

A Multidisciplinary Place-Specific Art Course Outline for the CEGEP Level

Amélie Brindamour

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By: Amélie Brindamour

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Signed by the final examining committee:

Kathleen Vaughan Chair

Lorrie Blair Examiner

Suzanne Paquet Examiner

Richard Lachapelle Supervisor

Approved by _____
Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

Dean of Faculty

Date September 4th, 2014

ABSTRACT

A Multidisciplinary Place-Specific Art Course Outline for the CEGEP Level

Amélie Brindamour

This thesis takes a close look at art practices investigating the physical, experiential and social dimension of place, and at how these art forms could be better integrated in the CEGEP Visual Arts program in Quebec. It consists of a research-creation project involving a heuristic study, which resulted in the design of a place-specific course outline for this teaching-level. The following research question guided my investigation “how can an enhanced understanding and explication of my endeavor in creating a place-specific body of work contribute to the design of a place-oriented art course outline for young adult learners?” I first assessed different kinds of artistic approaches by conceiving four projects inspired by my explorations of Park Jarry in Montreal, which culminated in a more ambitious body of work. The analysis of the documentation gathered during this process established a correlation between the art-making session, an enhanced connection to the place, as well as an improved pedagogical understanding of this art form. This manifested itself in the adaptation of the artworks into four assignments. The first project aims for students to become more familiar with the given area through an exploration, documentation and research exercise. It is followed by an activity based on the movement of process art. The third activity proposes to explore the techniques of pinhole cameras and cyanotype. Finally, the final project encourages students to investigate more in depth an element of the place. The thesis text includes photographic documentation of the artworks and a full-fleshed syllabus.

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1. POINT OF DEPARTURE: Introduction

Introduction

Now more than ever, many artists express in their work a desire to establish a closer connection between art and daily life as well as to address current social and environmental issues (Cauter, Roo & Vanhaesebrouck, 2011; Kester, 2011; Margolin, 2005). This is noticeable through the increasing popularity of movements such as community art, activist art, and environmental art, to name only a few. As an artist-teacher, my creative endeavors are greatly informed by these practices, and I consider vital that my teaching as well as that of other art educators, reflect these new interests in order to give our students the opportunity to experiment with activities that take place beyond the classroom walls. Developing my thesis on this standpoint, I embarked on the creation of a studio project so as to transfer my knowledge about place-specific art-making into a course outline for CEGEP¹ students –a teaching level with which I intend to work in the future. The aim of this course outline is to integrate multidisciplinary art activities that encourage students to explore the natural and built environment, and use them as a source of inspiration to create artworks that are specific to the various characteristics of a given place. The goal of this learning is the enhancement of the connection between the self and a place, enabling a deeper engagement, which might even result in fostering interest and respect towards local places. The first step of this inquiry consisted in the making of a place-specific research-creation project that I examined using the heuristic method. Going through the different stages of this method has allowed me to pay closer attention to the pedagogical potential in each of my artistic experiments, in order to design educational

¹ CEGEP stands for “collège d’enseignement général et professionnel”, and it consists of the public post-secondary education collegiate institutions in the province of Quebec, offering pre-university and technical programs.

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projects that are compelling and appropriate to young adult learners, as well as relevant to the contemporary world.

The aim of this study is to provide insight into this particular research question: how can an enhanced understanding and explication of my endeavor in creating a place-specific body of work contribute to the design of a place-oriented art course outline for young adult learners? Also, what kind of activities can best suit this purpose, and how can they be adapted to the CEGEP requirements? Moreover, I am interested in investigating how place-specific art-making affects one's own relationship to a place, as this constitutes an additional argument to support the relevance of this art form to an educational setting. The following study intends to provide an answer to these questions in order to benefit my artist-teaching practice and also to contribute to interdisciplinary knowledge at the intersection of environmental studies, social artistic practices and art education. Choosing to use the term place-specific art throughout my research is a conscious decision so as to establish certain links with the field of place-based art education, while also referring to Lucy Lippard's (1997) term "art of place" (pp. 278 & 286). My preference for these terms over others such as environmental art education and ecological art education will be explained in the Literature Review section (see pp. 25-28). The word place also carries deeper cultural connotations than the word site in accordance with the online Oxford English Dictionary, as it is defined as "an open space in a town, a public square, a marketplace" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014a), while site is described as "the place or position occupied by some specified thing" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014b). Given that students in the proposed course will likely create art in parks, and an important motivation behind my teaching is to assign more meaning to local spaces, the term place is therefore more relevant, although I will on a few occasions employ the words area, space and site to avoid redundancy.

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Background to the Question

The research question arose from an interest in connecting more acutely to the natural environment through my artistic and teaching practice, as well as from conducting field research in northern Finland. After pursuing an interest in painting in high school and CEGEP, and then studying textile art and photography at university, I discovered in the last three years that art that responds to particularities of a given place, especially in natural areas, is what ultimately inspires me most. My artworks preceding this research were based on the emotions felt and materials collected while exploring the environment close to where I lived, and this process allowed me to negotiate in a new way my relation to the local environment. Teaching has also been a strong interest throughout my life, allowing me to transmit my enthusiasm for thinking creatively and critically, and to educate about the transformative power of our actions. The Master's program in Art Education has been an opportunity to combine both interests and grow professionally in these two fields.

At the start of the program, I aspired to foster environmental awareness through art by organizing an interactive community project addressing ecological issues. However, my approach to this topic evolved considerably during the course of my studies, and I have come to grasp better the complexity of this subject in relation to current debates in art education involving sustainability and the challenges behind art activities that are too didactic, such as exercises that dictate to illustrate global warming (Ulbricht, 1998, p.32). I began to take into consideration the social dimension of art education that is place-oriented, as well as the importance of encouraging physical exploration of the environment. This re-orientation was

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sparked by the writings of various professors from the University of Lapland in northern Finland describing environmental art initiatives. I was interested in learning more about their perspectives and methods, and consequently I arranged a study exchange at such institution during the 2012 fall semester. As the northernmost university in the European Union, the University of Lapland is known for its leading role in the field of Arctic studies and its promotion of Nordic culture (University of Lapland. n.d.). The university is located in the city of Rovaniemi, a municipality counting approximately 61 000 inhabitants at the intersection of the Arctic Circle (About Us, Rovaniemi International, n.d.), and I had the chance when I was there to experience the full darkness of the polar nights and the bright dancing colours of the northern lights.

During my stay I was able to take part in two community environmental art projects and exhibit my work in one of the university galleries. In addition, I conducted interviews for an hour and a half each with five professors whose practices are centered around environmental and community art education: Timo Jokela, Maria Huhmarniemi, Mirja Hiltunen, Hannah Levonen and Glenn Coutts. Discussing personally with these art educators allowed me to understand the differences between the distinct historical, political and environmental contexts prevailing in northern Finland and in North America, which was not possible with only written accounts. The oral transcripts of the interviews also have a spontaneous quality that seems too often to get buried under conventions and editing standards in texts, and for this reason these exchanges were truly enriching and inspiring. The outcomes of this study however apply more particularly to the context of community group projects and less to individual place-specific art making, and for this reasons I will not refer to these interviews in the final account. On the other hand, I will

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expand on the other learning opportunities that arose during my study exchange such as the assignments included in two different courses that I attended while studying there.

The first project in which I participated on September 29th, 2012 was *Art and Reflections*. Hannah Levonen, in collaboration with local artists and the schoolteacher, led an outdoor workshop involving a group of teenagers who recently arrived in Rovaniemi as immigrants or refugees and were attending a transitional school. The event took place in the forest, more precisely the Oranki Environmental Art Park, and consisted in the creation of sculptures out of branches and wires in the shape of a snake, a nest and a bird (see Figures 1 a & b). This project is part of a series of art activities, exhibitions and festivals that are organized throughout the year by Levonen and her associates. This small community of artist-peers helps the students familiarize themselves with a new environment in a creative and fun way while developing positive experiences in relation to nature. I had the chance to witness a second project on November 9th, 2012 called *River Light*, this time organised by Mariah Huhmarniemi with the help of Timo Jokela and other community members. This event has taken place every year since 2002 on the beach of Rovaniemi during the darkest time of the year when there is approximately four hours of daylight. It involves local schools, community groups and students from the university, who build enormous straw and wood sculptures and light them on fire during the one night event (see Figures 2 a & b). I found both projects to be aesthetically interesting and suitable for the skill level of the participants, but most importantly they were successful in making the youth explore and reflect on their local environment. The knowledge that I acquired during these three distinct field projects, including the series of interviews, have been instrumental in my understanding of place-specific art education.

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Figure 1 (a). Hanna and the other artists and the school teacher leading the discussion group, *Art and Reflection*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 1 (b). Students building the sculptures in teams, *Art and Reflection*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 2 (a). Students from the University of Lapland finishing installing one of the sculptures, *River Light 2012*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 2 (b). One of the sculptures burning during the event, *River Light 2012*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour

In addition, an important part of my stay in Finland involved the creation of a body of work inspired by my excursions in the regional parks close to where I lived and by discussions with local inhabitants. The exhibition *Polku*, which translates as *Path* in English, was shown in November 2012 at the university gallery Kajo 2 (see Figures 3 a, b, c & d). It consisted of an installation including a series of photographs, an image projection, two sculptural works and two drawings. The photographs intended to recreate the personal landscape that I experienced during these walks, ranging from enlightening moments to more confusing and frustrating ones. Shoes

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designed to my size – made out of bark and pine cone scales collected during these outings – contributed to express the feeling of longing for finding my own way of connecting with nature. The body of work that I have created for my thesis is a continuation of this new way of considering photography that I developed in Finland.



Figure 3 (a). Amélie Brindamour, General view of exhibition, *Polku*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 3 (b). Amélie Brindamour, Detail of exhibition, *Marcher sur la Lumière*, *Polku*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 3 (c). Amélie Brindamour, detail of exhibition, *Série À l'Orée du Bois*, *Polku*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 3 (d). Amélie Brindamour, detail of exhibition, *Sentier de Chaussures*, *Polku*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour

The idea of creating artworks inspired by a specific place came from a desire to discover innovative ways of understanding this area of study rather than reproducing the concepts of art

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educators before me, as well as to make sure that the theory would translate well into practice. I believe that this personal approach is also more appropriate for enhancing the range of my teaching practice. Experiencing an idea through art-making allowed me to broaden my knowledge of the process and implications inherent to certain art forms. To name only one example, I experienced the challenges of collaborating with stakeholders and of inviting community participation in the 2012 project *Mange Pointe-Saint-Charles* (see Figures 4 a & b). For this extensive project I collaborated with the bakery Productive House in the neighbourhood of Pointe-Saint-Charles in Montreal, and La Pointe monthly community market. The scarcity of food services in the community is a critical issue, as many inhabitants do not have access to fresh and affordable food within one-kilometer walking distance, a situation referred to as “food desert” (Food Security Committee, 2012, p. 2). With the intent of symbolizing equal access to affordable food as a right and not a privilege, I represented the community of Pointe Saint-Charles through loaves of bread moulded in the shape of the area using bread pans that I welded. As one of the main food staples throughout the world, bread carries strong religious and political connotations and is often considered a symbol for sharing and justice (Porter, 1989, p. 10). The loafs of bread were then presented to the public for the occasion of the market, and viewers were invited to indicate with coloured butters the location of their home and their food resources. Some participants enjoyed eating their creations afterwards and found that the project was a good catalyst to discuss these issues, while others were more confused about the goals of the artwork. In light of this mixed outcome, I decided to orient my thesis project towards an environment where I felt more confident, meaning the visual arts classroom, and target the specific kind of learners with whom I intend to work in the future.

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Figure 4 (a). Amélie Brindamour, community project *Mange Pointe-Saint-Charles*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 4 (b). Amélie Brindamour, community project *Mange Pointe-Saint-Charles*
Photo: Amélie Brindamour

Students at the CEGEP level are at a good age to introduce notions of place-specific art-making and other conceptually-driven projects, since they are mature enough to understand the theoretical implications of these art forms, and can build from previous artistic skills to undertake multidisciplinary projects. The decision to orient my course outline towards CEGEP students also relates to the lack of diversity in artistic practices in the courses that are offered at this level. From the three strongly arts-oriented CEGEPs that I considered for this research – Dawson College, Cégep de Saint-Laurent and Cégep de Ste-Foy² – none of the course descriptions on their websites mentioned the new range of place-specific and socially-oriented practices that are happening in the arts today. All focused instead on building skills in traditional media such as drawing, painting, photography and sculpture, and are presenting more conventional studio-based learning practices (Dawson College Course Descriptions, 2007; CÉGEP de Saint-Laurent Descriptions des Cours, n.d.; CÉGEP de Ste-Foy Grille de Cours, 2013). However, while making a presentation to Concordia first year undergraduate students

² These three CEGEPs were chosen because they offer a diverse representation: CEGEP Saint-Laurent is a Francophone institution situated in Montreal, Dawson College is an Anglophone institution again in Montreal and CEGEP de Sainte-Foy is a Francophone establishment in Quebec City.

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during the design stage of the course outline, I was told that second year sculpture classes in CEGEP often integrate art activities that explore different spaces around the school. This has been confirmed through email discussions with Leopold Foulem, a retired professor from CEGEP Saint-Laurent (personal communication, April 30, 2014). Other indications, such as the title of the course Sculpture III at CEGEP de Ste-Foy, “Espace et Mouvement”, shows an interest in considering notions of place yet the course description does not mention more in depth explorations (CÉGEP de Ste-Foy Grille de Cours, 2013). On the other hand, a course that would be dedicated to address more comprehensively issues surrounding the notion of place would offer a better diversity in terms of contemporary practices and would fulfill several goals stated in the *Visual Arts Pre-university Program* published by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [MELS] (MELS, 2012). The program's specific components stipulate that “at the end of the Visual Arts program, students will be able to... determine where they stand in relation to contemporary society and culture”, “develop their artistic potential through a variety of practices” and “demonstrate attitudes that foster their personal, social and artistic development” (p. 12). With this in mind, I hope that the development of a place-specific course outline for the CEGEP level may encourage curriculum planners to envision an education for young adults that is more diversified and offers them the opportunity to create art that opens up to their outdoor surroundings. Such an approach would also be more reflective of contemporary art concerns such as social issues, place-specificity and environmentalism.

