Space for drawing: Women, art, love, and fear

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ABSTRACT

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In this arts-based research project, my purpose was to investigate how older women develop their skills as visual artists through the medium of drawing in a small group setting. The social construction of artist identities among the group and my teaching of drawing are the basis for my study of an informal, community-based learning environment. I assessed how learning new creative skills later in life affects the quality of an individual's sense of self and their perceived value and contribution in relation to society, and how apprehension about learning a new skill touches others in the group. My interest extended to investigating how the skill of drawing influences other areas of life like aesthetic awareness; and to the role of digital media in rendering the research. Arts based research as a method of inquiry allowed the use of alternative representation of results and findings. Because of my background in digital arts, using digital media was a natural way for me to relevantly integrate findings, drawings, text, and images in order to discover meaning and direction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer my deepest thanks to Dinii, Linda, Sylvie, Monique, Hilke, and Trudi who so heartily and generously gave of their time and commitment to participate in this study. I would like express gratitude to my dear husband, George, who always supported me throughout this entire process, with his humour and by reminding me of what is most important. I will be grateful forever for your love. Also, I would like to thank my daughter Naomi for her superior editing skills. To my family and friends, especially my daughter Stephanie, who supported me with cheers and prayer, inciting me to strive towards my goal — many thanks. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor Dr. Anita Sinner for her cheerful encouragement, expedient and valuable comments, and enthusiastic engagement through the entire process of this master thesis. I would also like to thank the members of my committee: Dr. Linda Szabad-Smyth and Dr. Kathleen Vaughan for their support.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my dear sisters who have joined the cloud of witnesses

Johanna Frederika Zantingh Desaulnier (1950-2012)

Jenny Klazina Zantingh Dekker (1951-1990)

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There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. (1 John 4:18, New International Version)

Petra Zantingh, *Hands*. Graphite on vellum, 12X9 inches, 2013

Chapter 1: The month of fresh starts

We gathered for the first time on a beautiful Friday morning in the fall of September 2011 — the month where sharp new pencils and crisp white paper wait and hope with expectation. As I walked into the space, the dining room had been transformed into a working classroom (see fig. 1). I asked myself again, could this really work? Antique furniture and Oriental rugs had been moved aside to make room for two long, industrial, collapsible tables. Sunlight from the long wall of windows filled the room, shedding rich light on the dining room table that had been tucked away in the corner and covered with a crisp, white, linen tablecloth. On it was a collection of fine china coffee mugs, delicate silver spoons, and cake plates all ready and waiting. Waiting for what? How was I going to maintain a sense of professionalism of practice in this organized and fastidious space? Who were these women and why did they want to learn how to draw? What kinds of judgments, attitudes, fears, hopes, and anticipations had I packed with me in my portfolio? What was going to remain packed away and what was going to assist me in my teaching like the basketful of pencils, slides, books, and art examples for this, our first of many classes?

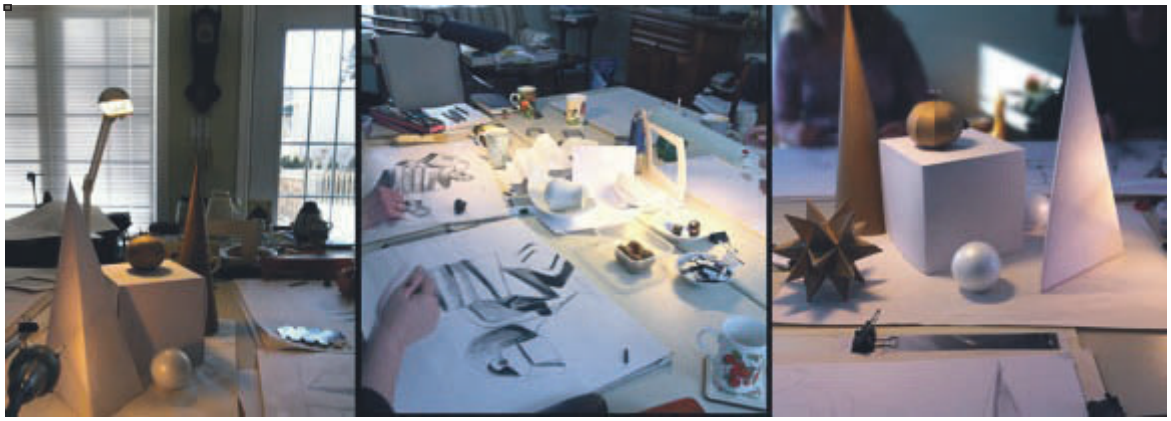

Fig.1: Petra Zantingh, *Dining room table shots*. Photographs, 2012.

This story began in 1985 and I remember with fondness the first time I met the hostess of this event. It was in Pierrefonds, Quebec. My family and I had just moved from Thunder Bay, Ontario, to Montreal and had bought a house on the West Island. My daughters were five and two and we wanted a house with a yard. On a quiet street, we found the house, but the yard was in a state of disrepair so before we moved in I went to work on the gardens. On one of these occasions, the woman from next door came over and introduced herself, and learning that she was a Dutch immigrant like me, we became instant friends. Cultural backgrounds are a strong component in stabilizing comfort levels when meeting new neighbours — especially for those of a displaced young mother. Over the course of the next fifteen years Dinii and I shared good times and hard times — we celebrated birthdays, graduations, and survived deaths and divorce. When I moved to Hamilton, Ontario, she moved to Baie D'Urfe, Quebec, with her daughter and family, and we stayed in touch with phone calls, letters and cards, emails, and visits. Our visits always centred on the visual arts and through the years we have visited many art openings and galleries together in Canada and the Netherlands. In a patron-like role, Dinii has attended several of my art openings and owns three of my works.

In 2011, as I was moving back to Montreal from Hamilton, Dinii was developing stage-three cancer and her health was precarious, but my friend who is generous and kind is also forceful and determined. Some might describe her as a five-foot-tall powerhouse and she was hell-bent on beating this thing that had the audacity to interrupt her life. Actually, Dinii attributes her miraculous recovery to God and the power of prayer. However, she did not come away from this experience unscathed and among the residual effects of the disease, she now becomes easily tired and so the woman who always sees

solutions when others see problems came up with the idea of having a drawing class in her home.

Professionally, Dinii has scientific leanings and was a dietician and a college professor. Her interest in the visual arts derives from a family that appreciated the fine arts and culture. Along with her five sisters; she has participated in sculpture workshops and has produced a small but impressive collection of work. Throughout the years, she has taken many art classes and it was in a painting class at La Palette Art School in Beaurepaire, Quebec, that she became friends with several women. These four women and another long-time friend were essentially hand-picked by Dinii and invited to attend the private drawing classes she hired me to teach that would take place in her home. Apart from taking the drawing classes, these six women had also generously agreed to participate in my research study, called *Space for Drawing* (SFD).

The group from various socio-economic backgrounds is comprised of Dinii (age 76); Linda (age: 67), a retired social worker with international experience; Sylvie (age 50), a stay-at-home mom; Monique (age 79), a retired bank employee; Hilke (age 78), a stay-at-home wife; and Trudi (age 75), a retired restaurant owner and cook. Three of these women have received their education in Quebec and three in Europe (Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland). In various degrees, their amateur art practices, spanning over many years continues today. For this drawing class that became a research study, we met at Dinii's home every Friday morning to draw together for two twelve-week semesters for a total of twenty-four classes in fall of 2012 to the winter of 2013. I had taught drawing to this group the year before and this was when I recognized and

identified the critical role that love, care, and fear played in this group. Some of the women were still afraid to draw and their feelings of inadequacies hindered their abilities.

The life stages of the women provide a unique andragogic opportunity to consider more fully a topic that has limited study in art education - aging and art - not in a therapeutic sense, but from a perspective of life-long learning. With four women over 70 (elderly); one women over 60 (senior); and two of us in our 50s (mature), the profile of this class offers insights to teaching and learning that add to existing literature about aging and art. Consequently, my research interest was to investigate how older women develop their skills, personal language, and confidence as visual artists through the medium of drawing in an informal small group setting. The social construction of artist identities among women and my teaching of the arts are the basis for my study. Working with this group, I examined the kinds of potential problems faced when life-long learners pursue a creative skill. Relationships with other learners are an essential factor for adults when they learn because it is these relationships that contribute to a sense of belonging — producing positive, safe environments (MacKeracher, 2004). In my experience as a college teacher of art and design for more than 12 years, I have observed that significant learning is often expressed emotionally and gauging these emotions and acknowledging them helps foster a level of trust.

I was guided by the following series of inquiry questions for this study: Why is it important to create a flourishing community of love and care when teaching something difficult that requires risk-taking? Where does fear come from and how can it be used to teach art? Why is it important to review, revisit, and even rehearse our loves and fears in the context of our own educational backgrounds? Is it possible to teach someone to

confront their fears in a space that is a safe group setting through notions of love in teaching and learning? Can experience and skill change perceptions of fear among women adult learners? I assessed how learning new creative skills later in life affects the quality of an individual's contribution to society, and how apprehension about learning a new skill affects others in a group setting. Can the skill of learning to see and draw influence other areas of life — like the ability to develop an aesthetic sense, consequently improving an individual's perspective on her quality of life? Did new understandings relevant to community art education and life-long learning emerge? Are considerations such as accountability, friendship, and care as important as the art-making techniques and themes?

Unexpectedly, these questions extended my interest to investigating the role of digital media in rendering the research. Because of my background in digital arts and graphic design, using digital media is a natural way for me to relevantly integrate findings, drawings, text, video, and images in order to discover meaning and direction. Digital media became an important tool before, during, and after the classes. Digital applications on my *iPad* were used to show motivating examples of artwork and as a space to record notes, conversations, and drawings. Researching images of drawings, paintings, or sculpture from artists online, I downloaded them into my photo library on my *iPad*, giving us easy access during the class to inspiring works of art. Because it is small in size and weighs little, it could be passed around effortlessly. Zooming in or out gave us access to the details in the image. My paper sketchbook was more useful in this study because the women were drawing on paper; therefore, I seldom used *Paper 53* (sketching app) to draw or *Notes* or *Pages Apps* to record any notations. My *iPad* was

also used to record conversations and to take photos of work in progress so all of this research information was in a digital format from the beginning. The *Stop Watch App* was used to time gesture and sustained drawing. The *Music App* provided music. As an extension of my research the *iPad* became an invaluable tool because I used it for a myriad of tasks during the class.

Our classes ran each Friday from 10:00 - 12:30 pm and most women came early to enjoy refreshments and conversation. Friday was the day that most women preferred and was the most convenient for me. When everyone arrived I began the classes by explaining what we would be drawing, showing motivating examples and my own drawing, and then demonstrating as needed. We often took a break around 11:00 am to look at each other's work and to give everyone a break. Observational drawing activities built on the skills we developed from week to week beginning with a simple gray scale and scribbling, then moving toward various still-life arrangements. My predominant goal was to teach them to see shadows, lights, and darks and to this end I mostly set up objects that were white, grey, and black.

In this environment of a teaching artist guiding mature women in drawing, we formed a community of practice in which our situated knowledges became the basis for meaning-making (Haraway, 1988). I committed extensive time in the field investigating my inquiry questions by examining the rapport between the women and the evolving relationships between us all in the physical and psychological space we filled every week. This research includes conversations and lived experiences of the teaching and art-making that happened in the space, as well as digital and paper documented journal entries and art works. As a form of expression, these artworks can be considered a site of

knowledge and meaning-making, and they function as a way to understand contexts and spaces formed by the research.

Merging and using both text and images, I became completely convinced of how significant art-based research (ABR) is, because images speak to me in ways that text cannot (Leavy, 2009, Irwin, 2005, Sullivan, 2010). ABR as a research method allowed the use of alternative representation of results and findings rather than only traditional qualitative methods. My responses in my journal sketchbook were inspired by our conversations and our lived experiences as individuals during our drawing sessions (see fig.2).

Fig. 2: Petra Zantingh, *Journal/sketchbook*. Mixed media, 2012-13.

As the artwork is central to the research, it became an integral component in the work illustratively and as a "visual phenomenological" response to the teaching (Leavy, 2009). Through my own drawing practice I remained connected and embodied in the

work portrayed in conversation, interviews, and artworks we created, giving me insight into the art-making process (Leavy, 2009; Creswell, 2013; Springgay & Irwin, 2005). In this case, visual research through layered images and texts shows and tells an accompanying story of our shared journey as artist teacher and adult learners.

In relation to the literature concerning adult education, I assessed how: 1) developing an art practice in later life is related to rejuvenation, renewal, and overcoming fear as an older adult; 2) whether the ability to "draw well" is related to an increased emotional awareness and empathy toward others, allowing learners to move towards greater understanding of love and care in teaching and learning; 3) whether the ability to recreate or draw realistically is critical to identity development in older artists; 4) whether new media tools such as digital applications can be used to teach an observational drawing class; 5) how creating a community of inquiry contributed to overcoming fear in developing new art practice skills through friendship as a form of love in teaching and learning; and 6) how the aesthetic qualities of creativity through art practice are developed in later life.

The foundation of my thesis was shaped by research into the development and growth of these women as artists, and their budding relationships with each other, as well as their accepting love and overcoming their fears around practicing their art. The women, who are living rich, fulfilled, and diverse personal and professional lives, have formed powerful friendships and bonds, but it is their relational connections as artists that form the basis of my subject matter. I worked with two core definitions: "love" and "fear." For my study, "love" is defined as care, compassion, empathy, friendship, and unconditional support for others in the group. "Fear" is defined as paralyzing

apprehension about developing, exploring, and taking risks with art-making (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Love and fear were often demonstrated in these rich relationships as the women, who came from varied backgrounds, learned to draw during these last two years, and in the process created a culture of empathy. The ability to understand each other can stem from realizing that in multiplicity, there are different experiences. Many emotional ingredients make up complex relationships, some of which are shallow, others deep, some expand, some contract. It is in this ebb and flow that growth occurs, not in a linear way but in an organic fashion.

