

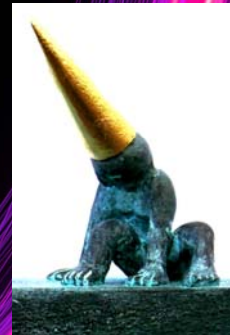
Community-based Artists: Dialogues of Identity and Learning

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Presentation for :

The Arts and Community PhD Researchers Network

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Rationale

[It is] more pervasive than ever. They [the government] view the arts as a means of achieving broad economic and social goals, such as education, crime reduction and community development. In other words, investment in culture is justified in terms of culture's ability to promote broad public policy objectives. (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2004, p. 2)

Within the discourse & debates related to the value of the arts & impact, artists voices were silent about their learning and why they undertook this type of work



Initial Proposition

When artists become involved in community arts projects they learn about their identity as an artist.

Review of Literature

Problems/ concepts requiring clarifications:

- Artist
- Community arts
- Learning
- Identity



Prompts/ questions to guide the study

Identity

- Why do artists who work with communities or in sites of learning choose to involve themselves in that type of arts practice?
- Are there any unifying traits or attributes of artists who choose to work with communities or in sites of learning?
- How does working with communities or in sites of learning influence the artist's identity?
- Does location or place (working in regional locations) affect the artist's practice?

Practice

- How do artists who work with communities or in sites of learning make meaning or theorise about their practice?
- How does the practice of working with communities or in sites of learning influence other work the artist undertakes?
- What are the artist's views of others when involved in the practice of working with communities or in sites of learning?
- How does working with communities or in sites of learning differ from other forms of art practice?



Final Proposition

When artists are involved in **community-based arts practice(s)**, they learn about their **identity/ies**, as artists.

My intentions were:

1. To gain a sense of the way artists who undertake community-based arts practice perceive themselves.
2. Explore the learning that occurs for them as artists, when they find themselves situated in contexts that involve working with groups of people

My aim was:

To consider how working as a community-based artist may influence their ways of thinking, how they make meaning or learn from the situations in which they find themselves, and how that in turn shapes them.



Who is an Artist?

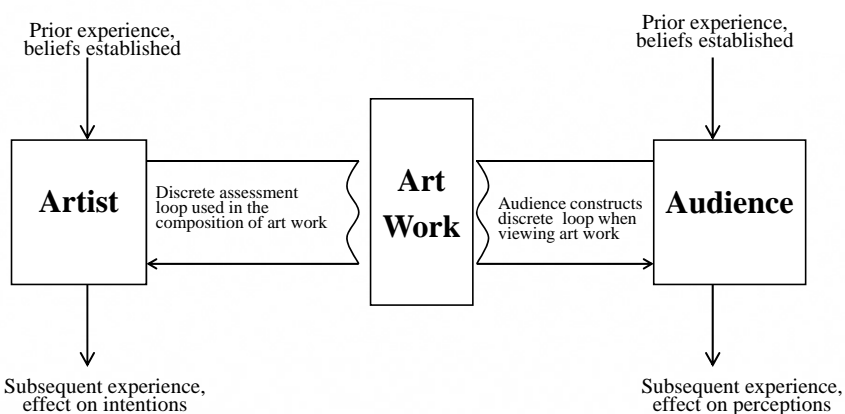
Problematic

- Different criteria used by governments for census, taxation, employment, grants.
- Qualifications/ credentials– formal, informal.
- Not usually main source of income.
- “Artist” rather than painter, sculptor etc.
- Consecrated artist vs Avant-garde artist.
- Outsider – genius or lunatic.

the categorisation of an artist “refuses to fit into any kind of model [or definition]... since part of the profession’s very purpose is to question notions of norms and standards” (Ting, 2002, p. 10)



Who is an Artist?