Theoretical framework

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My vision of art education is informed by Harold Pearce's pluralistic paradigmatic (1983) and postparadigmatic structure (1992) related to the teaching of art, Suzi Gablik's (1991) post-modernist vision of art, and site-specific art theories by Suzanne Lacy (1995), Lucy Lippard (1997), Miwon Kwon (2004) and Suzanne Paquet (2009). As an artist-teacher, my exploration of the design of a course outline for a place-specific CEGEP course is primarily through my own and others' creative practices, rather than through theories of teaching young adults, although I will address briefly this topic in the Findings section (see pp. 61-62).

By applying to the field of art education the tri-paradigmatic structure introduced by German social philosopher Jurgen Habermas (1971)³, Pearce elaborates on the many goals of art education, which students emulate to different degrees when creating art. That is, the formal qualities and technical achievement, the communicative and experiential side, and finally the more reflexive, culturally and socially relevant dimension (pp. 244-245). Regrettably, many art education researchers nowadays seem to overemphasize one of these aspects to the detriment of the others, as it is the case with certain researchers belonging to the environmental, ecological and place-based art education movements, an issue I will elaborate further later. Pearce's pluralistic definition of art education on the other hand offers a balanced and non-instrumental vision of art education's objectives, and reminds me to keep in sight the diverse purposes that art should embody in order to suit the particular learner's interests and artistic sensibility. Later in his career, Pearce also added a post-modernist orientation of art influenced by Kearney (1988), namely the postparadigmatic orientation, emphasising the constant state of flux and multiple realities of postmodernism (as cited in Pearce, 1992, p. 250). I would add to this theoretical

³ Jurgen Habermas tri-paradigmatic structures are "the *Empirical-Analytic* orientation, the *Interpretive-Hermeneutic* orientation and the *Critical-Theoretic* orientation" [author's italics] (as cited in Pearce, 1983, p. 244-245).

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framework the pedagogical approach of Suzi Gablik's (1991) postmodernist vision of art, in which she praises the reenchantment of culture through art that takes into account the environment and the community, and encourages artists to think of themselves as being part of a "moral community" (p. 114). This notion goes against the modernist belief of "art for art's sake" where aesthetic qualities predominate (p. 141), and re-establishes a better balance between the aesthetic, self-expressive and cultural dimensions of art.

These authors' postmodern vision is reflected in my definition of place-specific art education, an education towards the creation of multidisciplinary art projects focusing on *physically* experiencing the natural and built environment and then using the acquired knowledge to engage in a dialogue with the particularities of a place. This implies taking into account how cultural, social and political contexts shape our experience of a place. The field of place-based art education (Blandy & Hoffman, 1993; Gradle, 2007; Wallen, 2003) is more inclusive regarding this aspect than environmental art education (Jokela, 2008; Hiltunen, 2005; Huhmarniemi, Lilja & Lilleberg, 2008; Ulbricht, 1998) and of eco-art and ecological art education (Congdon & Krug, 1998; Inwood, 2009; Kang Song, 2012; Neperud, 1997), and I will expand on their differences in the Literature Review (see pp. 25-27). Even though I deem important to consider the communities inhabiting or using a given territory, this field of study is so vast and complex that a whole class could be dedicated to its learning, and for this reason this topic will not be included in the proposed course outline.

My understanding of the relationship between art and place is based on four writers who strongly contributed to the dissemination of this area of study, such as the art critic Suzanne Lacy

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(1995). In her theory of “New Genre Public Art”, she focuses on how the daily users of a space experience an artwork in the public realm. Despite the fact that a place-inspired work might not necessarily be presented in public when taking into account my definition, it is pertinent that it still “communicates and interacts with a broad and diversified audience about issues directly relevant to their lives– [and] is based on engagement” (p. 19). I consider that by encouraging a physical exploration of the space it improves students’ chances to *engage* with the different dimensions of the place, and tap into some of its significant characteristics and meanings that are shared with their daily users as well. Lucy Lippard (1997) complements these ideas in *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*, preferring the more culturally charged term “place” to “site”. She emphasizes the importance of better educating public artists in creating an “art of place”, instead of an “art about places”, which she says is too often prevalent in the art world (pp. 278 & 286). Even though Lippard is referring to public art when discussing the term “place ethic” and the various qualities that this art form should take into account, many of them are still relevant to my definition as she strongly emphasizes the experiential aspect of a place (p. 286). For example, she mentions that public art should be “specific enough to engage people on the level of their *lived experiences*, to say something about the place as it is or was and could be”, and “layered, complex and unfamiliar enough to hold people’s attention once they’ve been attracted, to make them wonder, and to offer ever *deeper experiences* and references to those who hang in” (p. 286).

Moreover, in the book *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2004), Kwon names three paradigms of site-specific art: phenomenological or experiential, social/institutional, and discursive (p.30), which is consistent with the different possibilities of

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place-specific art education expressed in my definition. Her understanding of current site-specific art involves a greater concern by artists regarding social issues happening in everyday life and the world (p. 24), as well as establishing connections to other disciplines and paying a special attention to popular discourses (p. 26). By regarding the site as a “field of knowledge, intellectual exchange, or cultural debate” (p. 26), she outlines the ever-changing nature of our understanding and experience of a site and the art created in it, or from it, showing the contradictions inherent in establishing clear boundaries when defining site-specific art. Finally, Suzanne Paquet also points out in *Le Paysage Façonné, les Territoires Post-Industriels l’Art et l’Usage* (1997) and *Errances Photographiques: Mobilité et Intermédialité* (2014), the interrelationship of the discovery of foreign places, photography and physical mobility. She also draws attention to the importance of photography in documenting land artworks and ephemeral works in the 60’s and 70’s, but insists that these works are more an art of landscape, or “un art du paysage”, than an art about a specific site, because they are showcased in galleries and books in the form of photographs (p. 168). In her words, “c’est bien par la photographie que le land art est devenu un art du paysage. Je crois que sans cet aspect vue enregistrée d’une destination où il serait possible de se rendre (...) il en serait tout autrement” (p. 168).

It is important to specify that the artistic context at the time was very different from the one prevailing now, and artists were then encouraged to go bold and not necessarily care about the environment, nor try to establish a relationship to a place. Lippard however stresses the benefit of creating an “art of place” (p. 286), and it could be presumed that if the land artists would have created works in sites that are familiar to them and the public, and would have taken into consideration the cultural, social and political context of the site, perhaps the works would

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have been more tied to the place, even as photographic documentations. Likewise, a number of artists presented in the next section succeed in using photography in their practice as a way of depicting a place, providing a new way of perceiving its features, while commenting on a particular local issue.

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2. DOWN THE TRAIL: Review Of Literature

Land Art, Environmental Art, Conceptual Art and Site-Specific Art

The artists from the land art movement in the 1960's introduced the practice of using the landscape as main material, what has later greatly influenced art education researchers in this area (Inwood, 2008, p. 59). Paquet (2009) examines some of its protagonists, such as Robert Smithson, explaining how the conquest of the west American landscape by land artists extended colonist nationalistic ideologies (p. 78):

On peut voir dans la sortie des artistes de leurs ateliers pour aller vers les déserts de l'Ouest une réédition de la conquête du XIXe siècle, alors que c'est par la mobilité, par la prise sur le territoire de même que par la description de son paysage, en peinture et en photographie, que passait la quête d'identité du pays. (pp. 75-76) (see Figure 5)

This attitude also showed little concern by most early land artists of the impact of their artworks on the sites. Other artists from this same period had a desire to connect with nature through art without subjugating or "marking" it" permanently. Richard Long introduced the act of walking as an art form, performing very gentle actions on the land, and making it more clear than did other land artists that the photograph was the artwork, as it is the case with the 1967 piece *A Line Made By Walking* (Roelstraete, 2010, pp. 66-73) (see Figure 6). Experiencing directly the landscape by trekking across an area before taking a photograph has often been an important element of Long's numerous artworks created since the 60's up until today (p. 18), an aspect that I find relates to my practice as well. A more contemporary example of land art, which continues in the same vein, is the famous British environmentalist sculptor and photographer Andy Goldsworthy, who generally manipulates very little the environment where he creates his sculptures (Von Donop & Riedelsheimer, 2001) (see Figure 7). In the dozens of outdoor

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ephemeral sculptures that Goldsworthy has created since the 70's, the colours, lines, materials, light, and the background landscape intersect to create a stunning effect. This aesthetic became extremely popular with the general public, and coincided with the growing interest in environmentalism and Earth protection movements in different parts of the world. Even though his artworks express a particular knowledge of the material used, they do not implicate other dimensions of the site however, such as the “social/institutional” and “discursive” aspects, to use Kwon's categories of site-specificity (2004, p.30).



Figure 5. Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake: Utah, United States



Figure 6. Richard Long, *A Line Made by Walking*, Bristol: England



Figure 7. Andy Goldsworthy, *Five Men Seventeen Days, Fifteen Boulders, One Wall*, Storm King Art Center



Figure 8. John Baldessari, *Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)*

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Artists from the land art currents were influenced by the rise of conceptual art in the late sixties and seventies, and the importance of the process behind the creation of a work of art (Rorimer, 2001, pp. 236-238). During the research-creation stage of my study, I became particularly interested in the potential of process-art to investigate a site using a predetermined structure. Indeed by setting in advance a course of actions in relation to time and place, it is possible to experience the given space without being influenced by one's own prior expectations and ideas. Sol LeWitt (1967), an important protagonist of this movement, describes the advantages of this approach in the article "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art": "The artist would select the basic form and rules that would govern the solution of the problem. After that the fewer decisions made in the course of completing the work, the better. This eliminates the arbitrary, the capricious, and the subjective as much as possible" (p. 80). John Baldessari was also a prominent artist to integrate a preset structure to his photography practice in the 1970's (Kelsey, 2011, p. 134). For example, with the 1973 work *Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)*, Baldessari decided in advance the subject and goals of the photograph, while leaving spaces for unpredictability in the final result. I have experimented with this way of working in the photographic series *From Seven to Seven* (see Figure 23 a, b & c), and this has inspired one of the assignments in my course outline.

Examples of works displaying a consideration for the particular social aspects of a site, and which could be considered more place-specific, include Joseph Beuys's *7000 Eichen [7,000 oaks]* from 1982 (Gandy, 1997, p. 641) and Agnes Denes's *Wheatfield – A Confrontation: Battery Park Landfill Downtown Manhattan* from the same year (Denes, 1992, p. 118). Both works display a distinct but compelling ecological concern, taking into account that the German

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public was worried at the time about the dangers of acid rain on the forest (Gandy, 1997, p. 641), and that the building frenzy in New York was eating away the space for land cultivation.



Figure 9. Joseph Beuys, 7000 A Eichen [7,000 Oaks], for Documenta 7 : Cassel, Germany



Figure 10. Agnes Denes, Wheatfield - Confrontation, by the Public Art Fund, New York

More relevant to my practice is the Winnipeg artist Sarah Anne Johnson, who created a body of work inspired by her experience of participating in a 21-day excursion in the Arctic along with a group of artists, activists and scientists in 2009 (Sarah Anne Johnson, n.d.). Her photographs express mixed emotions that could be described as wonder towards the beauty of the arctic landscape as well as feelings of discomfort represented by surreal festive elements, namely the fireworks and confetti-like motifs that are added using photospotting and acrylic ink (see Figure 11). The final effect of these uncanny scenes raises concerns about society's attitude of rejoicing in relation to the Arctic landscape, and could be interpreted as a malaise towards the exploitation of natural resources up North, or global warming.



Figure 11. Sarah Anne Johnson, *Explosions*, *Arctic Wonderland Series*

“Art of Places” in Quebec

Further research on place-oriented art initiatives in the province of Quebec showed that there has been a considerable interest among artists in incorporating art into the natural environment since the 1980’s. Boréal Art Québec has been a pioneer in introducing outdoor art making in the “belle province” and was active from 1983 until 2008 (Boreal Art/Nature, n.d.). Located in the small community of Rivière-Rouge, this artist-run centre organized residencies every summer gathering local and international artists who experimented in ephemeral and permanent environmental creations in the forest of Hautes-Laurentides. Other similar art centres combining an outdoor sculpture park with an annual event have been launched meanwhile, such as the Jardins du Précambrien in 1995 (Les jardins du précambrien, n.d.), the Symposium Essarts in 2000 (Rencontre printemps 2000, n.d.), and the Symposium d’Art In Situ in Namur in 2005 (Centre d’action culturelle de la MRC Papineau, 2014). I had the opportunity to visit the sculptural garden of Essarts on August 23rd, 2013 and met with the founder Pierre Tessier, while the Mexican artist Alejandra Zermeño, and the Quebec sculptor Carole Baillargeon were putting

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the finishing touches to their pieces before installing them permanently in the park. Both had distinct approaches to the site in terms of inspirations and aesthetic, but their works were nonetheless connected to a particular characteristic of the place. Zermeño created two colourful actual-size male figures by casting two teenagers from the community of Drumondville, while Baillargeon's sculpture represented the underground links between trees that are imperceptible in the forest, using materials whose shape and colors fitted the site were it was going to be put in place. Discussing with them about my thesis research made me realized how place-specific art is still not a well known art form, and confirmed the necessity of a definition that is flexible and inclusive. Indeed, both artists felt that their artworks could not be labeled place-specific, even though their creations were inspired by the place and required becoming more familiar with it. After this exchange, it was clear that my course outline and my teaching practice had to promote place-specificity as an art form that recognized many different ways to embody a place.