And so a group of women with individual histories, quirks, and attitudes gathered in a beautiful, sunlight space as the smells of coffee, baked goods, and homemade soup simmering on the stove wafted into the dining room/art classroom. It was in this space that we simply began to see and to draw. And it was with hopeful expectation that I first anticipated the many unpredictable but significant insights that would be gained through this seemingly simple yet complex and ever-shifting work of teaching and learning.

Chapter 2: Exploring spaces: Scholarly reviews on topics of women, art, love, and fear

Why is space for drawing important? Space is defined as an uninterrupted area, which is free, untaken, or unfilled (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Spaces are openings, positions, situations, rooms, and expansive areas for exploration. As an interval of time, space is also the freedom to discover as one chooses. Originating in Middle English, the dialect of English used between the late 12th and 15th century, the word *space* is a shortening of the French word: *espace* and Latin word: *spatium* (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Physical space is equally as important as psychological, spiritual, and emotional spaces are, and arguably, in the case of my research, space is a primary element for what took place in a tangible way. Psychologically, it was the place where some would grow and excel in drawing and communication. Physically, it was the place where we spent time exploring the dimensions of drawing and getting to know each other's quirks and eccentricities in sophisticated comfort. Space is both public and private, and in relation to this group, public space became both a place and time when others in the *Space for Drawing* group (SFD) could comment, encourage, and critique. Private space away from the weekly Friday class allowed for daydreaming in a cerebral location where ideas could flourish and grow (Richmond, 2009). It is with this understanding that I enter scholarly conversations and spaces in relation to my research study. Specifically, I will examine concepts of teaching drawing, and learning how to draw, and the tensions of creative expression that manifest in an array of emotions. Two areas of particular interest to me as a teacher are love and fear in relation to teaching and learning. Love in this case is

manifest as a form of caring and fear is represented as a response to drawing, where an inability to try something new causes anxiety.

Space for care

Our ability to care and the ethics of care begin with a realization that we ourselves have been cared for, producing in us a responsibility to consider others and/or freely support those around us. Caring raises questions of competence, sacrifice, and inclusion (Noddings, 2012). How does this translate or become reality in a classroom setting or, more particularly in my case study, in an art class made up of older women? And I wonder, is the ethic of care an ethic of principle? As women, do we act in a caring manner to enhance and maintain relationships? Are there cultural or historical versions of caring? For example, in my group the women are primarily older, and their principles and ethics may vary from those of a younger generation. Noddings (2012) suggests that some feminists have raised the concern that an ethic of care might be a contributing factor in the ongoing manipulation of women, and that the constant pressure of care might cause the caregiver to neglect herself. I think about care from several angles: the women in the group give care to each other as a form of love and the women care for themselves by attending the class. Many of them are full-time caregivers to members of their families and see our drawing group as a reprieve or a time that is carved out exclusively for them to avoid neglecting themselves. They also receive care from me as I teach them and I accept care from them. All of these forms of care have been advantageous in helping this group of friends and artists. Care became a foundation for building a safe, pleasant, and comfortable space where art could be produced without judgment.

Space for drawing

Drawing is defined as a way to make visual, distinctive marks; drawings are renderings, outlines, sketches, portrayals, and depictions (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Drawing is the most basic of art-making skills, not only historically in Western civilization, but also for individuals (Maslen & Southern, 2011). Making marks in childhood is a fundamental activity and usually precedes writing (Maslen & Southern, 2011; Betti & Sale, 1997). As children get older, visual, tactile, and spatial components merge and form a conceptual knowledge base that begins to control how they draw (Maslen & Southern, 2011). As children increase their awareness of what the world looks like, they attempt to re-create and make adjustments in order to produce a true-to-life replica of what they see. When this fails or becomes difficult they may become insecure and embarrassed by what they think is a visual lack of ability. Maslen and Southern (2011) suggest this is due to a large degree of self-criticism, often resulting in the drawings remaining hidden. According to Lowenfeld and Brittain (1982), this stage marks the end of artistic development unless the child receives further training and it is at this juncture that many adults find themselves in terms of skill-level, including our SFD group. Although not entirely conclusive, there appears to be enough evidence to suggest that as a child develops, her sense perceptions become corrupted by the surpassing development of the intellect (Maslen & Southern, 2011). So instead of seeing what is presented they begin to see through the lenses of what knowledge and logic dictate. Children do not attempt to copy nature visually as adults see it, because they are satisfied with their own methods of illustration (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982). Observational drawing is often perceived as a talent and not an acquired skill, so when the resulting

effort is not photographic in likeness the value of the work decreases. Educational systems assume that drawing skills naturally develop along with a student's intellect, and this results in many adults who either draw like adolescents (Maslen & Southern, 2011) or feel ashamed and become afraid to draw. Emerging from popular left- and right-brain psychology is the notion that the left-brain is linear and logical and the right brain non-rational and intuitive. In general, science prefers the linear, analytical left-brain to the intuitive right brain (Maslen & Southern, 2011). Edwards (1989) explains that our dual brains have two ways of knowing. When information is received, it is processed according to what each does best: the left side analyzing and verbalizing, and the right side imagining, conjuring up, and understanding metaphors. This process usually ends when the dominant left side takes over (Edwards, 1989). I think that right-brained dreamers and artists are, at best, sometimes lost in the school system or, at worst, punished for not paying attention. There is value placed on imagination and inventiveness but not if it comes at the expense of science and language. A study on creativity in the classroom indicated that teachers have an easier time with students who do not have some of the traits of creativity like impulsivity and taking risks (Westby & Dawson, 1995). Historically, this fits with the women in my group but may not be as true with children today. What happens to older adults who have suffered in school systems that have not attended to them and their needs as creative individuals? Is it possible to unlearn something you have absorbed in the past? Remediation and unlearning patterns are always part of the teaching process, and drawing is a good place to practice this reversal if it takes place in a caring environment when fear of drawing can be addressed in new ways.

In my experience, drawing has its own unique language, and using words may hinder or even paralyze the meaning of what is expressed. In observational drawing, rendering an object is a natural and simple activity if you know the object extensively. Repeated encounters through sight, feel, and smell of the object and knowledge about its function will further your understanding (Nicolaides, 1969). According to Nicolaides (1969), experiencing the object with as many senses as possible, for example smelling and feeling flowers, will help you draw them more successfully. On the other hand, Edwards (1989) claims that not being able to name or label an object, or drawing an object upside down will help reduce drawing anxiety. Attempting to draw something that you have had no experience with helps the artist concentrate on shape, form, and line without words getting in the way (Edwards, 1989). As a teacher of drawing, I must question, which theory is correct? Can the skill of learning to see and draw influence other areas of life and hone 'thinking-outside-the-box' skills for example? Which method is most helpful? Or does it depend on the circumstances, the learners and the teacher? Maybe it is a combination of all of the theories and methods proposed? For example, when the women in the group drew a still-life of kitchen utensils they did so with a history of using these tools with intimate knowledge and skill. Did this increase their success in the renderings when they defined the tools and clearly described them as sharp, shiny, or soft? In response to these questions, I devised an activity in which I strove to focus our drawing practice on the object, and not have the group become distracted by labels, personal symbol systems, and descriptions (see fig. 3, 4). We drew an obscure still-life of upside-down white dishes and objects against a white background,

set up so that discoveries of lines, shapes, and shadows could be realized through the simplicity of contour drawing.

Fig. 3: Linda, *Untitled*. Graphite on paper, 18x24 inches, 2013.

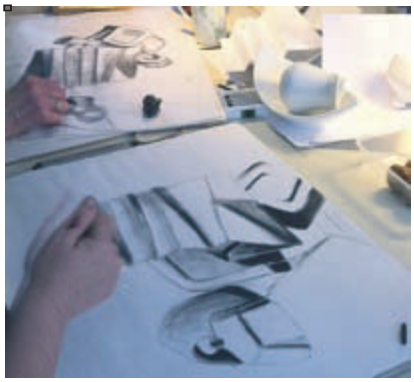

Fig. 4: Petra Zantingh, *Upside down still life.* Photograph, 2012.

According to Edwards (1989), the left-brain will always try to rush in and begin a diatribe of verbal descriptions and judgmental banter, preventing us from really seeing. Communication happens with gestures or marks in and around the text and words

(Richmond, 2009). Often when you want to wholly comprehend something, you take it apart or perhaps employ another language. For example, our use of the English word *cozy* has a much larger meaning in the Dutch language with the word *gezellig*, which also means cozy but encompasses the entire social and intimate realm of hospitality including smells and sounds.

Berger (2011) articulates the significance of sensory experiences when drawing, describing the impulse to draw as an intuitive task that is dependent on the consciousness that precedes analytical reasoning. Berger notes that neurobiologists have discovered that map-like messages transmit information from cell to cell, communicating from brain to body and body to brain. Drawing for Berger is an exercise in orientation and a form of inquiry. Drawing places and objects occurs in a space that the viewer determines or imagines. It is a process of visualizing what the object will look like when it is captured by the imagination. Much like in a child's art process when she uses drawing as a way to reconstruct her environment by visually moving it around to satisfy the connection between image and object (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982). Would it be possible to achieve this as a goal for teaching drawing to the women in SFD? Might observational drawing branch into something deeper and more imaginative with no language at all?

Drawing is a way of seeing through fresh eyes and with a new perspective, engaging us by offering more than one way to look at the world. Even one drawing has multiple meanings involving semantics and aesthetics — like a marriage between what we know and what we see (Maslen & Southern, 2011). Finding symbols in a drawing helps us understand the meaning and what the drawing may represent, but if the drawing is only about representation than it is merely a map or a practical image with a narrow

and shallow focus (Maslen & Southern, 2011). For me, this is a good place to start, but the marks that make up the visual representation are important for uniquely expressing the qualities of a drawing that speak about the artist who drew them as much as the object being viewed.

Observational drawing can help bring this about and it is one of the reasons teaching drawing is important: it transcends the physical documentation of an object onto paper by the uniqueness of the person who draws it. Art derives its vitality from new ideas and feelings through visual depiction. It challenges previously accepted conventions that surpass the rules of composition that state the rules need to first be understood. There are many issues in contemporary life and postmodern art that often challenge the traditional view of composition. Art is multidimensional and so are people (Betti & Sale, 1997).

A beginning approach to learning how to see and draw is with gesture (Nicolaides, 1969), a mark that records the movement of the artists' implement, time response, and what the object is doing. Time is an important element in drawing as the artist scans an object by glancing back and forth, so time and movement are essential in producing a drawing. The handmade quality and uniqueness of a drawing is called 'facture' and helps the viewer discover the clues in the meaning of a drawing (Betti & Sale, 1997). Gesture is a way to achieve this uniqueness because it is a quick way to capture the essence of a drawing. Physicality is an important ingredient in gesture drawing because the body, eyes, hands, and fingers, as in dance, are all involved in the mark-making. Betti and Sale (1997) argue that gesture is indispensable and natural for us as we frequently scan a room or a face for recognition. However, it is not enough to just

scan an object while drawing it. Rather, we need to train our eyes to pick up the nuances of colour, texture, form, and space. Gesture drawing is a metaphor for energy and spontaneity, and for communicating an idea quickly with long and short, thick and thin, fast and slow marks, made by the artist. In contrast and as a complement to gesture drawing, contour drawing is a slower, more concentrated investigation. A contour line is a single and incisive line that describes the object spatially by separating negative and positive space and defining the edges of value, shadow or texture (Betti & Sale, 1997). It is a slower approach and requires the eye to move with a pencil that does not lose contact with the page. Both of these initial introductions into drawing are beneficial because of the visual connection producing knowledge and empathy between the object and the artist. A gestural mark gives the drawing vitality and immediacy and is a quick connection to the part of the artist that sees, composes and feels. The technique of contour drawing trains us to search for more detail in the underlying structure as we explore and go deeper into the subject matter. Gesture drawing is like forming new relationships where we quickly scan strangers or newcomers to a group. Contour and extended drawings are more sustained, like the communication between friends, thus producing knowledge and empathy between the object and the artist.

Space for fear

Why are some learners afraid of exploring ways to express themselves in art, and specifically through drawing? In my teaching I have experienced extreme, paralyzing fear in some students to the degree that it has caused them to quit producing or even dissolve into tears. However when they persevere and keep working they find that the satisfaction

of overcoming and the process of art-making exceeds their fears. Bayles and Orland (1993) ask basic but important questions which get to the heart of this fear, and I extend this understanding to my study. What is fear in learning, and can I, as a teacher of drawing, bring qualities of care as love, to overcome fear? Assessing how fear and love are related in the process of teaching and learning is an ongoing area of inquiry for me as an artist, teacher and now researcher. These questions are relevant at every stage of any art practice, and although written for practicing artists, this thesis has implications for beginners also. Many expert and novice artists link practicing art to who they are and this identity development quickly becomes an integral part of their life and self-esteem, for as Bayles and Orland (1993) state, "overcoming apprehension and uncertainty in any new endeavour boosts confidence as mastery is achieved" (p. 15). Thus fear plays a powerful role in raising swarms of doubt and uncertainty. Although this will never change, say the authors, uncertainty can become an asset by altering this discovery by facing the self-doubt. Based on the SFD group, I came to question, does fear become a greater issue as we age? And how does this impact teaching adults drawing?

The role of the teacher takes a different approach when teaching adults. Becoming more of a guide and mentor rather than an authority figure. In directing students, the experience of learning becomes an adventure and the students' life experiences are equally important to the teacher's knowledge (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). Presumably, an aging population has more life experience than an adult college student, making this experience even richer. Teaching is a humbling experience for the teacher and filled with many emotions including fear, hope, and uncertainties and realizing limitations (Brookfield, 1990).

