Student Service Centre (SSC).

Course 2011-12. The programme for the next school year is divided into trimesters:

Trimester 1

Unit I: September 5 – October 22, 2011; **Unit II:** October 31 - December 23, 2011; (Initial Review)

Introductory programme

The first week of unit 1 will be used for an intensive introductory programme. On day one you will meet the teaching staff of the programme. In those meetings, the structure and the philosophy of the programme will be discussed extensively. There will also be a tour through the school's facilities such as workshops, studios, and the library so you will be able to navigate and find your way through the architectural structure of the HKU buildings.

How to live in the city of Utrecht is the objective of exploration of day two. In the morning SSC (Student Service Centre) will present a programme including information on housing, visa, scholarships, the city of Utrecht, HKU and its organization, and the Utrecht Association of Foreign Students. Information material on this programme will be sent to students beforehand.

In the afternoon of day two, various Utrecht art institutions collaborating with HKU will be visited. Among them are Centraal Museum, Expodium, and the Academy Gallery. During the introductory week, all these institutions will exhibit work by Ma Design graduates - and Ma Fine Art graduates - in the context of the ten-day Dutch Artistic Research Event (DARE). Talks with graduated Ma Design students will be possible during the exhibitions where you can learn from a student perspective about the MaHKU experience and the specific details of the programme. Day three and four will be devoted entirely to the presentations of the research proposals of all graduate students both from Ma Fine Art and Ma Design. The presentations are followed by interdisciplinary debates. These sessions will also give you ample opportunity to meet your fellow students, lecturers, course leaders, and other students from the Ma Design programme.

Trimester 2

Cross-Disciplinary and Supportive Studies: January 16 – February 3 2012;

Unit III: February 6 - March 30, 2012, (PdP/Self-Assessment);

Unit IV: April 12- June 1, 2012, (one week holiday), (Exam Entry Review)

Trimester 3

Preparation final assessment: June 4 - August 31, 2012 (Final Assessment)

In order to facilitate the final presentation and examination in a professional way, the programme maintains contacts with leading art institutions in and outside Utrecht (see chapter 4). In the chapters 8-13 of this handbook, you will find educational objectives and rules, prerequisites and procedures for admission, and a commentary on the MA of Design programme validation by the OUVS in London.

I do hope that your stay at our institute will be an immense source of professional inspiration. At the same time, I wish you to sense rich opportunities for your work, your research, and your growth as a designer after your one-year participation in our programme.

Henk Slager, Dean Utrecht Graduate School of Art and Design

3. Introduction to the programme

3.1. Philosophy of the MA Design Programme

In the 21st century, a topical design attitude seems to be intrinsically bound with forms of involvement and commitment. Thus, idiosyncratic design ideas have become fused with interests in issues such as globalization, the world of the Internet, and environmental issues. That trend necessitates creative design attitudes to be supplemented by reflective design attitudes evoking a researching attitude where design in a strict sense becomes contextualized in the larger world of involvement and commitment. At the same time, such working attitude demands knowledge of the topical theoretical debates and discussions in the field of design.

The philosophy of MA Design is geared at creating a reflective design practice. Therefore the theoretical debate within MaHKU is not an isolated academic phenomenon. On the contrary, critical studies is a toolkit to enable students to contextualize their creative practice. Insight into the topical theoretical debate leads to creative impulses for the design practice.

In order to be able to respond to those developments and anticipate additional novel effects, MaHKU decided to put the programmes of editorial design, fashion design, interior design, and public space design in one MA Design platform. Thus, the MA Design programme arching four design pathways is able to act as a facilitator for the production of possible interdisciplinary connections, modes of inspiration, and practical and theoretical forms of design analysis in its four domains. In addition, a studio-based design practice functions as a methodological design approach.

The interconnect MA Design programme knows four crucial design tracks characterized in each design pathway by the notions of exploration, analysis, elaboration, and representation. The four tracks also entail the production of theoretical forms of reflection in the context of the diverse design practices, since theory lecturers participate in the design units whereas design lecturers share in the production of theoretical frameworks. Such methodology produces two parallel but also intermingling streams of both design and theoretical forms of knowledge. Therefore, in the MA Design programme, topical issues in design, both in its specific pathway context and in the context of interdisciplinarity, are able to emerge together with related topical, theoretical discussions.

HKU's MA Design programme intends to offer students space and time:

- to critically explore diverse design attitudes, design disciplines, and their relevant topics and debates;
- to research and develop diverse modes of analysis directed towards both design practice and its theoretical topics and frameworks;
- to elaborate and expand both a visual and a theoretical process of practice-based research;
- to investigate and develop specific forms of representation connected to the outcome of the design and theory research.