Figure 12. Lynne Hull, *The Power for Bears to Dream the World – Without Notice*, Boréal Art Québec, Canada



Figure 13. Reena Saini Kallat, *Subject to Change*, Boréal Art Québec, Canada

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Figure 14. Alejandra Zermeño, *Inside of me*, Essarts Parc de sculptures, Saint-Pie-de-Guire, Quebec, Canada
Photo : Amélie Brindamour



Figure 15. Carole Baillairgeon, *Alice au pays de l'entre-aide*, Essarts Parc de sculptures, Saint-Pie-de-Guire, Quebec, Canada
Photo : Amélie Brindamour



Figure 16. Francis Cuny, *Xylo*, Essarts Parc de sculptures, Saint-Pie-de-Guire, Quebec, Canada
Photo: Amélie Brindamour



Figure 17. Roger Gaudreau, *Capsules*, Essarts Parc de sculptures, Saint-Pie-de-Guire, Quebec, Canada
Photo: Amélie Brindamour

Other local artists based in Montréal whose practices engage similar questions include mixed-media artist Geneviève Chevalier, as well as art educators and artists Kathleen Vaughan and Yves Amyot. Chevalier's installations explore the geographical and physical context of a space, but also tackle cultural and social issues affecting the community, often involving its participation in the process. In the long-term project *Orford : Territoire Insulaire* (2010-2014), Chevalier created a series of digital prints, a video and a series of visual and audio documents in

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relation to the battle of the citizens to prevent the transformation of a portion of the Parc National du Mont Orford into a residential development (Chevalier, 2014). For her part, Vaughan often deals with questions of identity and belonging through explorations of place. Her current series *Nel Mezzo del Camin* (2012-in progress) consists of textile maps informed by her experience of walking in Montreal's urban woods and parks with her dog. The maps express a phenomenological engagement with mental and digital perceptions of the spaces in question, with a political and ecological orientation (Vaughan, 2013) (see Figure 12). Yves Amyot is the instigator of the Centre de Création Pédagogique Turbine located in Montreal, which promotes the conception of pedagogical projects that integrate art to the exploration of the local environment (Turbine, 2013). In the *Carte Numérique Canal H4G* (2014), he collaborated with artists Magalie Babin and Natacha Clitandre, as well as the cultural centre of Verdun in order to organize what he refers to as “Techno-Marche” with primary and high school students from the area (Amyot, 2014). During these walks, students were encouraged to explore their neighbourhood and express their impressions using sound-recording and photography. This was later combined into a digital map of the area that visitors could discover through the students' eyes and ears.



Figure 18. Geneviève Chevalier, *Orford* : *Territoire Insulaire*



Figure 19. Kathleen Vaughan, *Nel Mezzo del Camin*: *Summit Woods*, Montreal, Canada

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Figure 20. Yves Amyot, *Carte Numérique, Canal H4G*, Verdun neighbourhood, Montreal, Canada

The diverse approaches that can originate from place-specific art-making can range from an orientation towards the phenomenological, environmental or social dimension of a place, as it has been demonstrated by the artistic practices of Johnson, Chevalier, Vaughan and Amyot.

Environmental, Ecological and Placed-Based Art Education

In the last forty years different currents in art education have sprung from an interest in incorporating an environmental and contextual perspective to this branch of learning. It could be said that these movements evolved from one another, but more recently researchers have tended to prefer one term *over* another because of pedagogical differences. The next two paragraphs will provide a brief literature review of this area of research, and then present the reasons why I prefer to use the term place-specific art education in my research.

Ronald W. Neperud (1973) was one of the first to raise the question of environmental aesthetic with the article “*Art Education: Towards an Environmental Aesthetic*”, in which he

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prompts art educators to extend the notion of art and aesthetics to their surroundings, and encourages a critical consideration of the built environment (p. 9). With a similar focus, Suzi Gablik's (1991) book *The Reenchantment of Art* argues for the urgency to take into consideration ecological issues, and has inspired many others after her. In the same line of thought as Gablik's, Ulbricht (1998) advocates art-making that is socially responsible and proposes that the scope of environmental art activities should encompass environmental issues as well as the social and political context of a place. Likewise, Kristin G. Congdon and Don H. Krug (1998) encourage art educators to present to students contemporary artists who are promoting and facilitating ecological restoration.

Congdon and Krug (1998) connect ecological art education with an art education of place, making a link between these originally three distinct disciplines: environmental education, place-based education and art education. This connection was also established previously by Douglas Blandy and Elizabeth Hoffman in the article "Toward an Art Education of Place" (1993). They proposed in this study to challenge the anthropocentric notion inherent to community art education, and rather to incorporate the characteristics of ecology and place-specificity belonging to the discourse of eco-theory and place-based education (p. 26). Sally Gradle (2007) also contributed to ground ecological art education to the notion of place, as she calls attention to the problematic of a lack of "sense of place" in society nowadays (p. 392). The theories of critical place-based art education as developed by Blandy and Hoffman and Gradle exemplify the multi-dimensional aspects of a place and also demonstrate the rich range of artistic creations that can be inspired by exploring physically and theoretically this notion.

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Practitioners of the environmental art education movement in northern Finland, who I introduced at the beginning of this paper, advocate art activities that take place outdoors and are tied to the community, thus integrating as well the notion of place-based art education (Jokela, 2007; Hiltunen, 2008; Huhmarniemi, Lilja & Lilleberg, 2008). Timo Jokela (2007), an experienced art educator and artist, challenges preconceptions about art activities whose sole purpose is to build awareness of environmental issues, or reproduce famous archetypal symbols without taking into account the place where they are made. Talking about his peers' practice, as well as his own, he explains that:

Environmental art is not a question of sculptures located outdoors but of recognition of the physically culturally bound character of the environment as the point of departure for and content of a work. In other words environmental art takes its site into account, first in terms of objective proportions, substances, materials and their lifespans, second as subjective multisensory experiences, and third as an intertextual place known and understood in the culture (Jokela, p. 120).

He encourages a vision of sustainability described as “interdisciplinary fieldwork” that considers the environmental, cultural and social characteristics of a place (1997, p. 3). This attitude towards sustainability, as well as the importance of an experiential approach to art-making is also supported by Neperud (1997, p. 19), and these studies are important in my research in order to reinforce its validity.

Of all the art educators mentioned previously, very few attempted to design a curriculum that integrated these themes. Hilary J. Inwood (2009) is one of the rare art educators to offer more insights on this question in her doctoral research at Concordia University. It consisted of

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studying the experience of elementary teachers as they ventured into integrating so-called eco-art activities in their curricula. Even though certain aspects of Inwood's studies do not align with my research's theoretical framework, her inquiry into an environmental art curriculum provided valuable insights for designing my own site-specific course outline for young adults.

Basis for my Own Research and Shortcomings in Other Studies

The use of the term place-specific art education in my inquiry is a way to combine theories surrounding site-specific art such as an "art of place" by Lippard (1997, pp. 278-286), while referring to the field of place-based art education, since it is the movement that corresponds better to what I envisioned for the course outline. Even though the area of environmental art education in northern Finland is one of the main inspirations for this research, many of the projects described by the researchers from the University of Lapland are created in groups and thus are less oriented to individual self-expression⁴. As a result, most of the artworks created display a similar aesthetic, and are not representative of the diverse creative endeavours that can originate from the exploration of a place. I also find the term environmental art education to be misleading, as it implies that the artworks have to be necessarily presented in the environment and are connected to environmental issues. In the same line of thought, eco-art or ecological art education can be restrictive, as there are many ways of perceiving a site, and the ecological dimension is only one of them. In my view, imposing art activities that address specific ecological and social concerns can be particularly constraining. For example, Ulbricht (1998) encourages art educators to tackle issues in their classrooms related to "global warming,

⁴ See projects led by Hannah Levonen and Maria Huhmarniemi described in the Introduction pp. 14-15.

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deforestation, water protection, endangered species, or waste disposal” (p. 32), while Kang Song’s (2012) projects were created “in response to environmental degradation” (p. 798). This approach can have some positive consequences as it informs students on general environmental issues and makes them more aware of the global crisis. However, it does not nurture the first two orientations of the tri-paradigmatic definition laid down by Pearse (1983) corresponding to the formal and technical qualities of art (p. 244), and its communicative and experiential side (p. 245). In this sense, Neperud (1997) warns art educators to question the “cultural views embedded in environmental advocacy lest we project our own values into others” (p. 20). On his part, place-based art education emphasizes the consideration of the local places and their social context and thus constitutes an important foundation for my research. However, in various activities described by Blandy and Hoffman (1993) and Gradle (2007), there is no mention of physically experiencing the aesthetical qualities of the built and natural environment, generating a contradiction in its disconnected approach to places and nature. This is the reason why I do not completely adhere to place-based art education’s values and prefer the amalgamation of place-specific art education.

To conclude, the introduction of the term place-specific art education allows me to weave together ideas regarding site-specific art (Kwon, 2004; Paquet, 1997 & 2014), an “art of place” (Lippard, 1997, pp. 278 & 286) and place-based art education (Congdon & Krug, 1998), while abandoning ideas from Blandy and Hoffman (1993) and Gradle (2007) for instance, that do not fit the post-modernist/post-paradigmatic vision of art education established by Pearse (1983 & 1992). I believe that my definition of place-specific art supports the many unique qualities of this field and offers more possibilities to students when venturing in this art form.

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3. MEANS OF TRAVEL: Methodology

Research-Creation Method

Since first-hand experience plays such an important role in my definition of place-specific art, I chose to use the method of research-creation to increase my understanding of the process of creating such a body of work (Sullivan, 2010). The main aim of this endeavour was to observe how I translated my impressions of a place into artistic projects, and how the acquired knowledge could inform the pedagogical assignments in the course outline. In order to examine rigorously my creative journey, I also employed the method of heuristic research (Moustakas, 1991) as an essential component that guided the collection and assessment of the data. These methods support and successfully complement each other as both align with postmodernist ideology, go beyond the established academic research structure and intend to transform the researcher.

The definition of practice-based research by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council [SSHRC] is the following:

An approach to research that combines creative and academic research practices, and supports the development of knowledge and innovation through artistic expression, scholarly investigation, and experimentation. The creation process is situated within the research activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms) (SSHRC, 2013).

In his key book *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts* (2010), Graeme Sullivan mentions the different types of studio-based investigations possible. My inquiry falls more

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precisely into the realm of practice-led research, as its goal is to conduct an investigation “into art and design” and “through art and design” (p. 77). Sullivan refers to researchers Maarit Mäkelä and Sara Routarinne (2006) to exemplify that “a distinctive feature of practice-led research is that the accepted task of data collection is also conceptualized as *data creation*” (p. 78). It is important to outline that even though the final body of work is an important part of the outcome of this research, the most essential realization is the design of the course outline. Therefore, the focus of the research was more oriented towards the process of creating the artwork, than the end result. This being said, it was important for me to feel excited and challenged while working on my art projects, and for this reason I applied the same quality standards as with any work of art that I have made in the past.

Sullivan (2010) also gives information on the different frameworks of any creative research, a few of which are aligned with my inquiry. For instance, my research is concerned with gaining a deeper understanding of a specific question, and thus it corresponds to the “domain of practice around inquiry” (p. 58). Among the distinct transformative dimensions that are part of research-creation, he cites the context of “self-reflexive research”, which is the direction of my thesis inquiry (p. 110-111). It also has a postdiscipline dimension as it reaches beyond the boundaries of genres and integrates two different methods of inquiry as well as course curriculum design, or in the case of this project, the creation of a course outline (p. 110-111). On the issue of postdisciplinarity, Sullivan adds that the researcher should select the methodology that best serves his/her thesis question, regardless of his/her discipline (p. 112). Along the same lines, Sullivan identifies different ways of “visual arts knowing”, and thus the creation of a place-specific body of work relates to “thinking in a medium” (pp. 135-138). I am

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also “thinking in a context” since I took into account the physical features and social dimension of a place (pp. 135-138). Additionally, Sullivan identifies three areas of art making in visual art practices, which are creative endeavours in communities, in cultures and in systems (pp. 158-159). Since the social, cultural and political context of a place influences highly my research, it could be said that as an artist I am “making in communities”, but because I am also motivated to broaden the understanding of this field of study, I am also “making in systems” (pp. 158-159).

Heuristic Method

The heuristic method provided the appropriate guideline to undertake the self-reflexive study that was part of my practice-led research. According to Clark Moustakas (1991), the definition of the heuristic method aligns with many dimensions of postmodern ideology, as it emphasizes the importance of disclosing the investigator’s “internal frame of reference” (p. 12), of examining through various angles an inquiry (p. 15), and of considering the social and perhaps universal significance of the question in general (p. 15). He provides the following definition: “Through exploratory open-ended inquiry, self-directed search, and immersion in active experience, one is able to get inside the question, become one with it, and thus achieve an understanding of it” (p. 16). Furthermore, Moustakas encouraged me as a researcher to orient the topic question from “something that has called to me from within my life experience, something to which I have associations and fleeting awareness but whose nature is largely unknown” (p. 13), and thus to embrace my emotional relation to the question and use it as a motivational force. Finding ways to connect more acutely to the natural environment through art is the catalyst that initiated this research and I have certainly been keen to undertake such challenge. In addition, the

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knowledge that I have acquired in the past three years creating art in natural settings provided a valuable foundation for my inquiry. Other important characteristics of the heuristic research are “tacit knowing” (p. 22), “intuition” (p. 23), “indwelling or turning inward”, (p. 24) and “focusing” (p.25). Even though I was sceptical at first about using the notion of “intuition” to provide insights into my relationship to a place, I discovered while performing a pilot study in February of 2013 that intuition successfully guided my creative process, and the thoughts expressed during the reflective stage provided valuable information on my state of mind while performing the field studies. At the end, the pilot project proved the suitability of the heuristic method to properly study my own experience for my thesis project (Brindamour, 2013). Intuition has also been very helpful when I felt moments of hesitation in the course of this research, as it pushed me to go for walks in Park Jarry, subsequently succeeding in rekindling my motivation and inspiration.