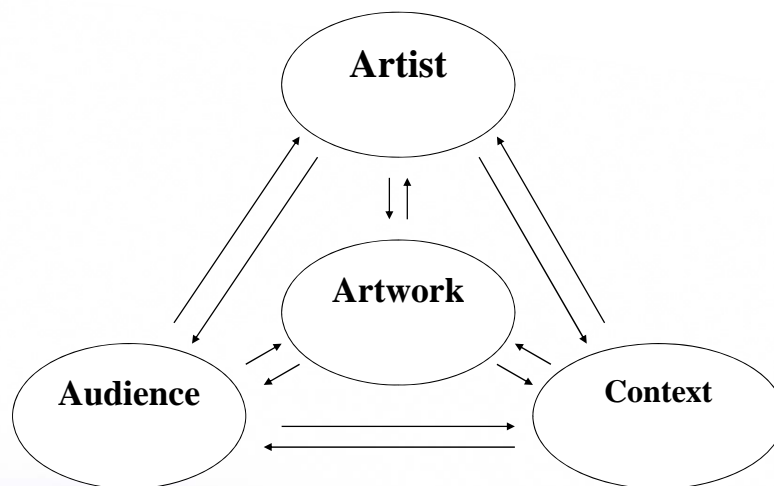


Usual relationship of an artwork between artist and audience.

Source: (from the work of Stephen Willats (c.1970) cited in Kester, 2004, p. 93)



Who is an Artist?



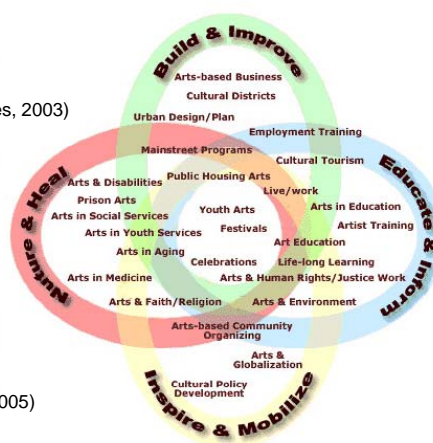
A socially interactive model of art practice.

Source: (from the work of Stephen Willats (c.1970) cited in Kester, 2004, p. 92)



Community-based arts practice(s)?

- Community arts (Hawkins, 1993)
- Community cultural development (Hawkes, 2003)
- New genre public art (U.S.) (Lacy, 1995)
- Social sculpture (Beuys, 2004)
- Dialogical art (Kester, 2004)
- Making in communities (Sullivan, 2005)
- Relational art (Bourriaud, 2005)
- Socially engaged arts (Centre for Creative Communities, 2005)
- Participatory arts (The Arts Council of Ireland, 2005)
- Socially engaged, participatory and educational arts activity. (Reiss & Pringle, 2003)
- Instrumental & Intrinsic Benefits



Arts-based community development
Source: (Cleveland, 2002)



Identity/ies

- Self /identity (Combs & Snygg, 1959; Connell, 2002)
- Development / formation (Erikson, 1950; Mishler, 1999)

Static / Fluid?

- Habitus/fields/ capital (Bourdieu, 1993)
- Enlightened / sociological / post-modern subjects (Hall, 1992)
- Structure / agency (Giddens, 1991)
- Identity capital (Côté & Levine, 2002)
- Becoming/ rhizomes / folds (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

	Representations of self and identity			PSP model
Collective self Self-concept by inclusion in large social groups or contrasting with other groups, derived by common (or symbolic) identification with group	Cultural identity Sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic, cultural or subcultural group	Social identity Individual's position(s) in a structure influenced by cultural structure; identity 'niche' created by		Social Structure ↓ ↑ Interaction
Relational self Self-concept that one shares. Define a person's role or position within significant relationships	Social identity Collective sense of belonging to a group, being similar to or having something in common with others	Personal identity Concrete aspects of individual experience rooted in interactions. Individuals find a fit between social identity and their uniqueness		
Individual self Self-concept that differentiates us from others as the unique individual	Individual identity Unique sense of personhood held by each social actor in his or her own right	Ego identity Sense of self-awareness over time. Personality agency responsible for behavioural, cognitive and emotional control.		↓ ↑ Personality
(Scheidt & Beeve, 2001)	(Katz, 2002)	(Côté & Levine, 2002)	(Côté & Levine, 2002; Erree, 1977)	