3.2. MA Design Pathways: Editorial Design, Fashion Design, Interior Design, Public Space Design

3.2.0 The pathway logistics

The MA Design programme arches four different design pathways. However, at the beginning of the year's programme, an interdisciplinary theory course Modes of Research obligatory for all students - including Fine Art students - launches the Critical Studies courses series (Course of Studies 1). During eight weeks, the Modes of Research course demonstrates different perspectives on theory tackling issues such as the role of research as a practice-based activity, interdisciplinarity, and modes of analysis in both theory and design. Next, the Research Development course is a discipline-specific unit taught by the different pathway theory lecturers. The Research Development unit focuses on the analyses and production of research concepts. A series of individual essay coachings by the pathway theory lecturers tops the Critical Studies course series off.

The Critical Studies course series parallels the Discipline related reflection course series (Course of Studies 2) thus enhancing reflection and interaction between practice-based research and theory-based research. Within the Discipline related courses, you again follow your specific design pathway. As a continuation of a BA-programme, the discipline-specific courses in editorial design, fashion design, interior design, and public space design offer a further deepening of relevant themes, skills, discussions, and concepts topical and prominent in your field. However, in unit 2 Analysis (week 9-16), you are obliged to follow one of the analysis courses outside your own design discipline in addition to the analysis course in your specific design discipline. This strategy enables you to both compare and develop idiosyncratic modes of analysis. The Discipline related courses are categorized by the four notions Exploration, Analysis, Elaboration, and Representation.

The Individual Design Research in Course of Studies 3 parallels and intermingles with the individual essay research. In fact, the individual, studio-based research project is supervised by both a design and a theory lecturer of your pathway inviting you to critically reflect on the development and transformation of your specific discipline.

The MA Design programme intends to focus on the contextualization of issues and on cultural-philosophical topics as a tool for arriving at forms of more general reflections. The Cross-Discipline Studies in unit 3 underscore that broad perspective. At the same time, the Supportive Studies in unit 3 stress interdisciplinary approaches to essay composition and essay research.

Annual Schedule

Week 1 – 16	Discipline	Critical Studies
Week 17 – 20	Cross-discipline studies/supportive studies	

Week 21 – 36
Week 37 – 48

Discipline	Individual research
Individual research	

The MA Design programme is expected to create a flexible design attitude enabling you to sometimes leave your specific design discipline and deploy different professional and theoretical fields while developing the capacity to add novel layers to your specific field of design. The following four pathway introductions will portray specific backgrounds in the context of the overall MA Design programme:

3.2.1 Pathway Editorial Design

Editorial design is associated with publication media such as newspapers, magazines, and the Web. Complex information structures and short production cycles are the main features of these media while notions such as transparency of editorial structure, clear formal hierarchies, and ease of use constitute the process of lay-out and production.

One could argue that editorial designers perform a key function in today's complex information environments by providing informational structure and overview and by translating abstract data into meaningful forms. In addition, editorial designers visualize the content-driven choices made by them and their natural partners: (text) editors, authors, and publishers while anticipating the cooperation with photographers, illustrators, information architects, screen designers, database constructors, and so on.

Editorial designers also act as mediators since they balance content with context; they design the processes organizing the traffic between various layers of information and meaning; they mix media and contexts while enhancing the notion of informational interconnectivity. Indeed, the core of editorial design seems to be the activity of making meaningful links. See for more information on current editorial design research: www.mahku.nl

3.2.2 Pathway Fashion Design

Fashion is a form of communication but not an innocent one. Clearly, fashion is never culturally or politically neutral. Rather, it is loaded with meaning, signification, allusion, and citation. What does fashion report to us? What do fashion designers and their products signify? How do they shift to the status of icons of a certain time?

In today's multicode societies, fashion inhibits as well as facilitates communication between social groups either highly fragmented or not. Transnational movements of people, cultural objects, and visual images play a vital role in creating a global network wherein also fashion plays its role of communicator. However, how does fashion communicate? What is the role of the fashion magazine? What is the role of the world of the catwalks? How does fashion deal with a multitude of layers of information? And how could concepts such as interconnectivity, interactivity, and performativity create novel trajectories in fashion theory? Indeed, fashion designers are at the core of the world of communication while portraying a clear-cut capacity to open up novel vistas of communication, design, and theoretical discourse. See for more information on current fashion design research: www.mahku.nl

3.2.3 Pathway Interior Design

Interior design is not synonymous with creating a set of propositions for functions, shapes, materials and constructions in a spatial setting. Rather, interior design is the art of creating spatial, physical, i.e., non-virtual environments while producing forms of visual and cultural signification and communication. At the same time, in the age of information and networks, interior design grapples with screens and screen-based environments; with the vast, anonymous places of airports, shopping malls, and office towers; with concepts such as sustainability, flexibility, interactivity, and speed.