Space for aging

One of the more significant points substantiated in a research study conducted by Patterson and Perlstein (2011) is the notion of self-mastery. Becoming skilled in creative activities "go[es] farther and engage[s] the mind, body, and emotions, sparking curiosity, problem solving, and artistic accomplishment" (Patterson & Perlstein, 2011, p. 28). Self-mastery as a skill increases self-confidence, deeper exploration and experimentation in the arts, which the authors also claim boosted the immune system of the elderly group studied. In the SFD group, self-mastery manifested itself when the women learned how to master specific drawing techniques, as demonstrated in their drawings. Although this study is concerned with positive health outcomes and is focused on a quantitative method of research, it is encouraging to have this particular data to substantiate and contribute to my project in terms of developing drawing skills. Bringing this work from the realm of health sciences will enrich our knowledge in the field of art education by introducing a scope of interdisciplinary perspectives concerned with creativity and aging. By far one of the most compelling articles I have encountered thus far is the critique by Patterson and Perlstein (2011) because they have discovered a transformative link between creative work and health in the elderly. In this research they present evidence that participation in creative work improves cognitive performance and quality of life, similar to Bayles and Orland (1993) perspective that "vision is always ahead of execution" (p. 15). For seniors, creative work involves imagination, which in turn launches the art ideas. Then technique and craft take over in the execution. Everything grows out of the first mark or brush stroke, making the start so difficult — a metaphor for teaching drawing to people who are apprehensive about making art. White canvases and blank pads of paper are full of

expectations and can be alluring, seductive, and frightening. There is risk-taking and experimentation involved in beginning an art project and imagination required to maintain and carry out the visual ideas.

This perspective builds on Maxine Greene's (1995) argument for the importance of using imagination in art education, aesthetics, literature, and social contexts. Imagination in these realms needs to be revisited as a space where art practice is a means of expressing ideas, advocating the use of unconventional, arts-based approaches. One of Greene's seminal essays explores how recalling childhood pedagogies is a means to identify patterns in individualized learning. This relates to my research in a meaningful way by providing insight into how we perceive or learn from our particular situated locations, past and present. We impose our own order and context based on past experience and knowledge, and it influences what and how we learn today. The realization that in multiplicity, our different experiences make way for understanding, seeing, and fostering empathy, from which my conceptual approach to caring as love begins to emerge. Love and friendship teach us how we respond to others in a learning environment, fostering a safe space where we can be vulnerable and where our strengths and weaknesses are shared. I believe love is truthful, tender, and asks for total disarmament, and as a teacher, I strive to foster the conditions for such love in my classrooms. When a person is open to it, good things may be born from a state of vulnerability in learning because it makes room for self-awareness, openness, and risk-taking (Nouwen, 1969), and that is how I entered into the drawing sessions with the SFD group.

As we become more self-aware, soul matters that involve self-reflection,

spirituality, and other intrinsic matters, begin to emerge. Although these issues are sometimes considered concerns of mid-life or aging because youth appear to be more pragmatic, Palmer (2005) explains that this is not really the case today as youth often deal with far more life-changing events than previous generations. But, like previous generations, we are encouraged to neither express what is in our hearts nor address any spiritual concerns. Palmer (2005) suggests, as a society, we tend to alienate and dull our relations with others and in the process, lose a deep connection to ourselves. Recognizing this deep connection authentically produces empathy (Leggo, 2011), I believe that it is only from this place of awareness that we can begin to care for others, and in my view, caring is an essential characteristic in both love and fear in learning and teaching because if a learner is in a supportive and caring environment she is free to express what she alone can express, regardless of skill level.

For me, art is a dialogue between the artist and an idea, and the artist requires freedom to move and grow her concepts into visual fruition. This involves an element of risk and sometimes losing control. Art-making is also uncertain, so facing that uncertainty or acknowledging and tolerating it as a constant companion, is important to succeeding. It is through this self-discovery and observation that the benefits of self-mastery and skill can be realized. Over the course of time, some of the women began to solve drawing or compositional problems on their own and also began to clearly identify these problems in others' drawing. Doing this together with others raises the success of the experience exponentially. For example, Lindauer (2003), is mostly concerned with studying aging artists, and this account is important to my research because of the encouraging and positive outcomes regarding successful aging and creativity. Successful

aging is often attributed to being vitally involved and fully engaged in new activities, which can encompass creative expression. Increased self-awareness and a deeper understanding of others, as well as the permission to experiment and explore new things, all contribute to creative growth.

Cohen (2006) also investigates the positive influences of the arts on health in the "second half of life" instead of looking at aging as a series of negative changes (p. 8). He is particularly interested in the area of folk art, an art medium dominated by older artists that has huge creative potential. Mounting evidence shows that as we age we become more in touch with our inner psychological lives (Lindauer, 2003). This increased knowledge can be a benefit in developing creativity. In fact, a sense-of-control mechanism is an important tool to successful aging. Self-mastery that leads to successful drawing technique mixed with social engagement is an important factor when creative and artistic activities are conducted in groups (Cohen, 2006).

Art production, in this case drawing within a comfortable group environment accounts for two important elements in my research, which are: the role of community and learning a skill. Meadowcroft's story of *Painting Friends* (1999) shows how community and friendship are critical when developing new skills and self-mastery. Paralleling the processes, as Richmond (2009) suggests, working with my group brought me to Meadowcroft's narrative inquiry about the lives of a group of women artists who collectively formed *Beaver Hall Women Painters*. Meadowcroft (1999) recalls the stories of their lives as women artists, friends, and art educators in the early 1900s in Montreal. Apart from artist-teacher Ann Savage, who had a significant impact on both Canadian and Quebec art education (Pearse, 2006) and was extensively researched by Concordia

emeritus professor Leah Sherman, these women as a group have been under-recognized by art historians despite their obvious contributions to the art world in Canada. Through historical text, noted conversations, interviews, and artworks, Meadowcroft (1999) was able to piece together the lives of these women in historical and social contexts using story to unravel different layers of meaning and gain insight into women artists at the turn of the century. This research is inspiring and provides an important guide to my own study in a contemporary context, working with a group of women in Montreal. For example, the author describes how they offered support during times of illness, domestic crisis, and also in their artistic practices. They were also vulnerable with each other. Emily Coonan's artistic career was shortened because of public critical indifference to her art and Prudence Heward, who was the most acclaimed, was supported but also envied by the group. Some of the women in the SFD group may have also envied each other in their ability to do art and some may have stopped because they felt that their art-making was being criticized. Art in some form is the common denominator with the group and that was what brought them together and through the relationships and time spent together practicing art, they became friends.

Meadowcroft's (1999) historical account of a group of women artists is significant because of the camaraderie that is clearly evident in their relationships, and the aspects of fear and love were woven through their lives. It gives credence to the importance of relationships when learning new skills in terms of overcoming fear and increasing confidence. The women in my group genuinely care for one another as evidenced by their relationships and concern for each other's lives outside of our studio time. Caring for one another developed in the group while working together and has

expanded outside with phone calls, offers of assistance while experiencing illness, and much more.

Like Meadowcroft, Grumet, in her book *Bitter Milk* (1988), provides an important analysis of women's studies, education, psychology, and philosophy. It focuses on the lived experiences of women teachers by examining and identifying a wide range of theoretical perspectives. Matriarchal patterns in our education systems that promote nurturing are an important notion in this book and are of deep concern regarding my research because most of the women in the *Space for Drawing* group were educated in the Catholic school system in Quebec. I anticipated specific issues regarding methods of teaching would surface and they did. Similar historical research by Pearse (2006) investigates art education in Quebec through first-person accounts and helps generate insight into the fearfulness around engaging in the arts by looking at the motivations, objectives, and styles of teaching visual art in relation to religion. In turn, today the SFD group's sustained and extended drawing in a space that encompasses and respects the whole person within the confines of an inner circle of friends has produced an atmosphere where fear of learning a new skill is obliterated.

Chapter 3: Spaces for lived experiences

Spending extensive time in the field, in this case in a private home, investigating the rapport between the women in the *Space for Drawing* group, and the evolving relationships between us all in the physical and psychological space we filled, it became clear to me that this research project was a qualitative and arts-based research project. Informed by educational phenomenology (van Manen, 1989), I describe the lived experiences of the individuals in the group beginning in September 2012. Vast knowledge was garnered through observing this group of six women in the multiple roles of acquaintances, friends, students of drawing, artists, participants, and co-researchers. Over the course of a year, I taught them drawing techniques, observed them as student artists, listened to their conversations and histories, developed teaching methods in response to their work in progress, and participated in art-making with them. All of this was viewed through various lenses and documented through diverse methods. Adopting Lather's (2006) position on paradigm proliferation, I draw upon several lenses suitable for this study. Informed by phenomenology, autoethnography, action research, and arts-based research, my approach consisted of mixed methods, with emphasis on lived experiences and arts-based research that attend to oral, visual and textual expressions.

Educational Phenomenology

Phenomenologically, my study discusses the essence of the experience of the participants incorporating what they experienced and how they experienced it (Creswell, 2013). In this way, conversational interviewing was an instrument to develop a closer relationship and gain greater insights into the meaning of an experience within the

framework of the research questions. Language alone is sometimes inadequate to describe experience but according to van Manen (1997), by using hermeneutic phenomenological methods it is possible to merge rational or non-rational, and esoteric ways of knowing. Interpreting and comprehending the conversations not in a re-constructed way but by looking at the meanings found in the conversations. This informed my understandings of the issues of love and fear in art. At the same time, I recognised that words may be insufficient for such broadly understood concepts because they are of a social and public collective, whereas our experiences are relational and conceptual. I interpret this to mean an intuitive reading between the lines of conversations or unscrambling the in-between spaces of the experience. In describing lived experiences, I want to discover the essence of understanding that occurs in the subtle intonation of conversation and non-verbal communication. This approach does not offer a procedural system; rather, my methodological framework requires an ability to be reflective, insightful, sensitive to language, and constantly open to experience (van Manen, 1997). It was not be enough to simply recall the experiences of our *Space for Drawing* group with language — that is, using words to describe what we drew, what we talked about, and who was there — words were also needed to elicit and depict the vital aspects of the experience of being together.

The topic of love and fear in art and how these issues contribute to a community of learning is important because it involves relationships and conversations. The purpose of the conversational interview, according to van Manen (Institute, 2013) (1997), is to gain a deeper and fuller understanding of a human phenomenon. As the conversational interview progresses and is reflected upon by the researcher and participant, the meaning

of the experience will be revealed. Interviewing this way is challenging because conversations naturally tend to veer off track. To maintain balance, as the interviewer I was diligent in keeping the questions at the fore in a structured way to stay focused and also sensitive enough to risk learning more when the conversation did shift. It is for these reasons that I chose to conduct conversational group interviews and make notes on some informal, individualized conversations that I conducted with the women in the context of our relationship and friendship.

Action Research

Originally, I had intended this work to have a Participatory Action Research component by involving the women at every step of the research. However, as we progressed through the months I discovered that this would not be possible, nor did the women in the group desire it. They were content to give verbal feedback and guidance on what we would draw and what they wanted to learn, but that was the extent of their involvement in pedagogy, and in defining the research study. According to Berg (2007), Action Research (AR) is a decidedly concerted and group enquiry assumed by the participants in order to improve a condition through deliberate self-reflective contribution to the study. In this way, AR shares its Marxist roots with the premise of feminist standpoint theory, which informs my perspectives, and provides a model of learning in which we can all become both co-learners and co-teachers (Freire Institute, 2012). Having the intentional support of the women in the group allowed us to develop consensual and democratic strategies to overcome the issues of fear in art, making action research an important aspect of this inquiry.

Autoethnography

Through autoethnography I attempt to unveil and unravel bits of consciousness, and layers of my personal story as it pertains to teaching drawing (Creswell, 2013). Artwork — both the participants' and my own — became central to the research and developed into an integral component in this work as a rich and significant site for knowledge creation (Leavy, 2009).

Although I was not the centre of this research study, it was immutable that I render the multiple layers of my involvement as a vulnerable, consistent, and pivotal researcher (Creswell, 2013). An autoethnographic lens places the researcher at the centre and I accessed this lens in order to shed light on the relationships in the group, oscillating from the centre to the periphery during the course of the study, as required. I foreground myself throughout this thesis, and ensured transparency in the research by remaining connected with and embodied in the work, which I portray in conversation, interviews, and artworks. I addressed the research questions through multiply layers of nuanced and palpable data containing and integrating my personal story (Leavy, 2009; Creswell, 2013). Visual research then tells an accompanying story of our shared journey. As a form of expression, artwork can be considered a site of knowledge and meaning-making that functions as a way to help understand contexts (Sullivan, 2010).

Arts-based research

In designing my research study, I realized that a combination of approaches was the most effective way to access lived experiences with oral, textual and visual dimensions. Using the artwork from the women and my weekly digital

journal/sketchbook that included sketches, drawings, and text and any accompanying artwork completed while writing, has given me insight into the process of teaching drawing and into teaching methods in an effort to unveil both the role of love and care and the power to overcome fear. Leavy (2009) has produced a comprehensive resource for arts-based research that explores theoretical foundations and methodology of the many ways to conduct research. Key concepts of arts-based research (ABR) include using visual art practices like drawing and painting to address research questions in a holistic way, as well as visual mapping (Sullivan, 2010) so that theory and practice became interwoven (Leavy, 2009). Using the language of art, which extends beyond the academy, was natural and appropriate for me as an artist and using ABR as a method of inquiry allowed the use of alternative representation of interpretations rather than relying only on traditional methods to determine results and findings. My weekly paper sketchbook entries during our time together reflected what we would draw that day and any other nuggets of information that seemed important in the moment. Viewing the women's artwork while it was being made was another consideration in the data collection that required me to take notes in the sketchbook while the work was being produced. So the sketchbook consisted of notes and drawings produced by me during the class. When the women observed me as I was drawing, they learned about technique as well, and these various observational experiences added a fascinating dimension to the study.