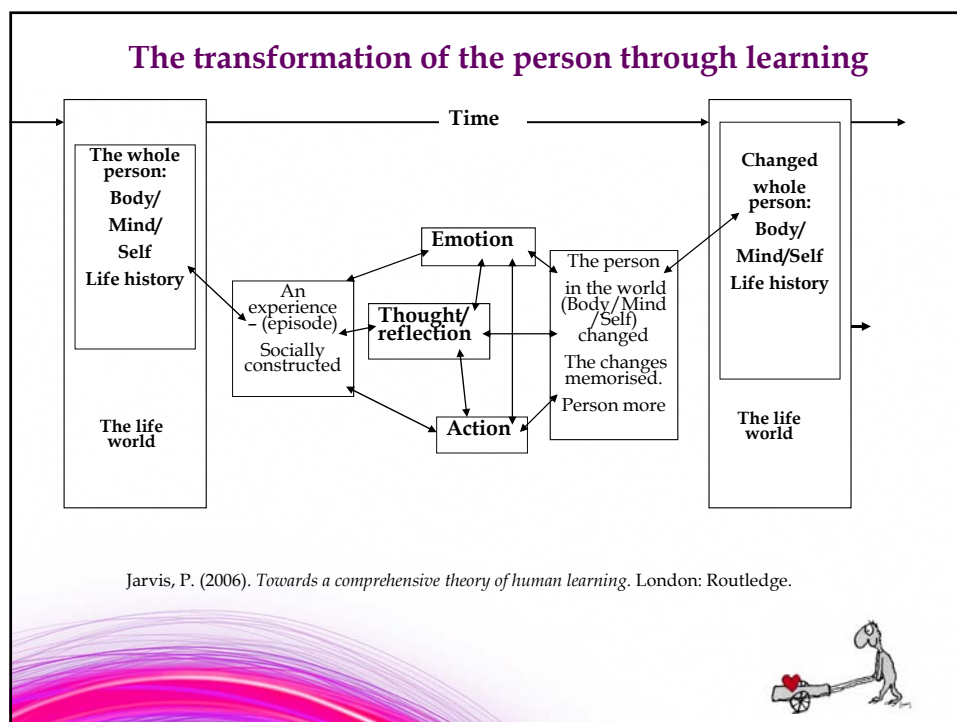
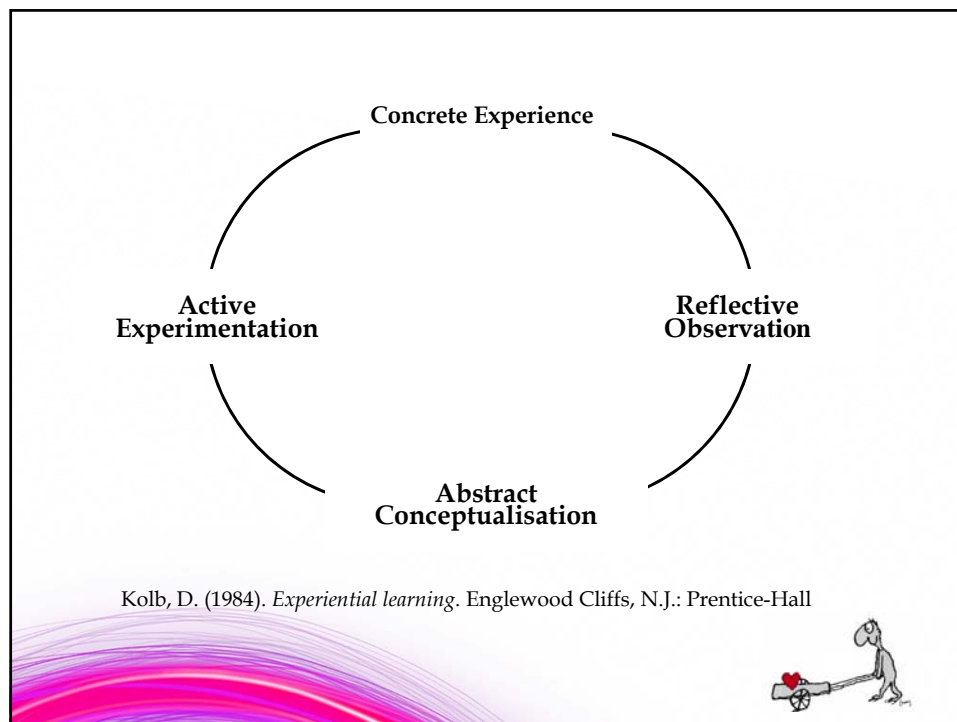
Identities mediated by subjective and objective worlds