The phases of the heuristic method that I followed were: “initial engagement, immersion into the question, incubation, illumination, explication, and culmination of the research in a creative synthesis” (Moustakas, 1991, p. 27). The second stage of *immersion into the question* involved spending numerous hours in Park Jarry engaged in place-specific art-making, and documenting my thoughts and the development of my relationship to the place using multiple methods. The advantage of choosing a diversity of methods in qualitative research is supported by John W. Creswell (1998) as means of avoiding one-sidedness and considering a question through multiple angles (p. 53). Nancy de Freitas (2002) also encourages artists to document actively their creative process and use it as a working tool before, during and outside of art making sessions in order to generate a better exchange between the creative and the reflective

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process (p. 7). The analysis of the data involved moments of *incubation* when I did not work on my research in order to generate a different kind of awareness on the question at hand, which helped to lead to the *illumination* stage (p. 29). In this stage, the investigation of the data allowed a new understanding of the question that was integrated in the course outline during the *explication* stage. I consider the course outline as much as the final body of work to be a *culmination of the research in a creative synthesis*.

Moustakas (1991) emphasizes the “discipline commitment” that the researcher must dedicate to her/his practice, claiming that she/he has to be “willing to commit endless hours of sustained immersion and focused concentration on one central question” (p. 14). He also explains that the timetable of a heuristic research should be flexible (p. 14), and for this reason, I sometimes worked on the different stages of the research simultaneously, when for example I realized that the creation of the final artwork was lengthier than I first envisioned. Another aspect to take into account is that the data collection process does not stop when the researcher is not performing the field work, as the researcher might feel inspired also at any moment of the day and “lives the question in waking, sleeping, and even dream states” (p. 28). This proved to be particularly true when I consider my position of teaching assistant for the undergraduate course Light-Based Media (ARTE 352) during the year that I pursued this research. Leading the technical workshop related to pinhole photography and cyanotype in this course inspired me to explore these alternative processes myself and integrate them as part of an assignment in my place-specific course outline. Moustakas also mentions that the validity of the research is determined by the vigorous compliance of the pre-determined steps with an attitude of intense

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focus and immersion (p. 32). For this reason I am providing a description of the time spent becoming familiar with the place and creating artworks in the Procedure section (see pp. 36-37).

Many graduate students at Concordia University have selected in the past the heuristic method to pursue their research-creation project with the goal of improving their teaching practice. For example, Nancy Long's (2007) Master's thesis consisted in creating a body of work inspired by gustative and olfactory experiences, that she then analyzed using the heuristic method so as to transfer her acquired knowledge to her students (p. 4). The focus of her study resembles mine, its intentions being to expand the range of artistic practices presented to her students, and encouraging them to find inspiration in one's own experience, of taste and smell in her case (p. 69), while of a place in mine. This resulted in an enhanced understanding of her own artistic practice as well as an increased knowledge of this art form, benefitting her receptiveness and dialogical skills in her high school classroom (p. 71). Susan Marsh's (2003) connection between making and teaching in her thesis *As Easy as 1, 2, 4... The Space of Ambiguity in Art and Teaching* is relevant to my research, as she studied as well her creative endeavor in the outdoors, which consisted of settling several iceboats on a river during wintertime (p. 12). Although she does not refer to her method as heuristic, she practiced self-reflective thinking during her art-making process and afterwards, allowing her to come to useful conclusions to employ in her teaching: "This process of working, I am recognizing, influences the way that I teach, the way that I try to teach. The technical foundation of the material, the push to find other ways of seeing, is a large part of teaching art" (p. 27).

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These two studies demonstrate the benefit of putting oneself in the shoes of our students, and thus of examining an inquiry using a creative method in order to better guide students through the same process afterwards. As adult education expert Malcolm Knowles (1980) states, “the single most effective teaching device available to teachers is the example of their own behaviour” (p. 3).

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4. THE JOURNEY: Procedure

The thesis project followed the sequence of three gradual stages, intertwined with the different steps of the heuristic method. Each of them provided diverse learning opportunities that culminated as a whole in the course outline, but also offered other learning outcomes such as a better understanding of my creative practice and an increased knowledge of CEGEP teaching requirements. Those three phases are the research-creation and reflective stage, the data analysis, and the course outline design phase.

Research Creation and Reflective Stage

Equipped with a sketchbook, digital camera and sound recording device, I explored Park Jarry and used the experience along with the site's characteristics as the basis for my art-making. Beginning on August 20th and ending on December 10th, 2013 the body of work that was created during such stage was varied in shape but generally included photography. I consider photography a way to explore and document my experience of a place while being immersed in it. Through the lens and framing apparatus of the camera, photography allows me to play and manipulate time and light, bringing an uncanny element into my images that represents how I often feel in nature. Although some drafts of the final project showed an interest in sound and sculpture, I decided not to pursue these projects and instead use the medium that I am the most interested in.

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Montreal has been my home for seven years now, hence it was the ideal location to undertake the research-creation and reflective stage of my thesis, and see how art-making can impact my relationship to a place that is familiar, but that I have never before considered through art. An additional motivation was that the proposed course outline entailed that students investigate a given place that they can access easily, and thus it is important that I also do the same. As a resident of the Villeray neighbourhood, a formerly agricultural area that experienced a working class boom and is now in a process of gentrification, I find that Park Jarry provided the perfect site to carry out this studio inquiry. I am particularly drawn as an artist to spaces that merge cultural and natural elements, and thus I was certain of the potential of Park Jarry to offer valuable inspirations to investigate this idea. The park was converted in a recreational space in 1925 and purchased by the City of Montreal in 1945, and is much beloved by locals, who have come together to form the Coalition des amis du parc Jarry in 2004 (Coalition des Amis du Parc Jarry, n.d.). A ten-minute walk from my home, this large space of 0.36 km² contains diverse types of environments, from a forest area, to an open field, to a pond—a seasonal stop for migrating birds, as I have observed—and therefore accommodating different kinds of creative endeavours (Coalition des Amis du Parc Jarry, n.d.) (see Figures 21 a & b). Without being overcrowded, Park Jarry is popular among families and joggers, and so I found that the morning and late afternoon when it was less busy was the best time to work in the park. This amount of visitors nonetheless ensured that it was a safe environment to carry on my research. Because safety is a priority, I was present on this site only during the day (between 8:00 and 20:00), I always informed a person of my whereabouts, and I carried a cellphone with me at all times. Park Jarry is also located beside Parc-Extension, a multiethnic locality whose population enjoys strolling and picnicking in the park. Prior to undertaking the research-creation and reflective

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stage, I conducted on September 7th, 2013 a pilot project in which I spent two hours at Park Jarry exploring the area, and taking notes on the characteristics of the site and its creative possibilities with the help of an audio-recorder and a journal. The examination of the entries showed an interest in various features of the site, such as the small island in the middle of the pond, the hill on the western side of the park, the sport infrastructures, the railway and the geometric positions of the benches and trees. All these factors convinced me of the suitability of Park Jarry to conduct this research, and that I did not have to consider alternative options such as Park Lafontaine or Mont-Royal.



Figure 21 (a). Plan du Parc Jarry, Montreal



Figure 21 (b). Parc Jarry, Montreal.
Photo: Amélie Brindamour

Taking into account the flexibility promoted by the research-creation and heuristic methods, I worked in specific blocks of hours without planning the sessions in advance, and thus on certain weeks I went twice to the park, while on others I did not go at all. I went to the site for seven sessions, ranging from forty-five minutes to two hours, for a total of eight hours and thirty-five minutes, complying with the criteria of “intense focus and immersion” dictated for the heuristic method (Moustakas, 1991, p. 32). This does not include the four additional times that I

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was present at the site in order to complete my final project, and the other moments when I went more casually to run and do yoga, carrying my question with me. Wandering around the site, and documenting its features was more a priority in the first blocks of time, while the following sessions were dedicated to creative and self-reflective activities. Social factors shaping Park Jarry came into play in my artistic interaction with the place and I will describe in more detail in this chapter the difficulties encountered in tackling this topic, and how I was able to approach it using my own artistic sensibility. In order to provide more information on my creative process I will refer to personal quotations drawn from self-reflexive comments expressed in the audio-recording transcriptions.

Project One: *Observation and Documentation*

In the first sessions I instinctively felt the urge to familiarize myself to the place through photography and drawing in my sketchbook. My mind was particularly attracted by natural elements (i.e. the weeping willows, the branches on the ground, the paths) and the social activities performed by the visitors (i.e. “I have been interested lately by tents, how people celebrate and gather in families in tents”, 1st session, September 14, 2013)⁵. Even though I mentioned in the audio-recording that I already had three ideas, I was still hesitant about beginning one of them, and I commented on feeling self-conscious about doing artistic activities in a public space (1st session, September 14, 2013). I took an extensive series of photographs in the first three sessions. The first one depicting a general view of trees and social gathering, the second one portraying shadows, and the third one looking more closely at the sport infrastructure

⁵ Due to the spontaneous nature of the recording and English not being my first language, the comments contain some idiomatic mistakes. In order to stay true to how I experienced emotionally the research-creation stage of my study, I decided to keep the transcriptions in their original form.

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and wheat grass. These observation / documentation exercises were particularly useful in order to familiarize myself to the site, and as a resource to consult later when feeling less inspired.



Figure 22 (a). Amélie Brindamour, *Observing and Documenting: First Series*, Park Jarry



Figure 22 (b). Amélie Brindamour, *Observing and Documenting: Second Series*, Park Jarry



Figure 22 (c). Amélie Brindamour, *Observing and Documenting: Third Series*, Park Jarry

Project Two: *From Seven to Seven*

In a desire to stimulate my creativity and represent the park more objectively, I set about on October 12th, 2013 to take a photograph every hour on the same spot, from seven in the morning, until seven at night. Black and white silver-based photography was the ideal medium in order to emphasize the shadows and darker areas, while also keeping me from being influenced

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by the previous photograph taken –given that I was only able to look at them as a whole after developing and printing the film. The field of process art, an art form that I became more knowledgeable of through this research project, was certainly an inspiration for this endeavor. An exercise performed in the course Space, Time, Place Workshop during my study exchange in Finland also caught my interest in the potential of performative predetermined structures. The professor Hannah Levonen, mentioned previously in the Introduction (see pp. 14-15), asked us to walk outside for ten minutes in the same direction, and then draw what was in front of us. Borrowing from the theory of the *dérive* by the Situationist International founding member Guy Debord (1958), this approach implied forgetting about the way our normal activities dictate how we use the terrain of the city, and rather letting oneself be transported by the psychogeographies of the environment in order to experience the space in a new way (p. 31).



Figure 23 (a). Amélie Brindamour, *From Seven to Seven Series*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 23 (b). Amélie Brindamour, *From Seven to Seven Series*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada

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Figure 23 (c). Amélie Brindamour, *From Seven to Seven Series*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada

I chose to position myself on a hill so that I would be able to portray a wide view of the park and incorporate many elements in the picture. Since I had been feeling overwhelmed at the beginning of the creative stage by too many possibilities and ideas, I particularly enjoyed this project and how it forced me to act without overthinking it (i.e. “I found difficult to start with nothing to do this research, and it took me a lot of time to become more familiar with the park, to get ideas”, 6th session, October 12th, 2013). I also appreciated having the opportunity to notice the flow of activities in the park, and pay closer attention to the people in it. I developed the film myself and printed the contact sheet and the two photographs included above (see Figure 24 a, b & c).

Project Three: *Exploration With Cyanotype*

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As mentioned earlier, I had the chance during a teaching assistantship to familiarize myself with cyanotype by leading an activity exploring this technique, a printing method using a photosensitive support and the sun to render the outline of any object. There is no need of a camera, darkroom or film to create an image, only the photosensitive chemicals consisting of potassium ferricyanide analar red and ammonium ferric citrate green, plus a paper or fabric support, the sun and running water (Patella, 2007, p. 112). These chemicals are highly toxic in their powder form, and thus only a knowledgeable professional should be allowed to mix them wearing gloves in a ventilated room (p. 112)⁶. The cyanotype technique was discovered by Sir John Herschel in 1842, and was explored more extensively by Anna Atkins, a British biologist who one year later illustrated a book about algae using only this medium (Saska, 2010, p. 9). Architects also employed cyanotype extensively to produce “blue prints” until the photocopy machine rendered this method obsolete (Patella, 2007, p. 112). My experience creating two experimental cyanotypes during my fifth session on September 30th, 2013 made me appreciate the immediacy of the medium to record the imprint of natural elements as well as its pedagogical possibilities.

⁶ Commercially prepared cyanotype paper is also available under the trade name "Sun Prints" (www.sunrpints.org), making cyanotype an option for non-expert or vulnerable users.