In addition to the sketchbook entries, I devoted myself to drawing on a regular basis while analyzing and writing up the data in a heuristic manner to better grasp and

compare what the women went through in the drawing classes to what actually happens during the drawing process (see Fig. 5, 6, 7).

Fig. 5, 6, 7: Petra Zantingh, *April 24, April 25, and April 27*. Graphite on paper, 17x14 and 14x17 inches, 2013.

These drawings served as indicators and markers of specific insights as I reflect on the meanings of how I committed to practicing drawing to gain expertise and technique (Appendixes 1-9: Thesis drawings). Becoming part of the research by embodying the act of drawing allowed me to generate greater insight to how love and fear operate when I am teaching and learning. For example, I began to draw things around me that had the theme of vulnerability like flowers and my aging foot. Our collective drawings serve as indicators and markers of specific moments and insights that extend beyond expertise and technique. The drawings serve as a reminder that drawing practice is a journey that evolves through a passage of time by assembling, adjusting, de-constructing, and re-constructing the marks to become a two-dimensional image (Maslen & Southern, 2011). One might argue that all drawing is self-taught or heuristic in nature and is an activity that is actually learned by doing.

I have included the artwork from the women, my field sketchbook that includes sketches, drawings, and text, and the women's artwork done during the classes, and a selection of drawings completed while writing this text. I anticipate that these sources of visual research will tell an accompanying story of our shared journey (Appendixes 1-9: Thesis drawings; 10-11: Journal/sketchbook drawings; 30-35: Women's drawings).

My process of information gathering

My diverse research data was produced from doing, observing and interviewing, rather than from interviewing alone. Producing alternative forms of experiential research material, observation requires that as the researcher (van Manen, 1997), I am part of what is happening in the group, so it was natural for me to work alongside and draw with the women. Breaking through the void of teacher-student and researcher-participant, which is often shaped by observational methods, I entered into the space of the participants to gain access to their inner thoughts, feelings and insights as information for this study. This approach involved assuming a relationship that was as close as possible, while retaining a hermeneutic alertness to interpret situations by stepping back and reflecting on the meaning (van Manen, 1997). Establishing relationships was not difficult to do with this group because we collectively reflected on incidents, teaching methods, and art-making, working together as participants-observers, teachers-students, and most importantly, friends. Thus, the boundaries between observer and participants became blurred at times and new knowledge was gained through our ongoing exchanges, as they observed me, and I them.

Using methods of participant and self-observation, open-ended interviews, and

visual data to investigate my questions on women, art, love, and fear, I sought to gain new insight and knowledge into art education practices to broaden and cultivate the area of adult women learners in a community art setting. My data collection took place over twenty-four weeks, and involved four key sources of information: first, informal conversational interviews (Appendix 12) with the group of six women; second, documentation from my field observations and drawing responses in my journal/sketchbook; third, objects, including artworks by the women and photographs of activities; and fourth, mapping and drawing completed while reflecting on and writing this thesis. Data sources were collected before, during, and after our weekly sessions in which I taught the group how to draw and develop their art practice skills. Like many practices, these weekly classes produced a steady progression in the skill of drawing. We sometimes planned the next lessons in the moment, especially after sessions were evaluated by analyzing works in progress. For example, specific viewing problems in a still-life arrangements resulting in using white objects placed onto a dark background with a strong spotlight. This helped everyone understand the importance of shadow and contrast in observational drawing. In this way we worked collaboratively through each stage in ways consistent with AR. Our rapport generated discussions about life, education, art, and drawing. Lessons were designed using a set of plans that were discussed and revised in consultation with the group to meet the needs and objectives of the drawing class. When an approach did not produce desired results, the methods were changed and adapted. For example, when I introduced a post-modern project that involved abstract, personal expression, one of the women objected and we returned to observational drawing, which is what they had initially requested.

Analysis by viewing, considering, and critiquing each other's work became an important part of the learning that took place. We all participated in this process by offering our unique perspectives on technique, composition, process, and overall results. Investigating and inspecting the work in progress and as a process served as a means of identifying unique abilities and building on self-mastery in the field of drawing. This process also developed aesthetic behaviour as collective and individual critiques are meant to maintain and advance the work (Richmond, 2009). Each session included a time of individual response and end-of-session-show-and-tell, giving the group occasion to comment on the techniques explored. Observations often included a comparison of the individuals past work, the progression achieved, and areas that required further work. A conversation around the individual's ability and self-mastery helped the women further their own work and was evidence that advancing skill increased their self-confidence. Becoming skilled in creative activities "go[es] farther and engage[s] the mind, body, and emotions, sparking curiosity, problem solving, and artistic accomplishment" (Patterson & Perlstein, 2011, p. 28).

We were limited to what kinds of materials we could use due to the restricted area and confines of a home, so, for example, art mediums involving solvents were not available for us. Instead, we identified the areas in drawing that we wished to learn about and established an experimental approach based on this constraint. Each woman also remained seated at the table and had a minimum amount of space to work in. Using this information, I gathered materials such as relevant examples of artists' work, techniques, video clips, digital tools like *iPad* applications, and other resources to assist in the lessons. My teaching methods are somewhat traditional and not unlike the lessons I

would have given in a classroom setting. After introducing the lesson, I showed images of artists' work similar in theme or technique to what the group would be doing. Motivating students with examples of artists' work serves several purposes; to inspire and encourage students, to validate art and show its historical significance, and to develop an appreciation and critical aesthetic sense. For example, we looked at the drawings of Kathe Kollwitz, Alice Neel, Lucian Freud, Robert Kogge, and Giorgio Morandi among others. In this way I borrowed from the DBAE curriculum, a method of teaching comprised of including aesthetics, studio practice, art, criticism, and art history in the lessons. Most of the women in the group had only experienced a version of child-centered-art education, where the child is primarily self-taught and self-directed (Greer, 1984). Images were shown as a hard copy from a book or as a downloaded image on my *iPad*. Sometimes I included YouTube clips to demonstrate a particular technique, for example, perspective drawing. This was followed by my example and a demonstration of the technique.

My preparation of the lessons included doing the work in order to show students a personal example. Demonstrations of particular techniques were an essential aspect of the lesson because it disclosed some of the precincts of the group. For example, when I demonstrated holding a pencil or piece of charcoal between thumb and forefinger in order to block in broad areas or enable a full arm movement, some of the women were unable to hold their pencil that way and one did not want to get her carefully manicured fingernails dirty. Observing the limitations of older fingers and hands that suffer from decreased motion informed my understanding of working with older adults by realizing that sometimes there are physical as well as mental barriers.

Observational drawing was the focus of the lessons and drawing techniques centered on the use of mostly dry techniques like pencils, charcoal, graphite stick, soft carbon, and conté. During our first lesson, I referred back to a previous first lesson we had done the year before where each woman produced a gray scale with shading and cross-hatching using various grades of pencils ranging from 8B to HB. This had proved to be difficult for some because they had no previous experience or knowledge of shading or cross-hatching techniques. We then moved to an exercise on non-verbal ways of expressing line. We explored observational drawing by looking for edges, contours, lights, shadows, positive, and negative space and interpreting what we saw on large sheets of newsprint and bond paper. Later the lessons included two and three-point perspective drawing, gesture and contour drawing, copying a Master's drawing upside down, and a few lessons on personal symbols and a post-modern project that involved abstract, personal expression. Although we mostly worked with pencil on paper, we also did rubbings with found objects, collage on cardstock, ink on watercolour paper, and experimented with oil and chalk pastel on tarpaper. Observational drawing was always done from life and often used familiar objects like fruits, vegetables, twigs, eggs, dishes, and kitchen utensils. Apart from one lesson (Lesson 6), where we drew white flowers on a black background from photographs, we drew from life. Drawing from life rather than a two-dimensional photograph increases the emotional response of the artist to what is being drawn (Maslen & Southern, 2011). An artist drawing from life makes choices in how to interpret a three-dimensional object and produce the carefully constructed marks to represent what they see. Observational drawing from life requires the artist to "engage in an interactive dialogue" with the subject matter (Maslen & Southern, 2011, p. 16). For

a complete set of the seventeen lessons that were used over the course of twenty-four sessions (some lessons required two sessions to complete), see Appendixes 13-29.

My next step in gaining information was conducting interviews. I conducted two formal sets of interviews over the course of two 12-week drawing sessions using a conversational interview approach. As the women deliberated and contributed to the research, I expected changes and shifts to occur. It was a joint decision to conduct interviews as a group because they were more comfortable, exhibiting an active involvement in the research. We used a collection of questions (Appendix 12: Interview questions). Many themes emerged from interviews, conversations, and observation and as I analyzed all of this acquired data, subtle nuances began to arise. Responding to the questions and each other in a relaxed atmosphere while preserving a level of professionalism in the project was a juggling act and required sensitivity in knowing how far to push. Can acceptance of each other and camaraderie in learning a new skill have the power to dispel fear in art? Will fear dissipate as love and care grows through shared lived experiences? Or might I instil fear through my questions? Sometimes the questions produced other questions and sometimes the conversations would drift off. The conversations were recorded and transcribed and returned for member checks, and after the participants read over the transcripts they were encouraged and invited to modify the text as they wished. Once the transcript had been approved, it became a part of the study. With transparency and openness, some notations of conversation as we worked together were also recorded. I also recounted the success and/or failure of a particular lesson in my journal/sketchbook, making this record an invaluable resource and accumulation of information. Keeping a weekly journal/sketchbook achieved several goals. First, it

provided a record of planning and preparation of each week's lesson. Second, it served as a space for my own individual drawing of the activity as it happened. Third, it allowed me to record tidbits, nuances, and first impressions of what happened in each session.

Individual artworks chosen by the participants were entered into the data collection because they contained the most important indicators of growth as artists and insights into their emerging development. Fragments of knowledge about their former education and their approach to learning were exhibited in how they approached a drawing. For example, the intentional need to use a ruler to mark points on a drawing or to use an eraser to remove unwanted areas are quite clear in the work and reference a time in art education where these tools were mandatory. Fear that surrounded and inhibited their abilities could be seen in the tentative markings of the some of the drawings but especially in the unfinished and abandoned drawings. Some of the marks made in the drawings by Monique were scratchy and hesitant and without verification from her, suggests a fearful response. Because I had developed a relationship with them, I knew that when Linda did not have drawings to show, it was because her drawings had probably been used to line the litter box. In other words the drawings were not precious to her but it was different with Monique. She did not want the others to see her work because she did not think it was good enough and this was a kind of fear response. Eventually, she did agree to allow us to view her work and she was shocked at the level of competence she had achieved over the course of the classes.

In some ways the drawings that did not find their way into the collection tell a greater story of fear and self-consciousness. Skill, confidence, and development as artists were evident in the progression of the boldness and scale of the drawings. As they

worked sequentially through the lessons, some of the women became very bold in their approach to the drawing, producing large, striking drawings with strong contrast. Encouragement to include and show the drawings and the gentle ways of speaking about the work suggested the level of trust, care, and love that had developed over time among the group. The collection of drawings and artwork produced over the course of 24 weeks is a vital component of this research because it empowered people to participate in this community of practice and demonstrations the significant progression that occurred (Appendixes 30-35: Women's drawings).

As I reflected on this investigation, I also participated by drawing every day in response to some of the lessons as a way of understanding what we had accomplished and how we had accomplished it. It was a vital way for my brain to take a break from words to concentrate on visual images and to let the thoughts have a chance to simmer and melt into the days of writing about the research experience. Mapping the themes for the research has helped me visually disseminate the data and form new links between the text and images as I developed a symbol system for the themes that emerged (Appendixes 36-38: Digital map).

CHAPTER 4: Spaces for interpretations and understandings

Interpretations

Verbal and textual data in this study was interpreted using a series of methods that brought forward different dimensions of the study, and ensured that I addressed multiple perspectives and diverse learning experiences. For interviews, a coding system was used to aggregate the text received from transcripts and place these into categories, eventually sorting it down to a few major groups which I identified as: art, love, women, fear, aging, aging, reflections, and breakthroughs (Creswell, 2013). Questions and answers by participants were organized thematically and I categorized the findings using the above themes. The data was interpreted using a linear colour-coded approach, producing a mapping system and visual diagrams. When visualizing texts, individual views and elucidations served as introspective spaces. For example, the way the coloured markers felt on the page as I circled, underlined, and added notes and marks to the transcripts allowed me to read and look at the text from a different perspective that opened up the possibility for multiple interpretations (Sullivan, 2010). Patterns revealed themselves in the way the coloured markers merged with the text. Some of the important points had an abundance of overlapping lines and marks of colour because they fit multiple categories indicating the complexities, amalgamation, and interweaving that occurred.

While transcribing the interviews, it was important for me to remember and listen to the intonations of vocal fluctuations in order to pick up on some of the nuances and underlying intentions. Many of the thoughts and ideas lie in the in-between spaces where, for example, a voice would fluctuate and quietly melt into the voice of another or elicit such enthusiasm and excitement that talking over each other and interrupting would

occur. These shifts indicated to me the ongoing relationships and distinct personalities being formed in this group of unique individuals with strengths and weaknesses. Like the artwork that was not chosen to be part of the data collection, some of the voices became quiet and silenced in the conversations and therefore it was critical for me to make the rounds with each individual during the interviews to allow everyone opportunity to speak. Paying attention to these in-between spaces was important in discerning and dissecting the text. I became a collector of anecdotes as I sifted through the data to find the important "points and cogency" and to recognize what parts of the conversations were significant for the study while in the moment (van Manen, 1997, p. 69). Sometimes the best anecdotes happened in hindsight after the conversations were recalled, making my journal/sketchbook an important site of data collection and information.