Learning

- Experiential (Dewey, 1963; Kolb, 1984; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994)
- Disjuncture/ Transformative (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Jarvis, 2006; Mezirow, 1991; Mishler, 1999)
- Formal/informal/ non-formal, conscious /unconscious, learning sites/situations (Foley, 1995; Illich, 1971; Jarvis, 2006; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008)
- Social theory of learning / Communities of practice (Bandura, 1977; Senge, 1992; Wenger, 1998)
- Communitas/ societas (Bauman, 1993; Jarvis, 2008; Turner, 1969)
- Lifelong & lifewide learning /education





What artists do in sites of learning

Artists acquire new labels/identities:

- “Creative Practitioners” (Galton, 2008)
- “Teaching Artists” (Teaching Artists Union, 2009).

Perform a number of roles:

- Experiencer, Reporter, Analyst, Activist ([Lacy, 1995](#)).
- Educator, Role model, Collaborator, Social Activist, Researcher/Enquirer (Pringle, 2002),
- Artist, Teacher, Researcher, (A/R/Tography) (Irwin et al., 2006)

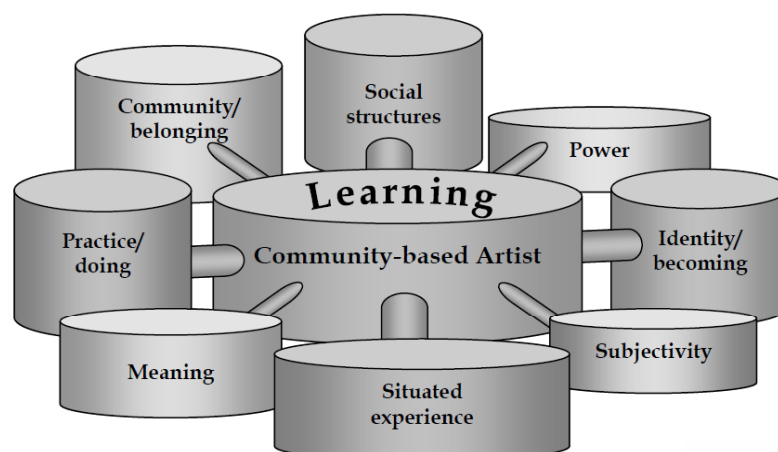
Facilitate learning by:

- Dialogic rather than cued elicitations or directives (Galton, 2008; Kester, 2004)
- Extend rather than change pupils’ initial ideas. (Galton, 2008; Pringle, 2002)

Can establish partnerships:

- *Towards learning; for learning; in learning.* (Bagnall, 2007)

Conceptual Framework



Research Approach

12 artists who live in regional Australia

Participants referred via cultural workers

Semi-structured interviews



Research Design

Methodology

Paradigm – constructivist /interpretivist
Hermeneutic phenomenological/narrative research approaches