What could interior design signify? What could it communicate? What do its shifts in styles and atmosphere tell us? Could a hyperform of interior design emerge? Could interior designers shift to Second Life and indeed transform into designers of virtual interior spaces?

These questions demonstrate only a fraction of the broad and fascinating vistas emerging in interior design. Indeed, topical interior designers work at the edge of a fast forward moving profession for the built environment. See for more information on current interior design research: www.mahku.nl

Many of these hypotheses and questions also pertain to the Public space design pathway. Therefore, the pathways Interior Design and Public Space Design closely collaborate in the form of the department and research group Spatial Design. Because of that, half of the discipline-specific units (unit 2: Analysis; Unit 4: Representation) are offered to students from both pathways in order to produce a constructive exchange of ideas and perspectives in both fields.

3.2.4 Pathway Public Space Design

Public space is closely connected to the search for creative perspectives and imaginations focused on revealing the hidden qualities and unexpected atmospheres of a place. But how does one address that specific place called public space? How could one expose its disguised beauty? Increased levels of traffic, screen-based transformations, multipurpose use of space, various conceptions of place-making, a network society producing network cities; all these concepts and phenomena contribute to various urban insights and conceptions traversed by a chaos of furniture, paving, functions and an array of signals. How to streamline this and discover hidden qualities? How to connect public and place? How to reveal the poetry and quality of the place itself? Clearly, the poetry of space connects with urban phenomena such as art and public space.

The development from concept to actual realization of urban places requires creative thinkers able to produce solutions and provoke transformations while shifting all technical and functional requirements. Indeed, designers for public space need design skills together with the skill of commanding integrated processes of designing, analyzing, furnishing, and maintaining public space. See for more information on current public space research: www.mahku.nl

4. External relationships

4.1 Professional relevance of the programme

Today, professional design needs the input of a range of (international) departments, disciplines, and professionals such as designers, artists, theorists, technologists, physicists, and managers. Consequently, a design professional should be able to smoothly co-operate within a team of professionals and interdisciplinary workers. The MA Design programme intends to provide the requested skills and paradigms to some thirty design students - fashion design, interior design, editorial design, and public space design, thus, eight per pathway annually. At the same time, the programme offers tools for learning in a discipline-exceeding way where the didactic strategy of interdisciplinary exchanges plays an important role. These interactions focus particularly on the possibilities and boundaries of your own design field.

The broad theoretical approach of the programme encourages the development of analytic skills and an open-minded research attitude. The ultimate aim is to couple theoretical creativity and discipline-exceeding vision with artistic power, so that you are able to create methods and contexts for situating and presenting your work. Moreover, now that both cultural and visual domains of our society tend to be transformed into multi-layered structures and systems of information, you also have to develop skills such as pitching, informing and advising.

4.2 Further external relationships

The HKU is part of two networks, Cumulus and Elia. Both Cumulus and Elia are designed to facilitate research of and reflection on advanced education. Lecturers are especially encouraged to participate in the two-yearly conferences and various workshops. Recent themes have been Challenging the Frame, The Reflexive Zone and Art, Engagement and Education. (see www.elia-artschools.org).

On a more local level, MaHKU has a good working relationship with the Dutch Design Center and Aorta (Utrecht Centre for Architecture). Given the focus of the Graduate School on the position of research in topical design, several collaborations have been established. The yearly Dutch Artistic Research Event (DARE) is organized together with Expodium. DARE takes place in the city of Utrecht at various locations such as the Academy Gallery, Aorta (Utrecht Centre for Architecture), Centraal Museum, Dutch Design Centre, Expodium, and the University Museum and shows graduation work and parallel panel discussions (research screenings). DARE is concluded by an international symposium (2006: Critical Methodologies, 2007: The Politics of Design; 2008: Spatial Practice, 2009: Urban Knowledge, 2010, Doing Dissemination). Since January 1, 2008, MaHKU, Academie Galerie, Casco, Centraal Museum, Expodium and University Museum collaborate in a recently established institution called the Utrecht Research Consortium. The Consortium will develop a series of collaborative seminars, research lectures, and symposia.

Furthermore, MaHKU will collaborate with design curators of the Centraal Museum in Utrecht and the Utrecht Design Biennial. Since the Central Museum has a renowned design collection, it offers an excellent environment for conducting research. Moreover, in collaboration with the Utrecht Design Biennial, workshops, lectures (e.g. the series "Rethinking Engagement" with internationally well-known designers) and graduate presentations will be organized. In order to attune the research programme of the Utrecht Design Biennial for Social Design and MaHKU's design research programme, a professor in the field of design has been invited to structurally play a decisive role in both programmes.