My own collection of field notes in the form of a pictorial and textual journal/sketchbook was one of the lifelines for my study because it was there that I recorded my first thoughts, impressions, and reactions before, during, and after the classes. In an effort to remain transparent with my class, I recorded openly, using both text and drawing, allowing anyone in the group to access my journal/sketchbook at any time. It remained my journal/sketchbook however, and although the women could see it at any time, they did not respond, change or add to it because they perceived it as my book. But, perhaps I failed to reinforce the choices they had in adding or eliminating anything from the journal/sketchbooks because they were content to not become involved with this segment of the research. Notations in the book included snippets of conversations between the women because these conversations were often loaded with personal stories and anecdotes. During the compilation of gathering and assembling the

text and images, I asked the participants to verify the data and add to it if they chose. The women were only interested in substantiating their own drawings and conversation transcripts as part of the collection and gave full permission for all other data, like my journal/sketchbook, to be included in this study, trusting my discretion.

The actual journal/sketchbook pages were scanned and digitally manipulated (close-cropped) to reveal the book cover edges and the pages to preserve the notion that the actual book is as important as the contents. Scanned images of the pages were lined up to view a group of pages rather than simply two at a time making it easier to be incorporated in the larger visual map **(**Appendixes 10-11: Journal/sketchbook drawings). This composition elicited a thought-provoking, non-linear perspective to this particular portion of the visual data.

Applying these empirical devices enabled me as a visual learner to gain access to the complexity of this project, the nature of social relationships, as well as my teaching practice and pedagogic beliefs. Using a mapping system based on emerging themes, I created a visual chart by way of a video (Appendixes 36-38: Digital map). This helped me decipher and untangle the text further, facilitating increased access into the subtleties of the data. Word and image met and married as "they empirically and theoretically examine the hybrid or third space" created as art and inquiry—or image and word—meet, which they view as a merging of subjective and objective" (Leavy, 2009, p. 232).

In conclusion, the mixed method approach to this project has allowed me to collect a wealth of data with a multiplicity of perspectives regarding my questions on love, art, and fear. These methods were effective as they helped me gain insight and knowledge into art education practices as they relate to this group of adult women

learners in a community art setting. Phenomenology and lived experiences have allowed me to collect anecdotes and conversations in an authentic manner from the viewpoint of the women in the *Space for Drawing* group. Using autoethnography has situated me in such a way as to gain a vantage point through my own lens as an educator and artist, and arts-based research has provided aesthetically pleasing and fascinating information from an alternate, visual perspective. The influence of action research opened up opportunities for involvement by the women and allowed for a transparency in this project by reinforcing the learning and ownership of the material that was taught. All of these methods have facilitated gaining access to the answers to the research questions posed and to increased knowledge in the field of art education. This study unveiled and shed light on my teaching experiences as I explored my own attitude, values, and art educational approaches.

I assessed how learning new creative skills later in life affects the quality of an individual's perceived contribution to society, and how apprehension about learning a new skill affects others in a group setting. Investigating how the skill of drawing influenced other areas of everyday life—like the ability to develop an aesthetic sense—I was also interested in discovering if that skill improved an individual's perspective on her quality of life.

Guided by my research questions, I analyzed the data and divided it into the following thematic categories: women, art, love, and care, fear, age, reflections, and breakthroughs. In analyzing the transcripts, the data was underlined and drawn on using carefully selected colours for each topic, and the colours overlap at times, creating new colours much like the merging and emerging themes in the research. Designated colours

were: magenta for women, red for art practice, teal blue for love and care, chartreuse for fear, grey for age, ochre for reflections, and cerulean blue for breakthroughs. All of these colours found their way onto the visual map of images as well as the transcribed coded pages, producing a visually attractive collage of colour, text, and images. As a visual artist, this digital collage of various colours, text, and collected images brought new meaning to the research questions as I explored and reviewed the complex blend of impressions from the teaching sessions with the women. Remembering the sessions as viewed through the documentation of images produced throughout the twenty-four weeks made the image linear to me and allowed me to see the transitions and developments that had taken place. The addition of superimposed, coded, transcribed text and selected theme colours made the image reflect what the research was like. Thoughts, ideas, feelings, images, and results were superimposed and layered to create a new image (Appendix 39).

With these themes, I was able to analyze oral, textual and visual data to address my research questions. At times, these themes overlapped and I visually depicted this in the pages of coded data as well as in the digital collage of the photographed artwork and journal pages However, some of the answers to the questions posed derive from the women's stories and experiences, so these form the basis of the thematic data analysis, with the following vignettes as part of the field conversations.

Women: Discoveries and reflections about ourselves

Dinii's story

Look how the light has changed — it just moves me.

Fig.8 Dinii, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Dinii (age 76) is a widow, a retired college professor and a clinical dietician. Her approach to drawing is one of openness and expectation and she believes that she will improve with practice. She opened up her home each week to our drawing group and supplied endless cups of coffee, healthy baked goods, almonds and dark chocolate, as well as soup lunches.

> *I remember my very early drawings because when you brought them home they were posted on a cupboard because we didn't have a fridge. During the elementary years, they were discussed and Father had to know about them and that was important. It was the same with our writings. The merits of the drawings were discussed. When I was in high school I had an incredible art teacher who introduced me to the German artist Kathie Kollwitz. She is the one who really started my wanting to draw because she had the capacity to put down with very few lines an emotion like sadness or loss. Her drawings are so powerful. I remember feeling very good about my drawings because I was allowed to explain them. But remember, these were child drawings of houses but we also drew from life. At school you brought in an apple or a piece of bread, things you had in your lunchbox to draw. Someone at school might say that your drawing did not look like the thing you were drawing, but you would say, "It's my drawing and it is a bird." Or we argued: "That's not a daisy or a tulip!" It was a competition and you fought over it. My five sisters are all amateur artists and my brothers are into literature and poetry, but one of them is now painting.*

My mother was the one who took us to the museums and pushed us to take music lessons.

All those years that you worked you think about the future: when I'm retired I'll have the liberty to do the things I want. It's hard to do this when you are looking after a family with six loads of laundry and a husband going on business trips. I think you need the freedom to steal time for yourself and I feel like I deserve it and deserve to enjoy these things now.

When I look at these drawings I see movement, and I can see the contrast. It's all about light and dark, about contrast, that one is so gorgeous. It's almost monochromatic and moves to a level of abstraction that is fascinating, amazing. I wanted to move away from precision in art and that's why I left Renta's class because I want to learn how to express myself. I think what I enjoy the most is seeing things I didn't see before and also forms and the relationships between them and when you point it out I see what I absolutely love, playing with shadows. I also enjoy mastering a technique. I'm not the greatest creative mind but I love to master a technique. I like the materials we work with, the pencils, paper, ink, and quite frankly I like the company. It's a safe learning environment. That negative is not here. You have better days but it's not a failure and I don't feel pressure to perform to a certain level. It's loose and becomes a joy. Drawing is like writing in that it allows you to express something in a different medium and it's

similar to writing poetry. Sometimes it is easier to write, to focus, and you take time for you and sometimes, beautiful things happen when you stop the world. It's like a walk in the woods. A meditative process. You let go and don't worry about the dust under the mat. It doesn't matter what the end looks like because I have no intention of hanging it in a museum. You want it to look decent but I don't want to perform so it takes the pressure off and that is why a group like this is so good because it is not large. I could go on for hours, we're happy to get together because there is no expectation to learn but we want to learn — in a Zen way. The most important thing is to keep learning and if you stop you're done. It's not so much what you learn but that you're open and if you lose interest in something new you become dead wood. In all the art classes I take there are mostly women. I'm in another class right now that meets at Fritz Farm community centre with no instructor but lots of learning and teaching. Everybody does different things at that class and we coach each other and that's the big difference between this class and that one.

Linda's story

I need to create

Fig. 9: Linda, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Linda (age 67) is a no-nonsense kind of person, a widow and retired social worker with international experience who loves all animals and cares for many pets. During the course of the study, she was also caring for an ailing mother who passed away in 2013. Linda developed a unique drawing style and impressively advanced her skills over the course of these sessions.

> *My older brother used to have a journal newspaper thing and I would do the drawings for it and we had little stories about our pet animals, a dog, Raggedy Ann and Andy. When I got a bit older I used to draw fashion. At one point I wanted to be a dress designer. I would make the clothes with little tabs on them so I could place them over the figures like paper dolls. And I wanted to be a cartoonist because humour is what makes the world go round. I relate to humour.*
>
> *I was forced to sew and knit as a child. I didn't like knitting because it takes too long. I wanted immediate gratification. I made my husband a sweater once and I had to hem the sleeves and the bottom, it should have been for an adult old gorilla! I was best at knitting scarfs.*
>
> *For me, the hardest activity in this class was to draw the crumpled paper or the cloth still-life arrangements; by far the hardest and I hadn't done this before — the light and shades are like the shades of grey in the grey scales. Art was like my overseas job. I always took new jobs — no point in doing the same job again. Some people don't want to keep learning but if you want to move, don't sit in a rocking chair. I like seeing flowers come back from near death. Now it's time for soup.*

Sylvie's story

It makes me want to concentrate on one thing and fill up my sketch book

10: Sylvie, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Sylvie (age 50) is a French Canadian married to a Canadian of Italian decent and they have three children in their early twenties. Sylvie built on her skills in drawing and began to draw on her own in her own time, often while waiting for dinner to cook.

> *The first thing I remember is having some pastels when I was a child and I don't remember exactly but at the end of elementary and beginning of high school I had a drawing to do about our vacation. In my head I thought I couldn't draw so I did a collage instead, of seashells and little rocks from Pierce. I remember spending hours on the seashells and little rocks. At such a young age I was sure that I couldn't draw probably because my teacher or my brothers said I couldn't so I did collage. I remember sitting beside someone in school whose parents were artists and painters and she used to draw Genie in a bottle. She used to take her pen and just draw it. My experience at school was sitting behind a person who could take anything and draw it. She had come from an art background and was so good. When you're a kid you get intimidated very easily and the intimidation stops you from wanting to draw so that you go to collage because you don't dare to draw.*
>
> *And we had colouring books too. The main thing that's important in early learning is where you went to school. I remember cooking and sewing lessons. As soon as learning is forced I don't want to do it anymore. My mother did some art when she was at the convent and*

now I look at them and think that they are beautiful. She went to convent with the nuns and I went to the public school with a teacher who knew nothing about art. Age makes a difference too because you have more experience and interpret things differently. Maybe it's the time you put into it but some families are more artsy. How can you judge art? This girl was from an art background and was born this way. The kids who produced good work in school also worked hard but still she loved it.

I came into this a couple of years ago when my husband was involved in hockey with my son. My daughter was upset about it so when my son left hockey, she wanted to do something with her dad so I came up with the idea that they take a drawing course together. They both liked drawing and painting. They were painting at night and they said, why don't you take a course during the day and from there I kept going. They quit but it's been four years now and I'm sticking to it. I have the luxury of time, like some of the younger women in my other class say, 'this is my time.'

I like it better now than before. Drawing is the basis for painting and I really enjoy the drawing. Maybe I'm more confident but I'm not as scared of the paper like last year. There are some good days and there are some bad days and some things are very hard but the main thing is that I'm not scared. I have begun to do it on my own. I want to make this a goal like my yoga — a time for me. You progress fast if you

do it but you can't look at it like a chore. It's like mediation— I always wanted to learn how to draw and my sister draws beautifully and I can't do it. It will take more time. To draw something three dimensional, totally abstract, and going with the flow and the guidance to really let it go and yeah, I can do this. I can draw at home. You need to be challenged otherwise you become stagnant. The perfect example is the collage because not everyone liked it. When you get the pat on the back from different people, you have proudness and you realize that you can do more. It gives you courage and validates you, and it makes me want to concentrate on one thing and fill up a sketchbook. It will take up some time to fill this little book but I think I could do that, even with just a single leaf — you can play with it while your dinner is cooking. We don't all have to do the same thing. What attracted us in the collage project is the individual work.

Monique's story

I want to learn how to draw like a child in kindergarten…

Fig. 11: Monique, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Monique (age 79) is a widow and retired bank employee. She has threatened to quit the group on several occasions but stayed with it. It was a struggle and a stretch for Monique to draw and she was easily discouraged and often sat back and watched the others.

> *I never, never, never, drew. I don't remember doing anything like our drawing now. My younger sister is 65 and has taken art courses. I used to be a semi-professional dancer and my parents took my brother and me to New York to perform. But I was never exposed to art growing up. I never went to museums. We learned to draw with a ruler and small paper and a teacher who was not an artist. We measured six inches here and six inches there. I don't recall any art in the class. I hated taking out the little pad and ruler and everything was done with the ruler and so it becomes a very negative experience.*
>
> *I don't like what I'm doing with my drawing. When we were drawing the eggs—that's the only time I was happy with what I did. Ah Shit! (Sylvie responded to this with: "You have to go to confession now"). I draw the big twig and keep adding lines to the drawing but I have alien shadows on mine, aren't they great? I'm a scribbler, and this I can deal with. I don't know if I can do it, really. How do I make it so it looks like the shadow? How do I make it look like it's not on the paper?*
>
> *I want to learn how to draw like a child in kindergarten. I would be so comfortable there at that level. I think it would be simple because I wouldn't be playing with shadows. If only I could draw like a child*

does! Well it's because they don't give a crap. I don't know a child who says they can't draw. They don't hesitate. Their baggage is limited and you are not being judged and we are always being judged. Is it going to look good?

I was so uptight before and now we all have experience and we're all trying and I look forward to coming back. The only reason I come is for the soup.