Qualitative in nature (most appropriate)

Inductive/ spiral analysis

Thematic

Hierarchy of conceptualization

Criteria used

Based on the following: (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Cherryholmes, Popkewitz, Walker, & Schrazz, 1992; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2004; Creswell, 2003, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Elliott, Lather, Schratz, & Walker, 1992; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Holstein & Gubrium, 2005; Janesick, 2000; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 2005; Mertens, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Richardson, 2005; Riessman, 2002, 2008; Squire, 2008; van Manen, 1997; Wolcott, 2001)



Research Design

Key supports/ concepts for me through the process

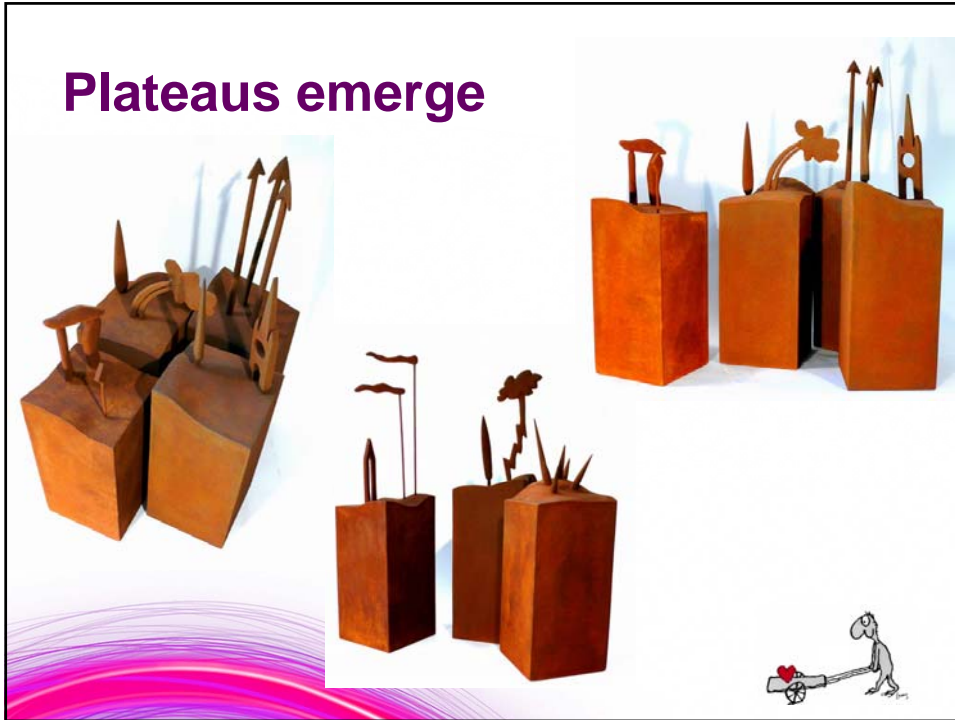
- Bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lévi-Strauss, 1966)
- Rhizomatics (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)
- Reflexivity/ reflexive bracketing/ [reflexive questions](#) (Creswell, 2003; Gearing, 2004; Patton, 2002)
- A/R/Tography (Irwin et al., 2006; Sullivan, 2005)
- Writing as a method of Inquiry, creative analytical process (CAP) (Richardson, 2005)