Figure 24 (a). Amélie Brindamour, *Exploring cyanotype*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 24 (b). Amélie Brindamour, *Exploring cyanotype*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada

Another alternative technique that requires few materials and provides an interesting way to render a place is pinhole photography. A pinhole camera is built from any box that is light proof by piercing a hole on one of its sides and adding a closing mechanism. Even though some pinhole photographers employ film as the sensitive support, it is preferable for the first time to use black and white photographic paper. Pinhole exposures can consist of a short elapsed time, varying from thirty seconds to five minutes, or longer periods that can extend up to a few days, a few weeks and even a few months (Keeney, 2011). I did not create a pinhole image in the context of this research, but I had the chance to experiment with this last technique during my study exchange in Finland for the course Excursion in Northern Finland with professor Michael Jacobs. As part of the course, we hiked and slept for five days in the national park Urho Kekkosen Kansallispuisto, and one of the exercises consisted of making a pinhole camera from a film can that we fixed to a tree for the duration of our stay (see Figure 25). Even though pinhole images are usually developed in the darkroom, an alternative option that is more accessible

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consists of using a scanner, which is how I developed my image. Since my pinhole photograph (see Figure 26) came out too dark, I am including another example from my colleague Caroline Weichselbaumer in order to demonstrate the range of results that can emerge from this exercise (see Figure 27). In addition, the pinhole photograph taken by Tuija Hautala-Hirvioja shows an example of a long-exposure image, three months in her case, a method called “solagraphy” through which it is possible to record the daily progression of the sun. Although students in the context of a CEGEP course would have to respect the short amount of time allotted for each assignment, they could nevertheless benefit from learning about other more time-consuming methods in order to understand all of the possibilities offered by the medium.



Figure 25. Image of a pinhole camera,
National National Park Urho Kekkosen Kansallispuisto,
Finland

Photo: Caroline Weichselbaumer

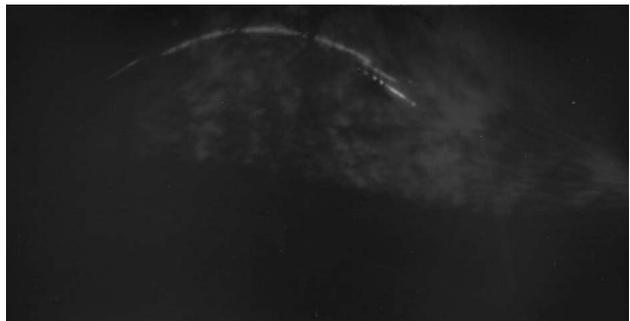


Figure 26. Amélie Brindamour, Pinhole,
Park Urho Kekkosen Kansallispuisto,
Finland

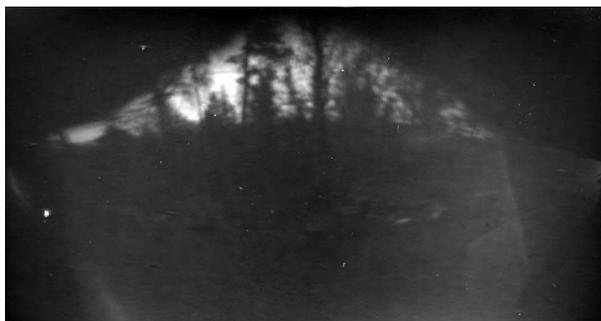


Figure 27. Caroline Weichselbaumer, Pinhole,
National Park Urho Kekkosen Kansallispuisto,
Finland



Figure 28. Tuija Hautala-Hirvioja. Untitled,
Rovaniemi, Finland

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Project Four: *Sleeping Like a Rock*

Considering that I adopted an experimental approach when creating the previous three projects, I wanted to complete the research-creative stage of my study by achieving a more resolved artwork. This proved lengthier than anticipated, and I worked on different sketches from October, 2013 until July, 2014. When the moment came to put my ideas in action, however, I felt that the means to represent them were inadequate and lacked aesthetic appeal. What struck me the most when exploring Park Jarry was the drastic contrast between the various forms of social celebrations and instances of homelessness and loneliness. My first idea was to bring to light this situation by creating small sculptures in papier mâché representing festive elements such as plates, tents, barbecues, balloons and banners (see Figure 29 & 30). These simulacra would have been used in diverse photographic arrangements in the park to simulate the scene of a celebration (see Figure 31). The recreation of these objects usually associated with summer activities would have brought into question the held assumption of the park as solely a place of conviviality. Nonetheless, I did not enjoy working with this medium and was afraid that the final rendering would lack clarity, so I decided to refine my ideas.

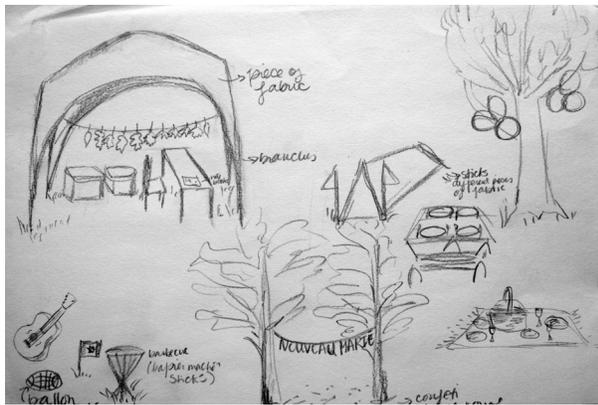


Figure 29. Amélie Brindamour, *Sketch*

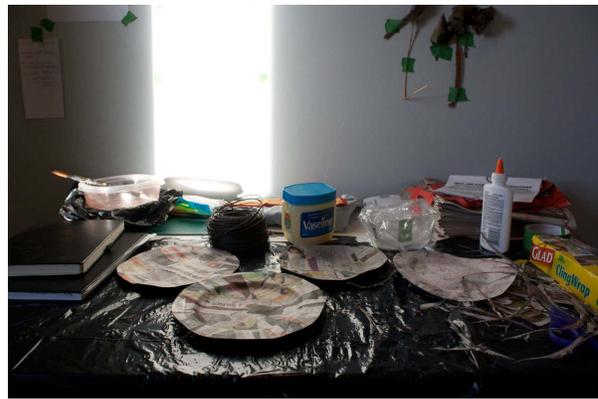


Figure 30. Amélie Brindamour *Photo of working space*

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Figure 31. Amélie Brindamour, *Test for series Celebrations* in Park Jarry, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada

I then thought of bringing the papier mâché sculptures into the gallery space, and paint trees on electoral campaign signs in order to bring a more political dimension to the project, but I felt that this was too didactic. Looking back at the first photos taken during the *Observation/Documentation* project, I decided to re-explore this topic through photography. I finally settled on a simpler project, yet more effective than the previous ones that required extensive preparation or material. I was also inspired by the practice of various photographers that I discovered last year who express their own personal view of a place. Similar to Jessica Auer's work, I was attracted by sites in the park that contained uncanny natural elements (Auer, n.d.). I also chose to photograph them in general from a frontal vantage point and using a simple composition (see Figure 32). The way Sarah Anne Johnson combines a sense of wonder and social criticism in the *Artic Series* was also an important inspiration, as well as her technique of altering her photographs by painting on them, which adds a sense of whimsy to her work (see Figure 11). Finally, the photographer Celia Perin Sidarous's interest in the formality and quaintness of fabric in her last installation *Three Stone Lions*, exhibited at the Leonard and Bina Ellen Gallery in May 2014 also informed my choice of exploring this material (Pistes de réflexion - Galerie Leonard & Bina Ellen, n.d.). The final arrangement of her photographs,

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displayed in different sizes in a salon style layout, provoked my interest in considering my photographs as being part of an installation so that the relationship between them could be accentuated (see Figure 33).



Figure 32. Jessica Auer, Meadow #3



Figure 33. Celia Perrin Sidarous, Three Stone Lions

As mentioned previously, I wanted my photographs to fulfill two purposes: to represent my positive experiences of discovering interesting natural features in the park, but also the disparity of people celebrating next to people sleeping on benches. Homeless and lonely people occupy a physical space in the park but often go unnoticed, in a similar way to the numerous granite rocks that are scattered around the place. I found interesting similitudes between the shape of the rocks and of the people sitting or sleeping on benches and the ground, and wanted to play on this analogy by using fabric to simulate an inert body shape (see Figure 34 a & d) and by covering a rock (see Figure 34 (b)). Likewise, fabric can be use to warm and unveil, as well as to hide, which are all connotations relevant to my reflection on homelessness and loneliness. Bringing a sense of the uncanny by enveloping objects with fabrics in primary colours was a way to juxtapose the feelings of celebration and solitude and carry a certain tension in relation to the subject matter. Indeed, the visual appeal of the fabrics' shiny hues attracts the eye, while the

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reality that it intends to represent is much darker, a strategy that corresponds to Lippard's (1997) statement about the importance of grabbing people's attention through the presence of unfamiliar features (p.286).

In the third image, I sew fabrics of similar colours into a pennant banner and lay it on the ground to play again with the idea of festivity (see Figure 34 c). I was surprised while shooting that day by children escalating the hill and playing with a ball, but I decided to take advantage of the situation by including a young boy in the photo. This addition incorporates a second focal point to the image, unlike the other photographs from the series, and it raises questions regarding the relationship of the subject to the banner, and if this "ghostly" figure is in fact real.

All kinds of art forms require the artist to be attentive to serendipitous moments, but this is particularly true when working in a public place where people's activities, in addition to the weather, can be very unpredictable. However, this is what in my opinion makes place-specific art such a meditative and enjoyable practice, since surprises and new ways of considering things can happen all the time. Another example of this situation is in relation to the fifth photo, which happened in an unpremeditated way when wandering in the park to find inspiration (see Figure 34 e). It is only when I began working on the other images that I saw the interesting relations in terms of shape and subject matter between this person sitting alone on a bench and the other photographs. It is impossible to know the feelings of this person at that time, but her posture was for me a good embodiment of many other people that I saw sitting by themselves in the park. In the same line of thought as the rest of the series, the painted cloth hiding her body brings up her vulnerability and invisibility, and conveys an uncanny feeling.

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To go back to Suzanne Paquet's (2014) description of photography in relation to a place, in this series the medium is used to document the space, carrying a sense of authenticity, but at the same time producing ambiguities as to whether the shapes covered in fabric in the pictures are real. It raises the question of the nature of the object beneath the fabric, and its reason for being there, and thus "par ses multiples liens avec les oeuvres d'art, la photographie a la faculté de leur conférer des spacialités et des temporalités nouvelles" (p. 15). This way, I consider the work to be primarily photographic, instead of being a documentation of temporary actions; It is the use of photography that create this ambiguous "mise en scène" and allow the viewer to see these different windows of Park Jarry in the same time.

This fourth project gave me a better understanding of the different narrative tensions and implications that can be conveyed through photography, and opened up new ways to work in an outdoor space that I am excited to explore in the future. The series offers a personal response to what Lippard refers to as a "lived experience", and thus my work could be described as an "art of place" (1997, p. 286). I was thus able to situate my work within the theoretical context of place-specific art education as defined in the Introduction (see pp. 10-14). Despite the cohesive formal qualities, technical accomplishment and expressive content demonstrated in the series *Sleeping Like a Rock*, I consider that there are still elements of the work that could be improved. I therefore approached its presentation in my thesis defense as a critique in the same way that students in my proposed course outline would experience the presentation of their work. This procedure brought a logical closure to the research-creation and heuristic stage of my study, in addition to enhancing my knowledge and experience of critiques regarding place-specific artworks. In general the comments received during the critique were positive, pointing out the

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richness of the primary colours in the fabrics, and the coherence between the five photographs. An interesting observation was made in relation to the impact of the artwork in the community around Park Jarry, and if this has been assessed, since these repercussions are implied in Lacy's (1995) and Lippard's description of respectively public art (p. 19) and an "art of place" (pp. 278 & 287). Because the series *Sleeping Like a Rock* has not been shown publicly it is not possible to know, but it could be deduce that it would have certainly reminded the users of the park of certain of its features, and possibly initiated a discussion about homelessness and lonely people in the neighbourhood. This is however an important implication of place-specific art that I have the intention of taking into consideration during future critiques in the context of a place-specific art course.



Figure 34 (a). Amélie Brindamour, *Series Sleeping Like a Rock*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 34 (b). Amélie Brindamour, *Series Sleeping Like a Rock*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 34 (c). Amélie Brindamour, *Series Sleeping Like a Rock*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada

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Figure 34 (d). Amélie Brindamour, *Series Sleeping Like a Rock*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 34 (e). Amélie Brindamour, *Series Sleeping Like a Rock*, Park Jarry, Montreal, Canada



Figure 34 (f). Amélie Brindamour, Installation view *Series Sleeping like a Rock*

Data Collection and Analysis

The diverse methods that I employed to document the reflective stage of the thesis consisted of audio-recording, writing and drawing in a journal, as well as photography. The majority of the examples given in the Findings section (see pp. 56-64) are comprised of audio-recording translations and photography since they were my favorite modes of documenting my impressions of the park and of my art-making process. I used the application software Evernote⁷ on my cellphone and computer in order to keep everything organized under the dates that the observations were recorded as well as the types of documentation (see Figure 35). The analysis

⁷ Evernote is a free application software that allows users to store notes in various forms—audio, photos and in writing—and organize them under different tags. It is possible to download the application on a Smartphone, making it easier to incorporate notes at all times. The application can be downloaded from the following website: <http://evernote.com/download/>

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of data in a heuristic study is similar to the process in other forms of qualitative research, the goal being to grasp the wholeness of an experience, and at the same time identify themes using scientific methods of regrouping and labeling “going from the general to the whole and back again” (Moustakas, 1991, p. 16). In the case of the heuristic study, the researcher is the main internal frame of reference and thus must make the ultimate validation of the research (p. 33). However, this validation does not only occur on the final step but throughout the research by “constant appraisal of significance”, “checking and judging” the data collected and the creative synthesis (p. 33). This stage of the research, involving a period of *incubation* that finally led to *illumination* and then *explication* stages, was carried out from December 10th, 2013 to April 13th, 2014 and included transcribing audio-recordings, organizing data, observing themes and drawing conclusions. I experienced several periods of *incubation* in February and March when I took a respite from the analyses of the data (p. 27). The specific method of “colour coding” by themes depending on the subject of the comments, such as the site, my feelings and the development of the artworks, permitted to identify the frequencies and progressions of my observations during the analysis of the data. The *illumination* stage did not necessarily happen all at once, as described by Moustakas (p. 29), but rather took place at different moments in the process, such as when developing the art projects in the park, at the beginning of the analysis stage and when conducting the research for the course outline.