Hilke's story

I do art because it relaxes me

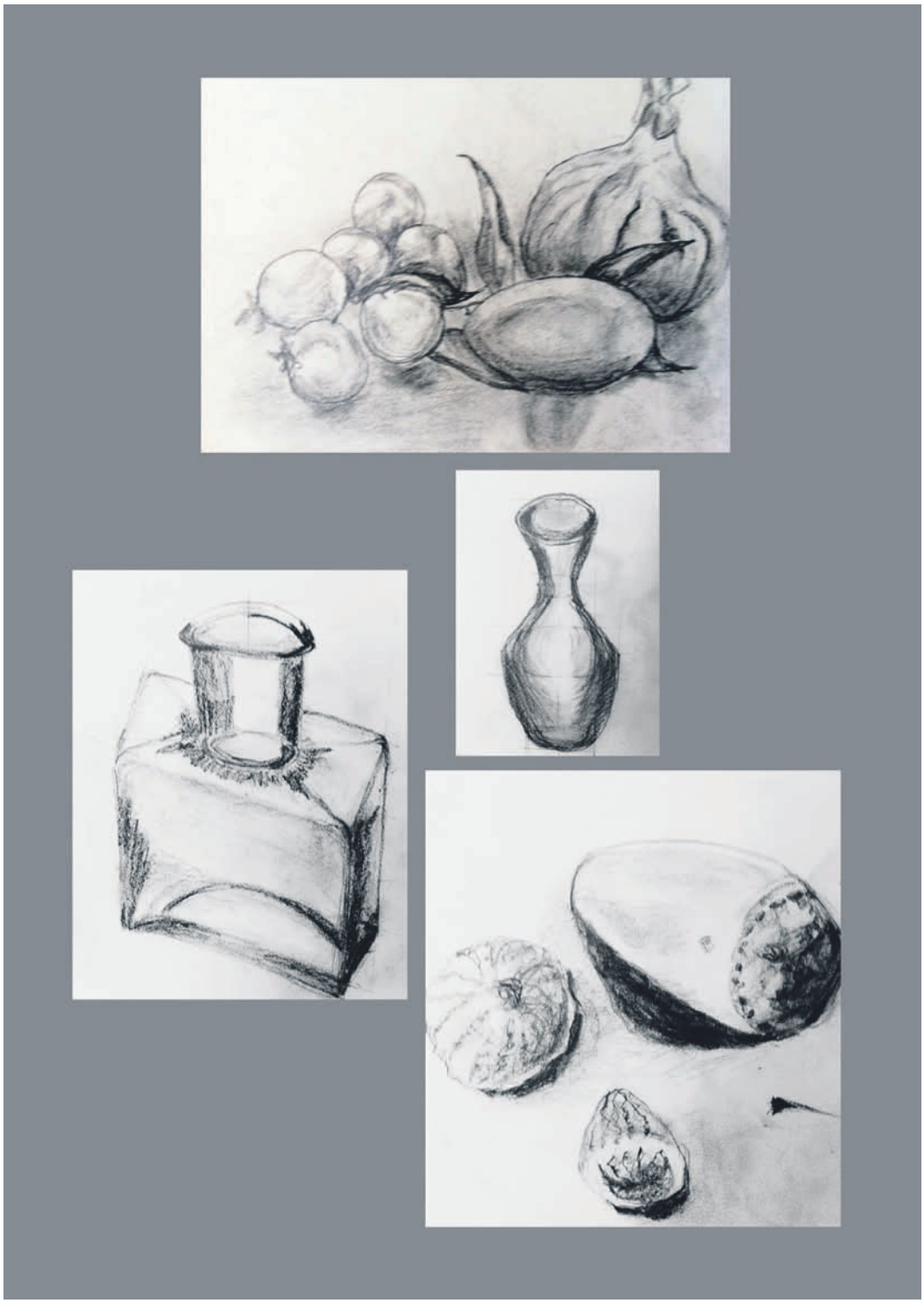

Fig. 12: Hilke, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Hilke (age 78) was a flight attendant. She is often away from the group because she travels frequently with her husband on business trips. They have an estate and winery and both of their grown children work with them in their businesses. Hilke's husband is a collector of art and has a very impressive collection of Quebec and international artists. Her son is a craftsman and her daughter previously worked as an art historian in New York. Art is a big part of their lives. Because Hilke said she could not come back to the classes after Christmas because of surgery and travel plans. Dinii found another woman, Trudi, to take her place. However, Hilke did come back occasionally and bringing the number of women in the group to six at times..

> *Every child had to do art at school like writing and arithmetic and sometimes the teacher was old and if my dandelions turned out nice then I would hand it in the next year, but the teacher remembered. In school we studied languages. We learned French and English and also studied philosophy and then we learned something about the background of the country and it helped you learn the language. I decided to paint flowers. I like watercolour and its fun to do the shadows and it's relaxing. I remember when I was in school my girlfriend's mother had a paper business and it was treasure because you couldn't get paper. In Germany when I went to school there was not much paper so you didn't doodle and you needed the paper so there was no extra. When you don't have, you can't waste it because it was after the war and you used every scrap of paper.*

I find drawing and painting relaxing. I like mixing colour but I don't have the eye for it. I want to do ink because I think it's really nice. I gave some drawings to my son and my hairdresser who paints in acrylic. As long as you have fun. I don't keep drawings because they just lie around and take up space.

Women are different today and they don't always take care of their families. My daughter is OCD and that's why it's very good for me — it's therapeutic. Whether you are good or not — that's secondary. I enjoy it.

Trudi's story

I always like to doodle.

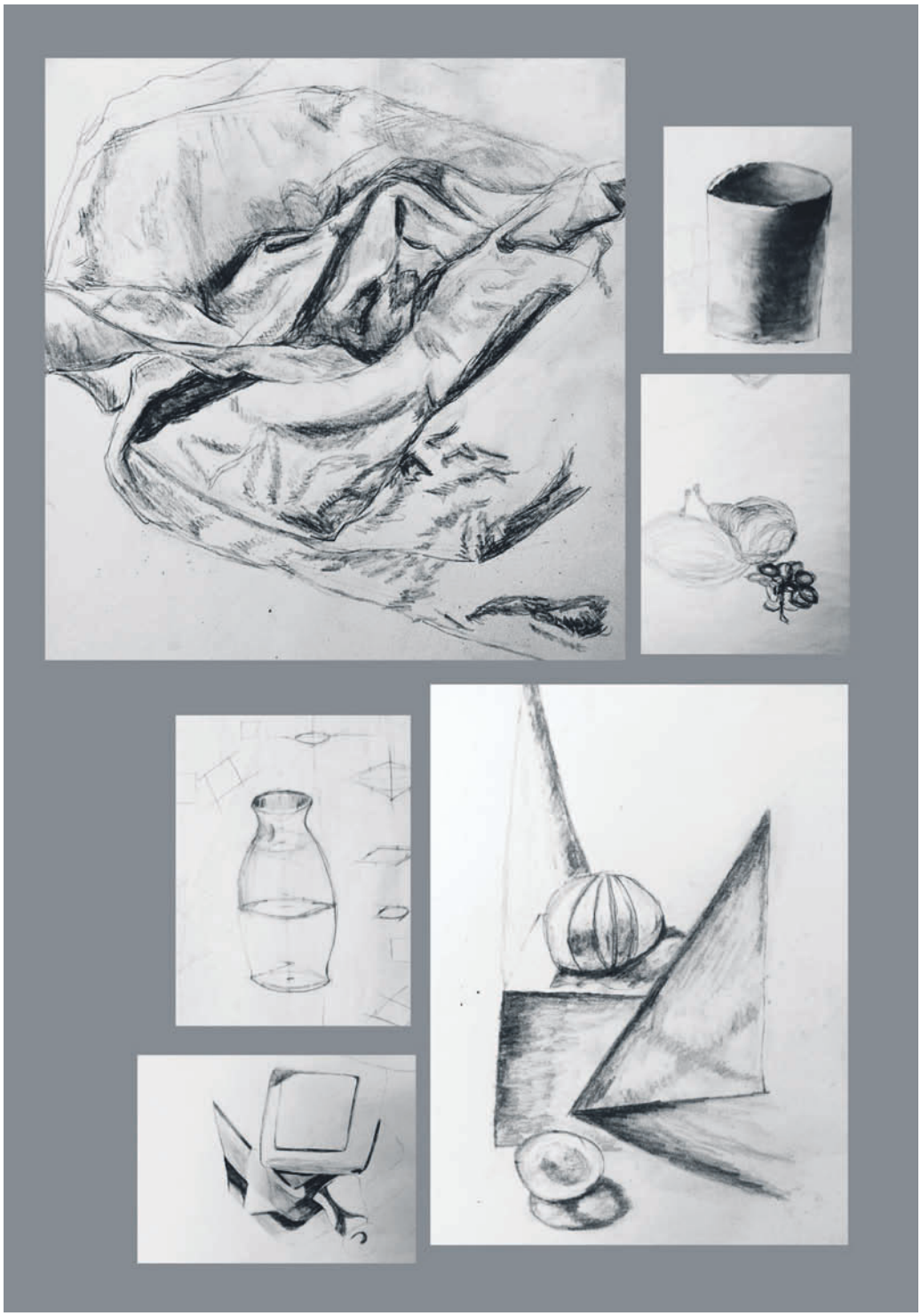

Fig. 13: Trudi, *Drawings*. Mixed media, 2012-13

Trudi (age 75) is a widow and a retired restaurant owner and cook. She was handpicked to join the group and only participated in the winter session. A quiet, introspective woman, she took to drawing with relish and gusto even though this was a new medium for her.

> *I always like to doodle. You know on the phone I'm constantly doodling but I'm not getting anywhere. I cannot draw a flower if you paid me. Sometimes I look at the doodles and think this is really nice. I drew in school but we were told to draw. We drew sunflowers from life in Switzerland. We had lots of dandelions and sunflowers and we always went to pick flowers. We had singing and lots of extra things. Young students today are saying we are planting vegetables or flowers but we did that sixty and seventy years ago.*

Petra's story

I do art because I need to

As a researcher, I include my story here in order to situate myself, as an art educator in the middle of these other stories because this project involved us all, as an art-making community and remembering our childhood experiences of art was a fundamental component. My artwork is not included because it is scattered throughout this text.

> *As far back as I remember I have been doing art. I think in many ways it was a way to be different or to stand out as number nine out of eleven siblings. Immigrating to Canada from the Netherlands in 1957 on my first birthday, our*

family struggled with poverty and cultural shock as we settled into small-town, rural Ontario. Art was an escape for me and I often became lost in making things with my hands. As children, my sister and I invented many architectural floor plans for our "button families". One of my chores was to polish our "Sunday shoes" (all 13 pairs) and I used this time to not only polish the shoes but paint with the shoe polish on the newspaper that protected the floor. I drew with anything I could find and became the "artist in the family". .

I was the first of all my siblings to attend college but it was not without a fight. Having immigrated so that the boys could have a better life, my parents believed that girls should just get married and have babies. I insisted on studying art and they finally agreed only if I studied commercial art at a community college so that I could make a living. Graphic design served me well but I knew that I wanted to paint, draw, and teach. So in 1994 I enrolled in university to get a BFA. Now I'm back in school to get an MA. I love to learn, ask questions, and share what I know, but mostly I love to get lost in making art.

Art: Discoveries and reflections in the art-making and art education

I gained new knowledge about teaching and the importance of becoming aware of your students' strengths and weaknesses, and love and fear, as individuals and as students. In the SFD group, the strengths and weakness in their art practice and their personalities began to merge and it was difficult to distinguish the two sometimes. As an educator, there are times when this is an asset and other times when this realization

becomes so significant that it places students in a discriminating and preconceived category where these qualities begin to define the person. Sometimes, I felt like giving up on some students because I knew what their reactions would be to what I was trying to get across to them before the lesson even began.

Earlier experiences with art education were often woven into the conversation as we drew. Many of the women came from a time in education when things were either right or wrong and this attitude quickly came to the fore, causing anxiety and fear in some. After several weeks, however, this began to dissipate as most of the women started to understand that observational drawing is a practice and requires many hours of experience but it is something that one can learn. They would often compare my teaching style to some of their other community art teachers. It seemed important to distinguish and identify the type of teaching that was happening with our group compared to what happened in their other classes. One of the differences was that I do not draw on or mark my students work and feel very strongly about this. Some students wanted me to, but in order to learn to draw, students need to feel and hear the sound of the pressure and flow of the pencil on the paper. Drawing on a student's work by the instructor is disrespectful and undermines the work, which is done in their unique language and voice. Articulating this point to the women helped them respect themselves and their work, which in turn helped them gain confidence.

Describing the space as encouraging, sharing, Zen-like, safe, and validating, the women named several essential ingredients in designing a favourable climate for successful learning. Filled with warmth and care, the physical space was aesthetically pleasing, filled with natural light and delicious smells of freshly brewed coffee and soup.

Sharing food had become part of this drawing group as we always began our sessions with coffee and snacks, and ended them with homemade soup. Bonding over food helped us develop our friendships, and this in turn improved our art-making skills, once again merging and blurring boundaries.

Exchanges between the women were peppered with invaluable information about their reaction to what was taught, what they learned, and what seized and spurred them on to more difficult tasks. There is a phenomenon that happens to someone who is learning to draw and that is the expansion that occurs in the quality of skill and technique. As Richmond writes, “in order to satisfy the eye, technique has to serve the work” (Richmond, 2009, p. 96). In other words, the work needs to be balanced and grounded in seeing, making technique neither an opponent nor a star. This balance can only be achieved through experience and with each experience comes more growth.

Throughout the weeks of lessons designed to teach drawing techniques in a fundamental way, we mostly concentrated on still-life arrangements of white objects on a dark background or simple studies of vegetables and fruits. Most of drawings in the data collection are of still-life drawings of pears and onions, white cardboard shapes, and the upside-down, white dish renderings. These drawings, when later viewed during a critique, also received the most accolades and positive comments from the group. It seemed that the more challenging and difficult the work, the better it was acknowledged, linking enhanced skill to increased confidence. There are also some examples of the crumpled paper drawings, negative and positive space drawings, tracing object drawings, collage work, and white conté drawings on tarpaper (Appendixes 30-35: Women’s drawings).