5. Programme Specification

The MA Design programme is truly unique in its experimental and practice-based focus on the designer as a researcher. This uniqueness is connected with the broad and integrated programme the Utrecht School of the Arts offers in the field of design. Departing from current topics, the MA Design programme reflects on the four design disciplines (Editorial design, Fashion design, Interior design, and Public space design), while researching existent and possible interconnections between them. Consequently, Ma Design pays much attention to critical studies, i.e. to the development of both analytic skills and the skills for a critical and theoretical debate on design in a broad sense in both written and verbal forms. Therefore, the programme includes individual sessions with theorists, designers, and critics where reflection on individual research, method and context will be trained.

5.1 Basic programme data

Final award	Master of Arts
Programme title	Master of Arts in Design
UCAS code	XXX full-time variant XXX part-time variant
Awarding body	Open University Validation Service
Teaching Institution	Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU)
Department	Faculty of Visual Arts and Design
Department Hosting Programme	Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design (MaHKU)
Date of validation	June, 2005
Date of revalidation	June, 2008
Programme start date	September, 2005
Document publication date	July, 2008

5.2 Programme aims and objectives

5.2.1 Educational aims and objectives of the programme

Aims of the programme

A1. The MA Design programme seeks to establish a practice-based research process by investigating current topics in design in an engaged manner.

A2. The MA Design programme intends to detect and explore the student's personal position within the discipline in order to be able to contribute to the discourse in the domain of design.

A3. The MA Design programme intends to create innovative design that shows possibilities and opportunities in connection with other (design) fields

A4. The MA Design programme stimulates a reflective attitude whereby the design practice and reflection enrich each other mutually.

A5. The MA Design programme provides insight in the approaches of other design disciplines and encourages the production of interconnections.

A6. The MA Design programme stimulates a process of communication that challenges individual, organizational and/or social transformation.

Objectives of the programme

B1. Research facilities: students are enabled to explore a research topic of their own choice (project proposal) and are supported by seminars, lectures, workshops, and coaching on research methods, writing skills and critical studies.

B2. Discourse platform: MaHKU functions as an international research platform where the topical discourse on design will be articulated in lectures, symposia, presentations and publications (e.g. the biannual MaHKUzine, Journal of Artistic Research).

B3. Professional depth: the students should present an innovative design. The reflective discipline-related courses will stimulate a more profound depth and a consciousness of possible connections with other disciplines. In addition, role, attitude and skills are professionalized through specific methodologies.

B4. Reflective practice: during the entire programme attention is being paid to the intermingling of image and word, reflection and creative action. For that reason the thesis and design project are counselled as an entity.

B5. Multidisciplinarity: an ongoing interaction between the various design disciplines stimulates discipline-exceeding collaboration. Therefore, a collective introduction, a collective research project, shared theory lectures, shared workshops and presentations are crucial elements of the programme.

B6. Publicity: the course has the ambition to participate on the edge of the design discourse and initiates various public activities (such as the yearly Dutch Artistic Research Event) where the students practice to present work.

5.2.2 Subject benchmark

Not applicable

5.2.3 Internal contexts

In addition to a constructive and mutually inspiring interaction between the various design disciplines, exchange will take place with the MA Fine Art programme in a common theory programme (Course of studies 1: Critical Studies).

5.3 Programme outcomes

A successful MA Design candidate should demonstrate the following competencies: you not only have knowledge of and insight into the topical developments within the domain of design, but you also possess an analytic, synthetic and evaluative capacity and demonstrate the ambition to excel. This is expressed in the following capacities:

C1. Organizational capacity: to independently organize and adjust practice-based research processes.

C2. Discursive capacity: to contribute with a proposition for development and renewal of the field.

C3. Capacity to create: to work to a large extent autonomously, from an idiosyncratic vision and with a broad cultural framework of reflection, while exploring the possibilities of novel connections.

C4. Capacity of interaction: to reflect on one's own products and ways of (collaborative) functioning with regard to peers, multidisciplinary environments, professional literature, social-societal and economic developments.

C5. Communicative capacity: to communicate convincingly in word, image and writing self-obtained insight, knowledge, ideas, vision and/or solution.

C6. Capacity of critical reflection: to deepen knowledge and insight, to be open to critique and evaluations of the steps and decisions made during the process.

5.4 Teaching, learning and assessment strategies

5.4.1 Teaching and learning strategy

As a MA student you are expected to be self-motivated and an independent learner, with tutor support. The MA Programme is a taught programme requiring you to submit your own project and an anticipated programme of