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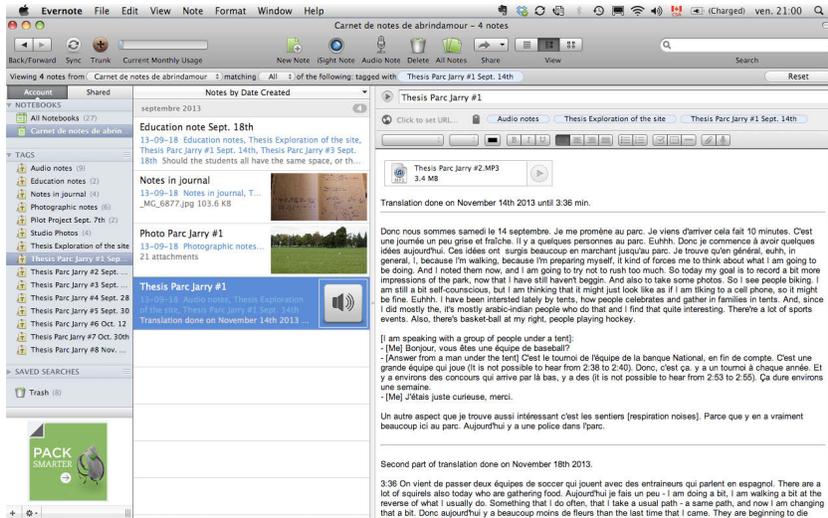


Figure 35. Screenshot of the Program Evernote

Course Outline Design Stage

I designed the place-specific course outline for a four-month CEGEP course and it contains a detailed description, an assignment schedule, as well as other mandatory information such as the objectives, materials required and reading resources (see Appendix A). It specifies that the outdoor space in which all students will work on the assignments will be close to the school and selected by the professor, explaining that convenience of access is a limiting factor of site selection in this context. Students will be expected to go to the designated space outside of class time to complete their projects. Another alternative would have been to let students choose their own space, but because of logistics and safety issues I decided that it was simpler to all work in the same space. I also included in a different document a description of the four assignments, indicating their objectives and evaluation criteria (see Appendix B). They align with the definition of place-specific art education given in the introduction, in that they encourage a multidisciplinary expression of the formal features and social context of a place by exploring it physically. Because the objectives included in the *Visual Art Pre-University*

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Program Guideline from the MELS do not have a multidisciplinary approach in mind, it was a challenge to find a way that the assignments would comply with the government standards (MELS, 2012). The best solution was to apply the objectives of the course to three distinct disciplines, namely drawing, sculpture and photography, and that students be evaluated according to the medium that they will choose to work with for a given project. I originally expected to include fewer assignments in the course outline, but I realized that in the context of place-specific art education, shorter and simpler projects were more successful. In addition to being based on the goals, objectives and standards of the *Visual Art Pre-University Program Guideline* from the MELS (MELS, 2012), the course outline is also in accordance with Dawson College's *Institutional Student Evaluation Policy* [ISEP] (Dawson College, 2011), CÉGEP Saint-Laurent's *Politique Institutionnelle de l'Évaluation des Apprentissages* [PIPEA] (CÉGEP Saint-Laurent, 2012) and CÉGEP de Sainte-Foy's *Politique Relative au Plan de Cours*" (CÉGEP de Sainte-Foy, 2010).

Given that there are not any courses in the program of Visual Arts at the CEGEP level that tackle place-specific issues, I collected and reviewed with the permission of their author the following course outlines to help me identify the workload and level of difficulty appropriate for this level of education: *Sculpture 2: Évoquer et Exprimer* from Amélie Proulx of Cégep de Ste-Foy (Proulx, 2014), *Drawing and Creative Expression* from Nathalie Olanick of the Continuing Education program of Dawson College (Olanick, 2012), *Sculpture II* from Andréanne Abbondanza-Bergeron of Vanier College (Abbondanza-Bergeron, 2014) and *Advanced Photography Workshop* from Jessica Auer from Champlain College (Auer, 2014). I grounded the design and content of my place-specific course outline principally on the CEGEP de Ste-Foy

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course syllabus, since I found that it was the most visually appealing and comprehensible, and I am highly interested in teaching at this institution in the future. I discovered another course outline through serendipity during this stage, which provided a valuable point of view on this topic, although at the university level. Concordia professor Jessica Auer shared with me her course outline *PHOT 398: Special Topics in Photography: Wanderlust*, which focuses on the exploration of the environment through photography. It also emphasizes the act of walking, and thus she organizes two treks in a natural park per course, one of one day and the other of several days (Auer, 2013). This approach is slightly distinct from mine, but nonetheless shows the growing interest among professional artists and students in this art form. Auer also makes an interesting connection between art-making inspired by the characteristics of a given place and the creative process that is expected when participating to an artist-in-residence program, which can motivate students by viewing the competencies acquire in the course as useful for their future career in the arts (see Appendix A p. 77). The course outline design stage of the thesis began on April 15th, 2014 and was completed on May 30th, 2014.

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5. NEW SCENERY: Findings

The analysis of the data allowed me to establish various relationships between my creative experience in Park Jarry and the connection felt to the place afterward, as well as my pedagogical understanding of this art form. These discoveries can be divided into four main categories; a deeper appreciation of Park Jarry; awareness of the educational implications; transfer of this new knowledge in the course outline; and general recommendations for the place-specific art classroom.

A Deeper Appreciation of Park Jarry

I examined the transcription of the audio-recordings made during the research-creation and heuristic stage of my research by considering one of the main thesis questions, “how does place-specific art-making affect one’s relationship to a place”. I discovered that it was possible to establish a deeper engagement with the park through the progression of the sessions. This shift begins to be perceptible at the third session, as there is a rise in the number of remarks about elements of the space, for a total of six entries, while the number for the first day is four, and the second day is two (i.e. “because it’s a different time of the day, it’s interesting to notice the different flow of traffic, right now there are a lot of people passing by the park to go back home from their work, from school” 3rd session, September 18, 2013). Likewise, while the observations in the first sessions were mostly concerned about the weather (i.e. “it’s a crisp, cold morning, but in the same time it is really sunny”, 2nd session, September 16, 2013), the ones in the last sessions reveal a more profound interest in specific issues (i.e. “I think about the

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microcosms of the park, how it is important for people with low income, how it is important for group, for homeless people to hang out, older people to hang out”, 7th session, November 18, 2013).

More interestingly is that the analysis of the audio-recordings demonstrates that there is a correlation between the sessions in which I created a work of art and my level of interest in the place. I created artworks during the first, fifth and sixth sessions, and they have respectively four, six and eight comments in relation to the weather, the environment and the park’s users, a total that is superior to all the other days when no artworks were created. For example, during the making of the second project in the sixth session, *From Seven to Seven* (see Figure 24 a, b & c), I expressed myself regarding the level of social activities in the park (i.e. “when I came this morning, it's not surprising that it was empty, at seven, there were some very few people doing jogging”, October 12th, 2013), the weather (i.e. “I chose a very nice day to do this project. There is a, there is a, it's a warm and sunny day today”, *idem*), the soundscape (i.e. “there're a big change in terms of sound also. It was really quiet at seven, and it's been noiser ever since. Now there are more people running, there are more people around”, October 12th, 2013), and other specific natural features (i.e. “I am looking at the shade [*sic.* shadows] of trees, which is something I have been looking for a while. That I would really like to create an artwork attached to the tree that would change the shade [*sic.* shadow]”, *idem*). Those excerpts showed that art-making allowed me to slow down in order to pay closer attention to the park’s users and its natural elements.

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This growing interest in more specific characteristics of the place is also visible in the artworks that were created during the art-making sessions. Indeed, the photographs that were taken during project two, *From Seven to Seven*, show a distant vintage point of the landscape (see Figure 23 a, b & c), while the photographs of the fourth project focus on features in close-up points of view (see Figure 34 a, b, c, d & e). Finally, looking at the artworks also provides a better appreciation of certain elements of the park, and for example looking at the photographs side by side from the second project, *From Seven to Seven*, (see Figure 24 a & b), gives a glimpse of the progression of the shadows in accordance to people's activities that could not be seen otherwise.

These two observations, grounded in the transcriptions of the audio-recording and an analysis of the artworks, serve as proof that I was able to connect more closely to a place by exploring it physically, while the actual art-making process made me pay closer attention to certain features of the space. This improved relationship is an important motive behind the process of place-oriented art-making, an incentive that I will be looking forward to communicating to my students.

Awareness of the Educational Implications

In addition to generating more comments in relation to the environment, the days when works of art were created also had more entries containing pedagogical reflections. The number of comments was one during the first session, two during the fifth and four during the sixth sessions (i.e. "I think, it made me think of process-based work, and how it could be interesting to

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include this aspect in the curriculum”, sixth session, October 12th, 2013). I did not make commentaries related to education in the other sessions, with the exception of the seventh session when I mentioned a thought about what would be the suitable length of a project. My own enthusiasm for expressing myself creatively was thus transmitted by finding ways of adapting these ideas for CEGEP students, and thereby providing answers to the main question stated in my thesis proposal.

Transfer of this Knowledge in the Course Outline

Although it was possible to grasp directly the educational possibilities of the four artistic projects, analyzing them rigorously afterwards provided a greater perspective on the potential for their integration in the course outline.

Valuable learning opportunities presented themselves in each of the four projects mentioned above, in relation to the achievement of technical and creative challenges, but also in the unusual way proposed to interact with the place. I believe that these exercises will be beneficial to CEGEP students too in the context of the place-specific course outline. Indeed, the first project that I performed, *Observing and Documenting* (see Figure 23 a, b & c), offers a compelling way to approach a new space by taking the time through a chosen medium to observe and document it in order to become more familiar with its features. This is important to consider in order to be inspired by the unique characteristics of a place and thus to create “an art of place” (Lippard, 1997, pp. 278-286). In addition, the research that I conducted about the place prior to begin the first project was beneficial to understand its social and political context, and the

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assignment in the course outline also states this objective, changing name for the *Observation, Documentation and Research* project. Likewise, students can practice thinking critically about how they choose to represent the space and which kind of aesthetics they adopt, making this assignment a good starting point to discuss the conflicting ideologies behind the field of landscape art and land art, such as the notion of colonialism as described by Paquet (2009, p. 78). The second project *From Seven to Seven* is based on the importance of exploring a place in an unexpected manner and provides an opportunity to discuss matters of subjectivity and objectivity in the depiction of a place, while also teaching about process art and conceptual art. The third project, *Exploration with Cyanotype*, encourages students to think about alternative media—in this case photographic—when venturing into the realm of place-specific art-making, and realize that affordable and quick techniques often work best when creating outdoors. Finally, these smaller projects led to the fourth exercise, *Sleeping Like a Rock*, in which it is possible to reflect more in depth on a specific topic of interest that might have emerged during the past projects. It was important for me to conclude the process of place-specific art making by creating a more resolved artwork, and transfer the knowledge acquired in the past projects into this one. I expect that students will feel the same desire.

It is necessary to acknowledge that not all students will have an artistic approach or learning style that parallels mine, however, using my own learning as the basis for the course outline is viable because it will open many possibilities to the students in terms of the techniques and topics from which they can explore and learn. Also, even though there is a difference in age between CEGEP students and myself, by offering guidance and modifying the expectations, I believe the activities will be accessible, while providing learning opportunities and challenges.

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As a course instructor, I will be willing to modify the course's demands and approaches to accommodate either a particularly ambitious student or one who needs extra support.

It is important to re-iterate that my approach is that of an artist-teacher who is exploring course outline design through my own practice and general theories of art education. I am not exploring this issue from the perspective of theories of teaching to young adults, although this may be an area for future research. I am aware however, of the important contribution made by Malcolm S. Knowles (1980) in this field, and of the six functions that adult educators should embody: “the diagnostic function”, “the planning function”, “the motivational function”, “the methodological function”, “the resource function” and the “evaluative function” (p. 26). These suggested attitudes are congruent with the importance, according to Knowles, of “self-directedness” in the role of adults to take responsibility and agency in their learning process (p. 43). Knowles specifies that this concept is what particularly differentiates the teaching style between children and adults, and for this reason he endorses the term “andragogy”⁸ to discuss his theories related to adult education (p.42), a concept which he states also applies to youth (p. 43).

The progression of the level of difficulty between the first project and the final one in my course outline gives the opportunity to students to gain confidence gradually in their capacity to create place-specific art as well as learn new techniques, and this way to become more “self-directed” when the time comes to undertake the fourth project in a more independent-driven manner. Knowles also mentions the “role of learner’s experience”, and how people’s learning abilities increase when based on experience (1980, p. 44), which parallels the experiential orientation of the place-specific activities in my course outline. Likewise, a mix of theory,

⁸ Knowle indicates that he noticed the first apparition of the term “andragogy” in the writings of European adult educators in the mid-sixties, and the word is formed from the Greek word *anēr*, meaning with “the stem *andr-*”, “man, not boy” or adult” (p. 42).

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lectures and studio time in the way the course is organized will create a situation in which students may experience difficulties while creating their project, and search for answers to their questions in the theoretical period of the class, in what Knowles describes as a “readiness to learn” (p. 44). The fourth assumption in relation to andragogy in Knowles’ model is concerned with the “orientation to learning”, and it brings attention to the importance for adult learners to develop competences applicable to real-life situations (p. 44). With this aspect in mind, I indicated in the detailed description of the course outline, as well as the projects’ explanations, the underlined reasons behind the creation of a project. I also made connections to situations in their artistic education and career when these abilities will be useful, such as the participation in an artist-in-residence program (see p. 79 in Appendix A).