With the objective of building confidence and reducing fear in art-making, some of the art projects in the weekly sessions were simply included to produce aesthetically pleasing results with minimum effort. One such example, using a post-modern approach or issue-based art project, was a collage project. I encouraged the women to be self-expressive in their individual works and to feel free to enjoy the process, but also to produce an interesting end product. I purposely took a basic or entry-level approach to collage because it was so new for the group. Existing materials like collage and simple line and colour dictated their design decisions, and made it simpler to accomplish affable outcomes. One aspect of this collage project involved an inside/outside self-portrait and required everyone to think about herself and find colours and images that reflected their feelings (see fig. 14).

Fig. 14: Petra Zantingh, *Journal/sketchbook*. Mixed media, 2012.

Participating in this collage art-making project diminished fear greatly in part because it was accessible, and it gave some of the women enjoyment and a strong sense of accomplishment. But this activity also irritated others because in their view, the art-making was childish and required little skill. What I thought was simply a motivating diversion to help some in the group gain a stronger footing in art-making technique and self-expression became a contentious issue. There appeared to be a strong disconnect between understanding the value and significance of self-expression in an abstract collage compared to self-expression in observational drawing. Some of the women were very entrenched in a traditional way of thinking about art.

Debating this issue and attempting to define the nature of visual art and all it encompasses would naturally require much more time and resources. To the women in the group, it was simply a question of realism versus abstract art. Does the capacity and skill to produce realistic art have greater value than work produced in self-expressive abstract art? This incident strengthened two things for me: first, that the art education they had received played a large role in their art interpretation and appreciation; and second, it reinforced the importance of using historical and contemporary examples as motivation in art education in introducing a lesson. This project was introduced at week nine; early in the semester and it was not thoroughly introduced with any artists or examples of collage type art-making. As an experimental lesson, my goal was to show how producing an expressive visual art piece based on a personal theme or issue could not be judged as right or wrong in the hopes of instilling confidence in some of the women. They were not all convinced that this project was worthwhile or authentic.

After much discussion as a group, we decided to focus on drawing for the remainder of the lessons. Observational drawing was a good fit for this group because the benefits of training their eyes to look deeply at objects increased their confidence. Developmentally, not all of the women were ready for experimentation or exploration in the art projects. I had developed the lessons in a formalized way and the women became used to the patterns of beginning our sessions with gesture and contour drawing, followed by sustained drawing. Whenever the lessons veered away from simply drawing objects in this method, some of the women became frustrated. For example, during the second-to-last session, I attempted to have them produce a tactile drawing by feeling a three-dimensional object with a dominant hand while sketching it with the opposite one. Proving to be very challenging on many levels, this exercise was not successful. Physically it required some awkward positioning and pushed some of the women out of their comfort zones. New explorations into drawing are an important area of pursuing an art practice but respect for what students are comfortable with is also essential. I also needed to respect what they were comfortable with.

We began each lesson with a series of contour and gesture drawings, but after several weeks, the women were still confused and needed to be reminded of the differences between the two forms of drawing. The key to them remembering and understanding the difference was continued practice of the two different techniques from week to week. Gesture drawing is quick and involves quick actions while contour drawing is learning to draw with your eyes in a slow and methodical way. These two distinct techniques help an artist become acquainted with the subject matter and are essential ways into the work. Serving as a warm-up, much like stretching for an athlete

before running or doing scales for a musician before performing, this habit is an important precursor to sustained drawing.

Working together – the women at their art boards clipped with large sheets of paper and me, in my small journal sketchbook – helped us form a studio-based space instead of a classroom-type space and the distinction was quite significant. Levelling the playing field and encouraging everyone to work at their own pace, from their own specific place of expertise, it also helped identify problems as we worked. For example, I could show the women how to incorporate shadow and line from my own sketches. I also made a commitment to the group that I would always document the artwork by including examples or by drawing directly in the journal. This weekly journal helped me bridge the gap between clinical observer and participant and the journal itself became an object of interest among the women. By joining in the art-making, a connection was formed with the participants and it established a sort of art studio practice space instead of an art class solidifying burgeoning relationships. Teaching happened in the making together.

Requiring dedicated concentration and focus, drawing is a serious and challenging task and the process of alternating drawing and writing has helped me to become a more effective writer and draftswoman. Observational drawing has given me a new perspective on how pleasant it is to achieve resemblance in the drawing to the object being draw, heightened my aesthetic sense, and increased empathy and appreciation for the challenges involved with a drawing practice. Developing this personal expression is the essence of art expression. In my own process, I have come to realize again how essential it is for art educators to also be involved in an art-making practice.

As important to me in this research study as the journal sketchbook was, the assembled digital collage made during the writing of this work is equally important. Collage is a visual artwork made from assembling different forms or images to produce a new image. Generally, collages are glued together, but in a digital collage they are incorporated into the final work by using layers. Working in both *Adobe Photoshop* and *Illustrator*, I created an 11" X 17" digital collage of images, photos of the artwork, coded transcripts, and scans of the journals. Selectively choosing what would be part of the visual map for this research was an intuitive decision that was made while we collectively critiqued the work. Based on the women's response to their work during the critique, I was able to select what we all wanted to include. This collection involved a personal aesthetic perspective, a sense of commitment to the work by the woman who drew it, and the woman's reaction to the work, that is, whether or not they appreciated it and why. Collection of the artwork became part of the research because it involved their input and opinions. Coding and grouping the work produced a remarkable effect because of the configurations and arrangements of the work. Organization choices only became clear to me when I included the scans of the pages of my journal/sketchbook. It was when I viewed the 40 scans and 55 drawings that I realized several important ideas. Particular artwork that stood out as being more successful by the women was not necessarily the work that reduced anxiety or fear, nor was it the most aesthetically pleasing. It was, however, the work that they felt was more challenging to execute and required a greater degree of looking and concentration that brought about the greatest satisfaction and fulfilment. This reinforced the notion that successfully achieving a difficult project brought a greater amount of satisfaction.

Love: Discoveries and reflections in the conversations, relationships, and art

Attempting to unearth the essential meanings in this phenomenological reflection of the interviews and conversations, I developed themes around the emerging issues. Ultimately my goal was to discover meaning in the multiple roles of educator, artist, and friend, inside and outside of the group context, through the lived experience of teaching, practicing, and simply being. Reflecting on lived experience becomes a contemplative analysis of structure and themes of the experience studied (van Manen, 1997). Finding significance in a hermeneutical phenomenological study is multi-layered and it is for this reason that many similar studies are delivered by way of prose or narrative, giving them more relevance in wider circles. Apart from the introduction and the vignettes, I chose to convey my reflections and findings in a non-narrative way.

Isolating and uncovering the data thematically, I took a holistic and a selective approach by reviewing the text line-by-line in order to gain multiple points of entry into the deeper nuances, and to help uncover surprises and particular themes. During the conversational interviews, the questions were open-ended, allowing the interviewee to become a co-investigator in the process (van Manen, 1997). As a result, the women in the group became active and invested in the research, which benefitted them as well as the study. Revealing a sense of care in the flourishing friendships, they often encouraged each other even during the interviews, much like they had during the drawing sessions.

In many ways these women could be compared to the women artists that Meadowcroft describes when she speaks about the self-doubt of the women painters of the early 20th century (Meadowcroft, 1999). The Beaver Hall women spent much time together sketching, viewing, and critiquing each other's work, thereby encouraging and

developing not only friendships, but also their professional skills. Growth in the lives of these ten gifted Montreal artists influenced not only their professional capability and accomplishment but also their individual stories and this is what I sought to emulate in the *Space for Drawing* group. Meadowcroft's study serves as an example for me of love and care as the impetus for the research I conducted in the SPD group.

During our conversations I observed and perceived the following: laughter and teasing, serious tidbits of personal information, encouraging remarks, practical advice, and silence. This indicated a high degree of comfort between the women and the physical space we worked in on Friday mornings. Camaraderie and a sense of solidarity solidified us as a group, and produced care and friendship, which culminated into a space where art could be practiced without judgment.

Jovial behaviour such as teasing and cajoling was often used as way of helping members to overcome their anxiety and fear as they approached the challenge of the lessons. In the beginning, encouraging words were used for those in the group who were fearful, but as the group become more familiar with each other I noticed a shift and perhaps a less patient attitude towards those who were struggling. This was never verbalized but I sensed a frustration in the group as well as in myself from time to time, as well as strong feelings of empathy and hope—frustration when the fear did not immediately dissipate, empathy because they understood the fear, and hope because at times the fear did disappear and in its place was a proud sense of accomplishment. As teachers and learners, we often experience both emotions at the same time. Love grows out of this duality as we cultivate and deepen our relationships.

In both a serious and light manner, personal information was often tossed back and forth in the group as we became more accustomed to each other. In the ebb and flow of relationship-forming, sometimes these tidbits were explored in a deeper and more meaningful way and something they would float above us like clouds. At times they were thrown out and around when the intensity of drawing became too much and the silence became too thick. Whenever these deep silences occurred I gave thanks, because it showed a deep engagement with the work and a leap into the next stage where intense seeing and drawing begin to merge in that mysterious way. Moments like these indicate that a student has become one with the drawing, losing their sense of time, unaware of their surroundings, alert but relaxed, confident, interested, and absorbed in their work (Edwards, 1989; Berger, 2011). In a group setting, not everyone is in the same place at the same time and so those who were uncomfortable with it sometimes broke the silence. We talked about this phenomenon as a group and as understanding grew, the women became respectful of it.

Sprinkled through the hours of drawing, there would be countless chats about food, exercise, children, husbands, travel, pets, properties, gardening, books, plays, movies, and music, and I would attempt to return us to conversations about drawing and art. Like many women from ages past we gave each other advice and like many women from ages past we either argued or took hold of the advice given. These conversations were imperative because in the comfort and beauty of that relational space, friendships were growing and care was being offered. Important and subtle reading between the lines was taking place on another level. When one woman said: “shit” in response to her frustration about trying to draw the shapes and shadows, another told her she would have

to go to confession. When one of the women lost her mother, we were able to care for her not in a superficial way but in a way that did not require words and reflected authentically what she needed from us.

Caregiving for these women is part of their existence. One is caring for an adult daughter who is suffering from a psychological disorder, another is caring for teenagers and young adults, and another was caring for a dying mother and countless pets. The drawing group, as their exclusive space to explore new terrain away from the routines, trials, and anxieties of everyday lives, became vital to them, and I would suggest, an extension of their caring dispositions constitutes a form of love.

Fear: Discoveries and reflections

From the outset, Monique admitted to being afraid of learning to draw and believed that she would never be able to produce anything. She often compared herself to others in the group and sighed heavily when she was frustrated. After attempting to help her through this in the context of this drawing group, I have concluded that it was not possible. She alone must be the one to help her get over any fear in her life and this obstacle cannot be moved by anyone else. At the beginning of each session she would threaten to quit the group and each time I tried to convince her that quitting was not the answer but that "art is all about starting again" (Bayles & Orland, 1993, p. 10). Although she did experience moments of satisfaction and accomplishment, she eventually decided not to return to the group and convinced herself that she cannot and will not be able to learn how to draw. She stayed until the end of 2013 but when the group begins again in the spring of 2014, she will not join. In contrast, Sylvie admitted to being afraid of the

white, blank paper but pushed through and found the confidence to progress to the point where the enjoyment of drawing made her begin to do it on her own. Indeed, many artists are afraid of the white canvas and the materials that fire and awake our imaginations with possibilities. Artists are also fearful of competition and what others think because we live in a world that is viciously competitive and sets hard standards (Bayles & Orland, 1993). Artwork is ordinary work that takes courage to keep doing and "artists learn to proceed, or they don't" (Bayles & Orland, 1993, p. 117). As a teacher in this group, I think that the confidence of the each individual woman played an important role in how they approached, interpreted and confronted their fear.

On the final day of our class, the women brought in a selection of the work they had completed over the course of the twenty-four weeks. Quantity and assortment was up to them. Reviewing the work together in this final critique proved to be invaluable and vital as research data because it was confirmation that everyone's work had improved and this was clearly evident when we looked at each individual's body of work sequentially. Some of the women were impressed by what they had accomplished and this knowledge validated them and gave them a renewed assurance. Others in the group were not as concerned with what they had produced but more concerned with what they had drawn while they were drawing it and therefore had not as many finished pieces to show. The work was not precious to them even to the point that viewing it the following week or during the final critique was not important. They lived in the moment of making and enjoyed the process, which was very fulfilling and satisfying for them. Others were deeply concerned about progress and were very engaged in the final critique.

Monique was not easily convinced of the validity of this exercise and did not want to share her work. In fact, her sense of fear in contributing to the group in this critique was palpable as she attempted to quietly retreat into silence. Eventually, she agreed to show some of her pieces and talked about her process. Viewing the work brought back memories of how she felt after she participated in some of the art-making activities and she was able to share how she had grown in her abilities and knowledge. Although she had gained considerable confidence throughout, her initial feelings of fear returned and she eventually gave up on learning to draw, at least at this stage. All the women had similar experiences and could recall quite vividly how they felt while they worked that day and whether it was difficult or not, but these feelings encouraged them to keep going. Recalling specific techniques, especially the ones that were often repeated, like gesture and contour drawings for example, had become part of their particular method of working. Using the language of art, they could describe and talk about their process, what they excelled at and what needed to be perfected. These women were eager to continue learning to draw.