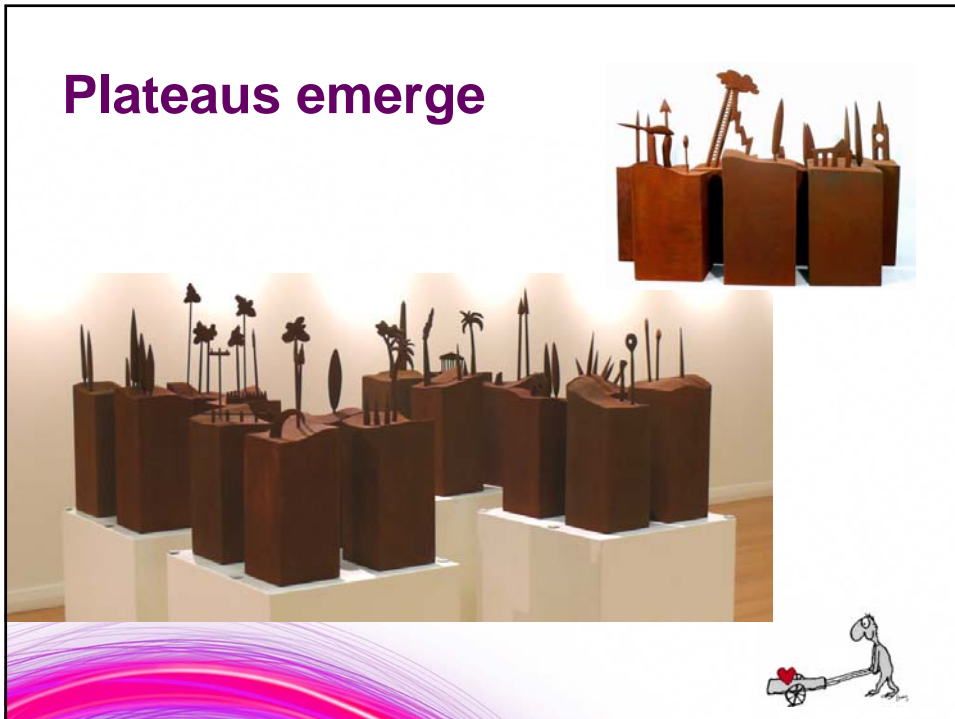
Plateaus emerge

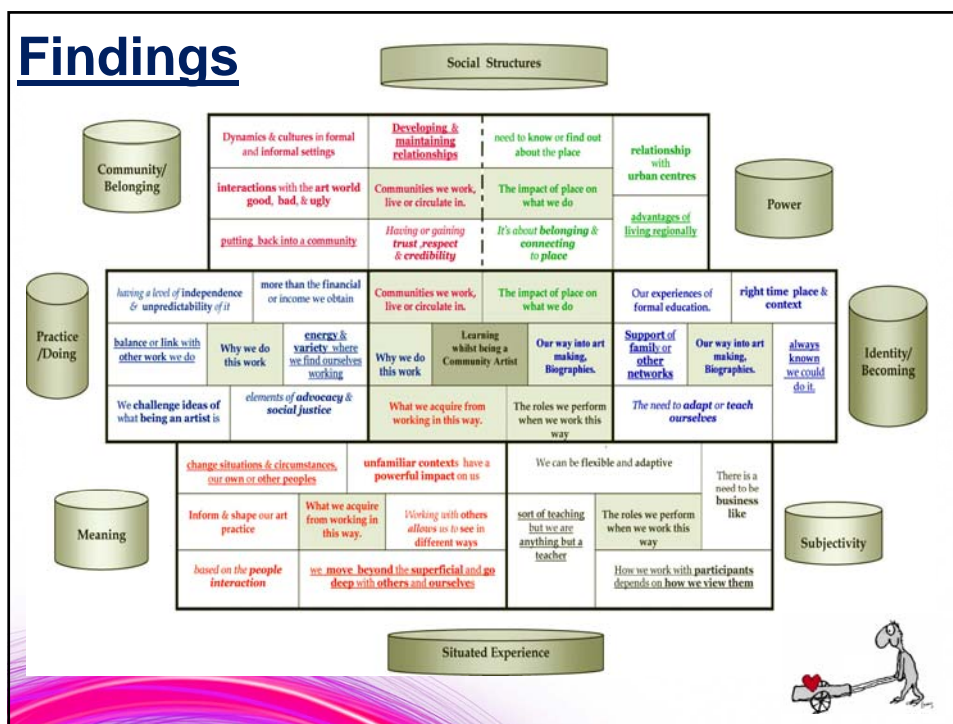


Plateaus emerge



Plateaus emerge





Findings

Our experiences of formal education.		right time place & context
Support of family or other networks	Our way into art making, Biographies.	always known we could do it.
The need to adapt or teach ourselves		

My first training was with my grandmother. Just one of those situations where I always loved it and I was a good drawer as a kid, it was just one of those sort of things where everyone said, 'oh you're so good' and it made me feel good, but my grandmother was a bit of a painter and I used to just adore spending time with her and doing it.