General Recommendations for the Place-Specific Art Course

I also became aware of other teaching issues during the research-creation stage and the analysis of the data, and these are; the expectations regarding the finished artwork; the ideal length of an assignment; the best choice of materials; and the complexity surrounding art-making that deals with social issues.

When looking back at the reasons why it took longer than scheduled to complete the fourth project, I realized that I was putting a lot of pressure on myself about how the final piece “should look”, an attitude that played a role in my creativity and motivation. Because the environment in the park is constantly changing, it can be deceptive to plan a project ahead, since variations in the weather, light and the flow of people can completely modify a project, and even

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render it obsolete. For this reason, it is important to keep an experimental mindset in the context of place-specific art, and to accept that the technical and conceptual executions might present different challenges than in other art forms. I considered this aspect when designing the evaluation criteria, and thus attributed the same importance to the demonstration of creativity and risk-taking in the fourth project than technical skills (see p.96 in Appendix B).

In the same line of thought, because of the constant changes that occur in the outdoors, it is judicious to keep diverse materials at hand when exploring and working in the place, so that it is possible to work on ideas as soon as they arise. This way, materials that everyone has at home such as fabric, cardboard and paper can be ideal to use for experimentations because they are also inexpensive.

The preference for an experimental mindset and easily available materials go hand in hand with the advantage of working on projects during shorter periods of time. I had many ideas for projects during the first two sessions at the park, but because I waited too long before materializing them they lost their appeal, or the space changed and it was not possible anymore to create them (i.e. “another idea that popped into my head was being inspired by coloured sand that are used on sport fields, because there are a lot of sport fields in park Jarry. So, I took photos of gravel, thinking I could make drawings with coloured sands, that could be quite interesting” 2nd session, September 16th, 2013). This idea however lost its appeal once I was back home, and the drop in temperature in the fall made its realisation impossible. I reflected on this issue in my last session at the park when I mentioned that “it occurred to me that small projects that can be created within the same day work the best. Projects that involve more planning can be difficult to

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realize because of time and weather issues, and at the end won't happen”, 7th session, November 18th, 2013).

Another challenge that appeared in the final project consisted of translating how I experienced the social dimension of Park Jarry into a physical artistic work. Addressing social issues through art can be challenging, and I realized how much this was true when changing constantly my mind regarding the creation of the final project. I judge important to encourage students to explore this approach if it inspires them, but this complexity will be discussed throughout the course and considered when assessing their work. Going back to physically being present in the space, as well as understanding that it is normal that my own perception of this issue might present limitations, helped me to get out of this creative block. This is an important lesson to remember in order to help students who might experience the same kind of difficulties.

To conclude, the results from this analysis tapped parameters of place-specific art-making that were previously unknown to me and have not been discussed in past studies in the fields of place-based art education, environmental art education and eco-art. These outcomes reveal that there is much to learn by studying one's personal art-making experience, not only in terms of the relationship between the creative practice and the appreciation of a place, but also by regarding the way in which it can inspire activities and provide an enhanced understanding of its pedagogical application.

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6. END OF THE PATH: Conclusion

In Retrospect

When looking back to my main thesis question stated in the Introduction (see p. 2), “how does an enhanced understanding and explication of my endeavor in creating a place-specific body of work contribute to the design of a place-oriented art course outline for young adult learners?” it is clear that the results from this study brought up many answers. First, the experiential side of the research-creation stage made me discover new approaches to adopt in the teaching of place-specific activities, such as documentary, conceptual, technically-oriented and self-expressive. The heuristic method allowed me to keep track of my observations during this stage with the goal of developing educational strategies to apply in the art classroom. Following the *immersive* period, the *incubation* step then led to *illumination*, in which I realized that my own art projects created in Park Jarry could translate into assignments appropriate for CEGEP students, responding to another important question: “what kind of activities can best suit this purpose, and how can they be adapted to the CEGEP requirements”. The *explanation* stage provided an opportunity to look back at my comment entries in order to understand the other repercussions of employing the method of research-creation, such as developing a closer relationship to Park Jarry, corresponding to the question “how place-specific art-making affects one’s own relationship to a place”. Finally, the design of the course outline during the stage of *culmination of the research in a creative synthesis* presents in a cohesive format the findings of this study, and will be a great asset for the promotion of a multidisciplinary course exploring the notion of place-specificity. The final artwork *Sleeping Like a Rock* (see Figure 34 a, b, c, d, e, & f) is another important component of this last stage, demonstrating how much this study allowed

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me to progress as an artist, a factor which will benefit my teaching of place-specific art activities as well.

Additionally, the theoretical foundation of this research provides a valuable overview of the field of place-specific art by gathering art educators and critics, as well as international and Quebec artists, constituting a useful resource to other art educators who would desire to integrate this approach to their teaching practice.

However, I acknowledge that the view of place-specific art education provided in this research is personal, which is a known characteristic of the research-creation and heuristic method. Hence, a replication of the steps followed by another researcher would lead to completely different results, and they should be considered as valid as the ones obtained in this case. In addition, it is beyond the scope of this inquiry to assess the efficiency and accuracy of the place-specific course outline in the CEGEP context, and for this reason it will remain a proposition more than a guideline. Finally, the phenomenology of place-specific art making and how it changes one's relationship to a place is highly complex, and this study only offers a partial way to understand this phenomena.

To conclude, I believe that there is an urgent need to reconsider the places where we live, our connection to them and how we treat them. These spaces are also invested by cultural, social and political significations, which is important to interrogate. It is highly relevant to examine these issues through art. As a creative domain that encourages experimentation, conveys various layers of meaning and appeals to the senses, art allows alternative methods of inquiry into this

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topic that are not within the reach of other fields of study. Although the intersection of art education and environmental studies has been a strong interest of mine since the beginning of the Master's program, the little information regarding how to teach this art form to young adults has made me feel intimidated to teach a course on this topic. But as Sullivan (2010) states, "to find out what is important in the visual arts, there is a need to start with art" (p. 89). It is my hope that by sharing my knowledge, experience and ideas in relation to this art field it will be easier for other art teachers to integrate this approach in their classroom, as much as it will be for me.

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Appendix A *

A Multidisciplinary Place-Specific Art Course Outline for CEGEP
Visual Art Department, Fine Arts Program 510.A0



Party Boat; Artic Wonderland series, Sarah Anne Johnson, 2011

DEPARTMENT
Visual Arts

SEMESTER
Fall

LOCATION
Studio space and
outdoor location

LEVEL
2nd year
students

PROFESSOR
Amélie Brindamour

CONTACT INFORMATION
abrindamour@gmail.com

PROFESSOR AVAILABILITY
Communication preference:
e-mail.
Response time: 48 hours

*Based on the format and approaches of the course outline *Sculpture 2 : Évoquer et Exprimer* from the CEGEP de Ste-Foy in Quebec City.

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE ABILITIES TO DEVELOP IN THE COURSE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will explore a wide variety of contemporary artistic approaches investigating the physical, experiential and social dimension of a place in the context of place-specific art. Through this multidisciplinary art form, students will be encouraged to *physically* experience the natural and built environment and then use the acquired knowledge to engage in a dialogue with the particularities of a place. This also implies taking into account how cultural, social and political contexts shape our experience of a place. The competencies developed in this course will prepare students to the increasingly popular multidisciplinary and socially-oriented practices in the art world, as well as to the participation in artist in residence programs.

With this in mind, students will learn about and employ multidisciplinary techniques related to place-specific art-making, ranging from digital and analogue photography, drawing, assemblage, installation and alternative photography techniques (pinhole and cyanotype). For each project, students will choose the media that best suit their ideas, and will need to fulfill the objectives specific to this medium as stated in the course outline. By spending time in a place determined in advance by the professor, students will consider how environmental and social characteristics shape the experience of a place, and express a personal response to it. Students will be expected to complete three small projects that will build towards a final more sustained and ambitious work. The practices of Quebec and international artists such as Geneviève Chevalier, Yves Amyot, Sarah Anne Johnson, Agnes Denes, Richard Long and Robert Smithson will be introduced to students.

PLACE OF THE COURSE IN THE PROGRAM AND PREREQUISITES

Prerequisites for the course Multidisciplinary Place-Specific Art are Sculpture 1, Sculpture 2, Photography 1 and Drawing 1.

LEARNING PROGRESSION AND STRUCTURE OF THE ABILITIES TO DEVELOP IN THE COURSE

Considering the elements 1, 2 and 3 of the ability “Utilize creative processes currently used in sculptural practices as part of their artistic intention (054D)”*, this course will give students the opportunity to experiment with the various processes mentioned above. Technical demos will provide to students the necessary instructions to undertake their projects in the medium that they chose to work with. Through experimentation, students will use problem solving abilities and critical thinking in order to create an artwork that is inspired by a particular place, and is coherent in terms of material, techniques and content. To present artworks, students will employ the appropriate vocabulary to talk about the reasons motivating their aesthetic choices. Students will be able to look critically at their work, and be aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

*Refers to MELS Objectives reproduced at the end of this course outline.

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

Students will be expected to handle the tools and the workshop equipment adequately and respect the security regulations.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

In the first portion of the class, which will take place in a studio space, visual examples of contemporary practices related to place-specific art will be presented, as well as the contextual information for each project. The second part will be dedicated to art-making in the space previously selected by the professor that will be adjacent to the school, and where all students will work.

Explanations and demos for each project will be provided as well as a handout containing the description of objectives, evaluation criteria and the deadline. Feedback will be given on an ongoing basis, and more substantial commentaries will be included on the evaluation rubric for each assignment. The submission of the project will be followed by a class critique. One invited professional artist will come to discuss his/her work in the middle of the session.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

It is mandatory for students to attend classes and take part actively in the discussions. Students are also expected to bring all of the necessary materials to work productively during the studio portion of the class. The professor will take attendance at the beginning of every class and will evaluate them throughout the semester. Arriving late or leaving early is considered an absence. Students and the department will be notified when reaching two or more absences, and three absences will significantly jeopardize students' success in the course, and might result in a failure.

Note: When absent from class, the student is responsible for inquiring about missed information and assigned homework.

EVALUATION OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CONSULT THE DOCUMENT *EVALUATION OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES* AVAILABLE INSIDE THE STUDENT AGENDA OR AT THE CEGEP'S WEBSITE.

You can also refer to these same documents for the regulations and policies regarding the written assignments evaluation, participation in learning activities, work submission, grade revision precedures, and plagiarism. The minimum grade to pass is 60%.

REFLEXIVE WRITING

Two written assignment are requested for Project #4, providing an opportunity for students to assimilate in a different way the concepts seen in class. This text must be submitted on paper and respect the *Norms for presentation of written work*.

REQUIRED MATERIAL

The toolbox purchased for the first course of sculpture has to include:

- X-Acto knife
- Hammer
- Screwdriver
- Measuring tape
- Security goggles
- Ear protectors

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

- Pen and paper if the student desires to work with drawing
- Owned or borrowed digital or analogue camera if the student desires to work with photography
- Appropriate materials if the student desires to work with sculpture

PLUS:

- Students will be asked at the beginning of the semester to pay a \$5 material fee in order to buy black and white photographic paper, and cyanotype chemicals for Project #3.

READING RESSOURCES

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- Kwon, M. (2004). *One place after another: Site-specific art and locational identity*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
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TENTATIVE CLASS – ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

01	<p>In class: - Introduction, presentation of course outline - Project 1: Observation, Documentation and Research Explanation of the project Demos of digital photography and drawing techniques in relation to Place-Specific Art Exploration of site</p> <p>To do: - Find materials and begin project 1</p>	15%
02	<p>In class: - Presentation of examples of Land Art and Site Specific Art through the practice of Robert Smithson, Ana Mendieta, Joseph Beuys and Agnes Denes - Project 1: Observation, Documentation and Research Continue project 1 on-site</p> <p>To do: - Complete project 1</p>	
03	<p>In class: - Presentation of examples of Environmental Art through the practice of Andy Goldsworthy, Timo Jokela and Jackie Brookner - Project 1: Observation, Documentation and Research Presentation of students' projects and discussion</p> <p>To do: - Explanation of project 2 - Working on ideas for project 2</p>	

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04	<p>In class: - Presentation of Process-Art through the practice of Richard Long, Sol LeWitt, John Baldessari and Kathleen Vaughan</p> <p>- Project 2: Process Art Demos on digital and analog photography and drawing techniques in relation to Process Art Working on-site</p> <p>To do: - Continue and complete project 2</p>	20%
05	<p>In class: - Presentation of examples of Public Art through the practice of Richard Serra, Olafur Eliasson, the duo of John Ahearn & Rigoberto Torres and Suzanne Lacy</p> <p>- Project 2: Process Art Presentation of students' projects and discussion</p> <p>- Explanation of project 3</p> <p>To do: - Working on ideas for project 3</p>	
06	<p>In class: - Presentation of photographers whose practice is inspired by the idea of place, such as Sarah Anne Johnson, Jessica Auer and Gabriel Orozco</p> <p>- Project 3: Alternative Photo Techniques Demos on cyanotype and pinhole techniques Working on site</p> <p>To do: - Continue project 3</p>	30%
07	<p>In class: - Presentation of examples of place-oriented Activist Art through the practice of Yves Amyot, Geneviève Chevalier and collectives such as ATSA, The Floating Lab, Guerilla Gardening, Conflict Kitchen and Fallen Fruits</p> <p>- Project 3: Alternative Photo Techniques Continue project 3 working on-site</p> <p>To do: - Complete project 3</p>	
08	<p>In class: - Project 3: Alternative Photo Techniques Presentation of everyone's project and discussion</p> <p>To do: - Break</p>	

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

09	<p>In class: - Professional artist encounter: Techno walk with artist Yves Amyot (subject to change)</p> <p>Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>- Explanation of project 4</p> <p>To do: - Working on ideas for project 4</p>	
10	<p>In class: - Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>Working on ideas on-site</p> <p>To do: - Complete proposal for project 4</p>	35%
11	<p>In class: - Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>Proposal due</p> <p>Individual meetings to discuss project</p> <p>Work on project 4 on-site</p> <p>To do: - Continue working on project 4</p>	
12	<p>In class: - Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>Individual meetings to discuss project</p> <p>Continue working on project 4 on-site</p> <p>To do: - Complete project 4 and write reflexive analysis</p>	
13	<p>In class: - Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>Presentation of 10 projects and discussion</p> <p>To do: - Complete reflexive analysis</p>	
14	<p>In class: - Project 4: Individual Project</p> <p>Presentation of 10 projects and discussion</p> <p>- Conclusion</p>	

OBJECTIVES

<p>OBJECTIVE 0549 Use drawing as a tool for artistic creation</p> <p>ELEMENTS OF THE OBJECTIVE ELEMENT 1 – Develop an idea for a creative project ELEMENT 2 – Experiment with the expressive properties of drawing ELEMENT 3 – Represent an idea in an expressive drawing ELEMENT 4 – Present the drawing</p>

ELEMENT 1: Develop an idea for a creative project

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Accurate identification of possible ways of representing the idea 1.2 Consideration of current trends in drawing 1.3 Appropriate choice of approach (figurative, abstract or mixed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop ideas by drawing various drafts in a sketchbook and work on one of them more in depth • To stimulate creativity by conducting research

ELEMENT 2: Experiment with the expressive properties of drawing

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
2.1 Production of preliminary sketches 2.2 Varied application of techniques 2.3 Exploratory handling of media, tools and supports 2.4 Varied experimentation with modes of representation 2.5 Appropriate experimentation with additive and subtractive drawing techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To select material for drawing in accordance to creative idea • To learn to represent light and shadow convincingly, and use lines to convey dynamism • To use drawing style to convey the creative intention

ELEMENT 3 : Represent an idea in an expressive drawing

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
3.1 Appropriate choice of mode of representation 3.2 Effective use of the different elements and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To express moods and emotions through creative choices such as colors and lines • To use problem-solving skills to

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principles of visual language 3.3 Coherence between the finished product and the creative intention 3.4 Ongoing adjustments made throughout the project 3.5 Emergence of a personal style 3.6 Quality of the work in terms of form and content	resolve difficulties encountered along the way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pay attention to the overall finish quality of the drawing • To express creative voice
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ELEMENT 4 : Present the drawings

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
4.1 Relevant connections made between their work and the creative intention 4.2 Accurate identification of the elements of visual language and the techniques used 4.3 Active participation in the critical analysis of the work 4.4 Appropriate use of terminology specific to the discipline 4.5 Observance of rules of French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use of the appropriate vocabulary to describe technique, material, aesthetic and content • To express ideas in sequence and by themes • To recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the artwork

<p>OBJECTIVE 054D</p> <p>Utilize creative processes currently used in sculptural practices as part of artistic intention</p> <p>ELEMENTS OF THE COMPETENCY</p> <p>ELEMENT 1 – Conceive creative project proposals</p> <p>ELEMENT 2 – Execute creative projects</p> <p>ELEMENT 3 – Exhibit their work</p>
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ELEMENT 1: Conceive creative project proposals

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Clear formulation of idea 1.2 Judicious use of current and historical references 1.3 Production of coherent sketches or a maquette 1.4 Consideration of the space required for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop ideas by drawing various drafts in a sketchbook and work on one of them more in depth • To create a maquette • To stimulate creativity by

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

the work and its internal proportional relationships 1.5 Appropriate choice of technique and materials 1.6 Outline of production specifications	conducting research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the physical and symbolic proprieties of the materials used, and choose the appropriate technique to express creative intention
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ELEMENT 2: **Execute creative projects**

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Creative use of sculptural techniques 1.2 Effective integration of materials 1.3 Original use of the elements and principles of visual language 1.4 Ongoing adjustments made throughout the project 1.5 Appropriate finishing of surfaces 1.6 Appropriate documentation of the developmental process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use of the material in an unconventional way To take in consideration the relationship of the material with the space To demonstrate technical skills To exhibit apt use of problem-solving skills

ELEMENT 3: **Exhibit the work**

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Appropriate choice of presentation device 1.2 Original placement and presentation of the work 1.3 Consideration of lighting 1.4 Formulation of a pertinent artist statement to support their work 1.5 Careful overall presentation 1.6 Appropriate use of terminology specific to the discipline 1.7 Observance of rules of English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the indoor or outdoor space where the artwork is exhibited To use the appropriate vocabulary to describe technique, material, aesthetic and content To express ideas in sequence and by themes To recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the artwork

OBJECTIVE 054E

Create photographic images for artistic purposes

ELEMENTS OF THE OBJECTIVE

ELEMENT 1 – Formulate a creative project proposal

ELEMENT 2 – Capture camera shots using division of space

ELEMENT 3 – Capture motion shots

ELEMENT 4 – Capture shots that explore the properties of light

ELEMENT 5 – Print the photographs

ELEMENT 6 – Present the photographs

ELEMENT 1: Formulate a creative project proposal

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Consideration of a given visual problem in the project proposal 1.2 Appropriate use of reference sources 1.3 Proper planning of camera shots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider a theme and formulate a creative intention through exploration To develop a good understanding of the history and issues surrounding the field of photography To use adequately the following equipment taking into consideration light conditions: shutter speed, aperture, tripod, and light meter

ELEMENT 2: Capture images using division of space

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Adequate mastery of photographic parameters 1.2 Framing, camera angles and shots in conformity with creative intention 1.3 Accurate correlation between focal length and aperture 1.4 Effective use of the elements and principles of visual language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the rules of thirds and the golden ratio To convey visual impact by taking into account the placement of the main subject in the picture To understand the relationship between the aperture and shutter speed to portray the subject in a way that reflects creative intention

ELEMENT 3 : Capture motion shots

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Adequate mastery of photographic parameters 1.2 Creative application of the effects of motion and spontaneity 1.3 Effective visual composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the different ways to express movement using a shorter or longer exposure To explore the concept of time in photography

ELEMENT 4: Capture images that explore the properties of light

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Proper measurement of light on a subject 1.2 Proficient use of contrasts 1.3 Application of varied photographic effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To read correctly the light meter on the camera or as an independent device To select the appropriate light in the photograph to correspond to

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

1.4 Personal use of expressive properties of light	the creative intention, whether outdoors or in a studio setting
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ELEMENT 5 : Print the photographs

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Proper use of materials and techniques 1.2 Coherence between the finished product and the creative intention 1.3 Unique visual composition 1.4 Quality and accuracy of printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect the digital or black and white darkroom regulations • To adequately follow the procedure to print an image • To achieve adequate contrast and a range of black, greys and white • To pay close attention to the overall finish quality

ELEMENT 6 : Present the photographs

Performance criteria	Abilities to develop
1.1 Appropriate description of the elements and principles of visual language and the techniques used 1.2 Relevant connections made between their work and the initial visual problem 1.3 Active participation in the critical analysis of the work 1.4 Appropriate use of terminology specific to the discipline 1.5 Observance of rules of English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use the appropriate terms to describe the equipment, techniques and effects • To explain the correlation between original creative intention and the final result • To recognize strengths and weaknesses in the final work • To express ideas in sequence and by themes

CONTEXT OF REALISATION

Depending on the medium chosen for each project, students will be able to achieve the various objectives mentioned above in relation to the disciplines of drawing, sculpture OR photography in these different contexts:

- During creative experiments inside and outside of class in order to respond to the four mandatory projects.
- When presenting their artwork in front of the class and critically reflecting on it in written form.

Appendix B

Visual Arts Department, Fine Arts Program 510.A0

A Multidisciplinary Place-Specific Art Course Outline for CEGEP

PROFESSOR

Amélie Brindamour

CONTACT INFORMATION

abrindamour@gmail.com

Project #1 – Observation, Documentation and Research

- **Worth 15% of your mark**
- **Due on Class 3**

Objectives:

1. This exercise is a way to familiarize yourself to the space chosen by the professor in preparation for the next assignments. Using the medium of your choice, photography or drawing, explore the given place twice, one inside and one outside of class time and document it. The amount of time spent on the site during each visit must be a minimum of two hours.
2. Edit and organize your photographs or drawings to keep the ones that are the most successful in terms of representation of the space, according to criteria of your choice that you can articulate. Be prepared to say what you like about a photo, how it successfully represents the place.
3. Conduct a research about specific elements that you decided to document. This research should investigate two of the following aspects of the place: natural elements, built infrastructure, history of the location, previous and current uses, socio-cultural dimension, and any significant events that happened there.
4. During a 5-minute oral presentation of your work in class 3, reflect on your findings and what you have learned about the place. What caught your interest? How is the space usually used? Who uses it? How did you feel in that space? How the medium selected influenced your way to perceive the place?

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPECIFIC ART COURSE OUTLINE

Evaluation Criteria:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thorough exploration of the place using the medium selected by presenting a numerous and diverse body of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of your work in class:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appropriate use of artistic terms- Extensive reflection- Engaging tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• / 15%

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PROFESSOR

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CONTACT INFORMATION

abrindamour@gmail.com

Project #2 – Process Art

- **Worth 20% of your mark**
- **Due on Class 5**

Objectives:

1. Through this project, you will explore the place in an unexpected manner, and reflect on matters of objectivity and subjectivity in relation to the representation of a space. Inspired by the examples given in class, decide on the predetermined conditions that will guide your exploration of the place.
Ex. - Will you be walking or staying still, and for how much time?
 - At what intervals will you make an artwork?
 - What medium will you use – photography, drawing, sculpture, audio-recording?
 - Is there an additional step to your Process Art action(i.e. creating a sculpture using the materials found on site, etc.) ?
2. You can improve your work afterwards (i.e. enhance colours and contrast) but do not edit (subtract or add) to them, since the goal of this exercise is to let chance enter into the process.
3. For the 5-minute presentation in class 5, reflect on how the restrictions given as part of your exercise played a role in your final result, and how it corresponds or differs from your first impression of the place.

Evaluation Criteria:

• Clarity and originality of proposal for the process-art exercise	• /5%
• Engagement in the process, as demonstrated in the final results	• /5%
• Technical skills	• /5%
• Presentation of your work in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appropriate use of artistic terms- Extensive reflection- Engaging tone	• /5%
• Total:	• / 20%

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PROFESSOR

Amélie Brindamour

CONTACT INFORMATION

abrindamour@gmail.com

Project #3 – Alternative Photographic Techniques

- **Worth 30% of your mark**
- **Due on Class 8**

Objectives:

1. Affordable and quick techniques often work best when creating outdoors, as it is the case with the alternative photographic media of cyanotype and pinhole. This project can be carried out using either technique.
2. Taking as a reference the technical handout and explanations given in class, prepare your photographic support so that it becomes photosensitive—the fabric OR black & white paper—and create a series of images portraying different elements of the place.
3. Develop your images using the appropriate techniques – water for cyanotype and a scanner; or the darkroom for the pinhole – and select to present only the strongest results.
4. For the 5-minutes presentation of your work in class 8, reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of your art series, and how the final result corresponds to your original creative intentions.

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Evaluation Criteria:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative choice of subject and the way it is represented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good balance between dark and light tones • The image is in focus, unless it corresponds to creative intentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of your work in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate use of artistic terms - Extensive reflections - Engaging tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • / 30%

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PROFESSOR

Amélie Brindamour

CONTACT INFORMATION

abrindamour@gmail.com

Project #4 – Individual Project

- **Worth 35% of your mark**
- **Proposal due on class 11**
- **Final project due on class 13**
- **Reflexive written component due on class 14**

Objectives:

Proposal:

- Now that you have explored diverse approaches in relation to Place-Specific art-making, reflect more in depth in a final project on a specific topic of interest that might have emerged during the past assignments. This is the opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired in the past projects onto this one in order to develop a more resolved artwork. Your proposal has to include a short written description explaining what your project will consist of and what the intentions and ideas behind it are. It also has to contain several sketches or images showing how your final artwork will look like, and demonstrate that you have tried different ideas, materials and aesthetics.
 - Written description: 250 words
 - Sketches: 8 pages

Final Project:

1. Choose the material and technique that will best serve your idea. Think about the physical properties of the material, its associations and symbolism, and what its relationship to the space is.
2. The final project can be carried out individually or in a team. If you choose to work in a team, you will be expected to create a more extensive final project. Each team member will receive the same grade.
3. The final project can be carried out on-site or in the studio space, depending on what serves best your creative intention.
4. While creating your project, keep an open mind to new ideas that might appear along the way, which can enrich and improve your artwork.
5. Select the presentation space that serves best your project, which can be either in the space itself or in the studio.

Reflexive written component:

- Take the opportunity to reflect on how the different components, i.e. the material, technique used, content and aesthetic of your final project reflect your original creative intentions. Did your idea change or become more complex along the way? Which problems that arose in the creation stage were you able to resolve, and which not? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your final artwork? What did you learn through the creation of your artwork? How did it change your relationship to the place?
 - Written description length: 500 words

Evaluation Criteria:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written component has the required length, uses the appropriate vocabulary and conveys a clear description of your artistic intentions - Sketches show an in-depth investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • / 5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Artwork: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The final artwork shows creativity and risk-taking in how it responds to the place, and in the choice of materials and technique - The final artwork demonstrates skills in the manipulation of the materials - The space where the work is presented as well as its final arrangement take into account the formal qualities and content of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /10% • /5% • /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of your work in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate use of artistic terms - Extensive reflections - Engaging tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexive Written Component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In depth reflection of the process and final results - Good use of vocabulary, writing style is smooth and engaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • / 35%