Findings

<i>having a level of independence & unpredictability of it</i>		more than the financial or income we obtain
<u>balance or link with other work we do</u>	Why we do this work	<u>energy & variety</u> where we find ourselves working
We challenge ideas of what being an artist is		elements of advocacy & social justice

... that's what's exciting to them and its terrific and it's exciting because we're not real sure what we're going to get ... well every one was different – every one of our projects had to be different for us to want to do them I think. We never want to repeat, repeat, repeat.



Findings

We can be flexible and adaptive		There is a need to be business like
<u>sort of teaching but we are anything but a teacher</u>	The roles we perform when we work this way	
		How we work with participants depends on how we view them

I think you sort of have to be a master of stepping in and out of lots of different roles and of being really aware that the project that you're doing that you want people to own it so you're there – it's actually more of a parental role in a way – you're sort of – you're there to listen and to find out and you go, 'okay, I get what you need'. How can I then facilitate that – provide that – so you're sort of just stepping out there and I'm going to now lead in front instead of sort of just sitting in the middle, and go well I'm now part of what's going on, to actually sort of sitting back behind and looking at the big picture of what's going on and what's going to evolve. So you're actually doing lots of different things at different times. ...



Findings

<u>change situations & circumstances, our own or other peoples</u>		unfamiliar contexts have a powerful impact on us
Inform & shape our art practice	What we acquire from working in this way.	<i>Working with others allows us to see in different ways</i>
<i>based on the people interaction</i>	<u>we move beyond the superficial and go deep with others and ourselves</u>	

It's the beginning of a feeling of, a feeling of potential. There's an excitement, there's a feeling which is like a family get-together which happens occasionally, or like a large family gathering. It's not like a club or a social event which happens and dies away. It's a real sense of event. The launching of something, like when you're making something that's there permanently, or even impermanently, you're making that event. It's an expression of minds coming together.



Findings

Had not explored why they did this work

- Moved from tacit/practical knowledge to discursive knowledge
- Went deeper from a job to understanding it was underpinned by their values / beliefs
- Connecting to /with others was important (sense of who they were)
- Broadened their world provided them with more tangible / intangible resources for their identity capital.

Approaches to working with others

- Sound pedagogy - dialogical, relational, (socially interactive model)
- Could create liminal states for *communitas* (disrupt the usual)

Problems with descriptor - Community art

- to community-based arts practice(s)
- "dislodge restrictive paradigms of thought" others and their own

Community-based arts sites

- Social places where personal and structural worlds interact
- Artists could challenge others views of them in turn more congruence with their various identities

Findings

Learning had occurred for the artists as a result of being involved in community-based arts practice(s), which they had folded into their identities and had assisted them to further develop agentic qualities to navigate their respective life journeys.

Contradictions & Tensions

Artists by working in sites of learning:

- Wanted to demystify / challenge social / cultural identities of artists
- Confirmed their perceptions of social / cultural identities of teachers
 - Discipline, control, conforming, restriction & outcomes.

Implications for practice

An insight into people who are continually asked to perform amazing feats the impact on them – intrinsic benefits for artists

Rather than focussing on artists' approaches to pedagogy, or the roles they perform, an examination of the changes to, effects on, and learning that occurs for artists who are continually involved in establishing these environments, may reveal broader understandings of the complexity involved in this work for organisations and government bodies, and in the process reveal a wider range of benefits that can be derived from such projects.



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