Analyzing my own drawings — those made in my journal/sketchbook over the course of the drawing sessions and those produced in conjunction with the writing of this thesis — have also offered up essential and critical knowledge in the field of observational drawing and teaching methods. Revealing my own situation as it pertains to notions of meaning in observational drawing has produced knowledge about the relationships between teacher and artist and increased empathy and appreciation for the difficulty of putting what you see down on paper with marks. Visual markings, such as scribbles and coloured lines and symbols, in and around the data collection of transcripts

helped me distinguish the various themes and how they overlapped. The accompanying drawings have been enlightening, giving valuable insight into the work. I could clearly see how some of the women progressed in their abilities and skills in drawing. With confidence, they were able to critique their own work as well as the others' by using the language of art. With conviction and expertise, they began to see the strength of contrast and the subtleties of shadow in drawing. We explored observational drawing by looking for edges, contours, lights, shadows, positive, and negative space, and interpreting what we saw on large sheets of newsprint and bond paper. As they developed their ability to see in order to improve their drawing techniques and skills, they also developed an aesthetic sense by talking about what they saw. In observational drawing, learning to 'see' the objects you are drawing requires a patient hand and eye. The sum of this analysis left me wondering, can the experience of developing a 'good eye' physiologically be transformed into seeing others more emphatically?

Chapter 5: Spaces for reflections and discoveries

My research objective was to investigate how women over 50 develop their drawing skills, personal language, and confidence as visual artists through the medium of drawing in a small group setting. Working with this group of adult women, I made many discoveries about art education within this population and about the relationship between art, love, and fear. Discoveries in the data came from the following sources: 1) the interviews and conversations before, during, and after the classes; 2) drawings by the women; 3) my own journal/sketchbook and drawings produced while writing this thesis, and 4) digital collage produced as a video. My initial research questions evolved into more intricate deliberations as I continued to wonder: Why is it important to create a flourishing community of love and care when teaching something difficult that requires risk-taking? Where does fear come from and how can it be used to teach art? Why is it important to review, revisit, and even rehearse our loves and fears in the context of our own educational backgrounds? Is it possible to teach someone to confront their fears in a space that is a safe group setting through notions of love in teaching and learning? Can experience and skill change perceptions of fear among women adult learners? I assessed how learning new creative skills later in life affects the quality of an individual's contribution to society, and how apprehension about learning a new skill affects others in a group setting. Can the skill of learning to see and draw influence other areas of life—like the ability to develop an aesthetic sense, consequently improving an individual's perspective on her quality of life?

Creating an encouraging, Zen-like, safe, and validating space was an important ingredient in designing a favourable climate for successful learning. Filled with warmth

and care, the physical space was aesthetically pleasing. More important however was the space that was created by the group themselves. Creating a community of love, care, respect, and friendship allowed for a space that had the potential to release the women of their fears and self-consciousness in making art or learning to draw. In this non-judgmental space, the women in the group gave themselves and one another the permission to make mistakes without consequence. Beginning to recognize each other's work as individualized expression in line, tone, and colour, they encouraged and even demanded this growth. As a result, some of the women were able to let go of their self-imposed, societal, and educational bonds of adhering to strict rights and wrongs, and move toward a more generous and unimpeded approach to making art. It was wonderful to see how the group became actively involved with this part of the research, which showed a sense of care in their friendships. They continued to encourage each other even during the critiques, much like they had during the drawing sessions and earlier research interviews.

By viewing and organizing the work during our last session together, I began to see the depth of the relationships between these friends and the subsequent development and growth in their characters and capacities both individually and as a group. Chronological viewing of the work from the beginning to end of our sessions gave renewed energy and even hope to the commitment to drawing on the part of the women. It also offered a wealth of information to the research.

In reflection on this completed work I am renewed in my convictions that developing a creative skill—like drawing—later in life is related to rejuvenation, renewal, and helping an individual overcome fear. However, fear is a complicated

emotion that is closely linked to how insecure one may feel. Although confidence gained in pursuing a creative practice may help an individual gain assurance, it may not be enough to overcome fear, especially if the individual does not work at it. Art is about beginning again and again, and the work required in becoming accomplished involves loving it enough to keep going. As an art educator, I hope that my love of teaching my craft will get caught and transferred to my students in a hospitable way. I want them to develop a love for the visual arts, an understanding that it takes commitment, and an increased joy in seeing the world around them. A hospitable teacher is a good, empathic host who helps their guests see their talents and gifts while continuing to grow in their process with renewed confidence (Nouwen, 1975).

The role of the teacher takes a different approach when teaching adults, becoming a guide and mentor rather than an authority figure. In directing students, the experience of learning becomes an adventure and the students' life experience is equally important to the teacher's knowledge (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). Good teaching especially to adults is a risky business that requires a triangulated autobiographical (Palmer, 1990). The women's stories had been triangulated from many standpoints enriching their learning experiences between subject and self. It also requires courage as a teacher to admit to certain variances like: sometimes a lack of knowledge instead of insight or equipping the group instead of being in control. Teaching this way asks learners and teachers to enter into a space that allows both their respective life expereinces to intertwine as they enter into the learning. Openess, conversation, and colloborative forms of learning are characteristics of the life-long learning model, but how easy is it for the adult learner to let go of their own earlier models of learning, in some cases, where a

nineteenth-century learning environment embedded their education experience? In some ways the new *net generation* of learners reflects this template of life-long learners, where a teacher steps off the stage and converses rather than lectures. Where students are encouraged to discover for themselves and use their own experiences, and where collaboration and individual learning styles are the norm (Tapscott, 2009). As our population ages, there will be more demands on our educational systems and some of the research that is being conducted on young students learning in a digital age has implications for this group too. There are significant parallels here worth exploring; informal learning experiences like this one is the future, rather than classrooms only.

Working with an older population is not without challenges. Limited mobility, forgetfulness, depression, loss, and absences due to illness or travel are just a few of the issues. For example they needed to be reminded several weeks in a row about the difference between gesture and contour drawing. Health was a big topic of conversation and over the course of our time together, we were often reminded of the fragility of life. The richness of remembered stories of early educational experiences were great sources of knowledge and brought to light some of the positive pedagogy but also the ridiculous methods in schools of the past. Associating rulers as the primary tool in art-making seems very odd in light of our post-modern worldview and yet they viewed my digital drawings as unusual and not authentic art.

I envisioned and anticipated using new media in this drawing research project and it was often used for showing images of paintings and drawings for motivation or for demonstration techniques using *YouTube* video clips. I also used it to sketch from time to time but the focus was on tangible materials like paper and drawing tools. Many of the

women in the group were not very computer literate, to the point where even email communication was not the most efficient or effective way to get in touch with them. I see great advantages in using technology in teaching drawing and have begun sketching often on my iPad, so I intend to explore this in future projects. Using digital media introduced a new dynamic to this group and allowed them to see infinite possibilities beyond their scope of education and even technology. They began to see that it was relatively accessible to the point where one of the women wanted me to teach her how to sketch using one of the *iPad* applications.

Using digital media as a research tool allowed the data and images to merge and create a new image, metaphorically it represented all of the relationships, conversations, learning, and images as they blended into one complete object. It was here that I created and designed a short video clip as that seemed to be the most compelling medium. In fact, it seemed to be the only way to make sense of this entire project. Patterns revealed themselves in an abundance of overlapping lines and marks of colour because they fit multiple categories indicating the complexities, amalgamation, and interweaving that occurred. Word and image met and merged into something new — an assembled digital collage assembling the various elements to produce a new image (see fig. 15).

Fig. 15: Petra Zantingh, *Collage.* Digital image, 2013.

Spaces for answers and more questions

This study has left me with more questions, including: Is the ability to "draw well" related to increased emotional awareness and empathy toward others, allowing learners to move towards greater understanding of love and care in teaching and learning? Can the ability to learn to see lights, darks, line, colour, shapes, and shadows in observational drawing translate to a deeper sensitivity and empathy? Because life drawing involves seeing and looking carefully by developing an eye for detail I believe that this life skill can be transferred into other areas, and this was reinforced by the women, particularly with Dinii, Linda, Sylvie, and Hilke who were actively caring in their private lives as well as in the intimate moments of our group. Helping others see beauty in ugliness, is something many artists (Edward Burtynsky, Kathe Kollwitz, or

Rembrandt to name a few) do in their work and if this conveys a certain empathy in the viewer, then how much greater could this be for the student artist in developing empathy, love, and care? Aesthetic qualities of creativity through art practice and especially developing an eye can be nurtured anytime in life, and create an appreciation for not only art but also beauty and light.

I have spent a great deal of time thinking about this study, and I wonder: How has this affected my own practise and influenced my own art-making? How does teaching art affect an artistic practise? How has this study influenced my technological and digital media practice? Coming to the table to participate in art-making is more than just learning a skill. As an artist, it involves training your eyes to see the nuances and subtleties of what is in front of you. As a researcher, it involves slowing down and concentrating on looking, analyzing, making choices and decisions to what is important and what is not. As a teacher, it involves dialoguing with those you are working with and even comparing techniques and results. These skills are transferrable and can be applied to our ability to become more empathic and sensitive.

Creating a community of inquiry and developing art practice skills in drawing became an avenue for friendship, care, and love, and this learning experience did indeed help some of the women overcome their fears. Was it the fact that their confidence in learning a new skill helped them overcome fear, or, was it the fact that they were part of a community of learners that were all engaged in doing the same work? The answer is both, along with a commitment to persevere in the work and an educator who loves her practice. The women grew tremendously in their skill as artists and in their appreciation for the arts and aesthetics. Art was the common denominator in the group and the reason

the women came together in the first place. However, the friendships that developed in the group became the reason to continue, even when the artmaking proved difficult at times. After all, several of the women concluded their interviews by saying it was "time for soup."

Although there is no perfect love on earth, love for others and for the making of art does have the capacity to break down fear.

Petra Zantingh, *Coming to the table*. Oil on 4 panels, 20x20 inches, 2014.

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Appendix 1: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *April 16.* Graphite and watercolour on vellum, 15x12 inches, 2013

Appendix 2: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *April 24.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 3: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *April 25.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 4: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *April 27.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Petra Zantingh, *April 30.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 5: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *Map 6.* Graphite on paper, 14x17 inches, 2013

Petra Zantingh, *May 7.* Graphite and conté on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 6: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *May 2.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 7: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *May 20.* Graphite on paper, 14x17 inches, 2013

Petra Zantingh, *September 11.* Graphite on paper, 17x14 inches, 2013

Appendix 8: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *October 10.* Wash and graphite on vellum, 10x8 inches, 2013

Appendix 9: Thesis drawings

Petra Zantingh, *November 9.* Wash and graphite on vellum, 10x8 inches, 2013

Appendix 10: Journal/sketchbook drawings

Appendix 11: Journal/sketchbook drawings

Appendix 12: Interview questions

Sample Interview Questions:

1. Can you talk about your progress as an artist in the drawing group?
2. Has your scope and knowledge of drawing increased while being part of this group?
3. Can you describe your experiences while drawing in the group?
4. Can you describe your experiences while drawing on your own?
5. Do the artists in this group have anything in common?
6. Why do you want to learn how to draw?
7. Do you feel challenged when you begin a new project?
8. Has your visual awareness increased since you began this drawing class?
9. Are there any reoccurring motifs or themes that enter into your drawing?
10. Can you identify these images in your sketchbook?
11. Can you describe why those specific images are important?
12. How relevant is your age and experience in this group?
13. How important is it to you to continue learning?
14. What is important for the researcher to know about this experience?
15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 13: Lesson 1

MATERIALS:

Sketch book (minimum size 5 X 7)
Bond paper pad (19 X 24)
Newsprint pad (19 X 24)
Charcoal paper (19 X 24)
3 sheets of water colour paper (cold press 140 lb)
Assortment of water-based brushes (various sizes)
Kneaded eraser
Pencils (8B, 6B, 4B, 2B, HB)
Sharpener
Conté
Willow Sticks
Coloured Ink sticks
Drawing board with bulldog clips

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Nicolaides, K (1969). *The natural way to draw*
Edwards, B. *Drawing on the right side of the brain*
Edwards, B. *Drawing on the artist within*
Cameron, J. *The artist's way*
Tharp , T. *The creative habit*

Crumpled paper drawing

1) DRAW THE OVERALL SHAPE AND LIGHTLY SKETCH OR MAP OUT ONE AREA
Take a large sheet of paper and crumple it to create an interesting still life introduction to looking for lights and darks. Shinning a spot light on the paper helps see the shadows more clearly.

1) CONCENTRATE ON ONE AREA
Think about the grey scale and try and find the range of light and darks in the crumpled paper still life

Appendix 14: Lesson 2

Nonverbal ways of expressing line

1) YOUR ESSENTIAL UNIQUENESS
Sign your name in the middle of the sheet, then write it again, think about the interpretation and write in response to that. Try again with your opposite hand

2) UPSIDE DOWN LINE DRAWINGS
Copy the line drawing and then turn it upside down and copy it again. Did you notice a difference when you could not identify what something was, i.e. ear, eye, etc.?

REFERENCES:

Edwards, B. *Drawing on the right side of the brain*
Line drawings from Matiesse, Picasso

Appendix 15: Lesson 3

Left & right brain

1) DRAW THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE VASE AND THEN THE LEFT SIDE

2) INTRODUCTION TO CONTOUR DRAWINGS

- Place your non-dominant hand in a comfortable position and draw the contour of it with your dominant hand
- Blind contour: only look at the object you are drawing and do not take your pencil off the page
- Continuous line drawing: describe both internal and outside edges

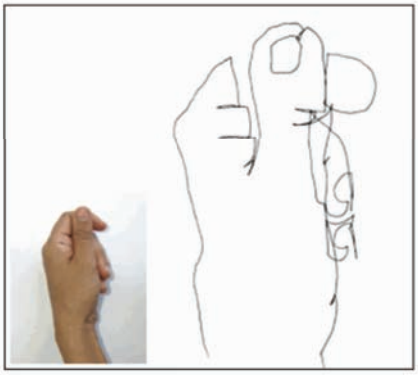
REFERENCES:

Betti, C. ;Sale, T. *Drawing: A contemporary approach*

Edwards, B. *Drawing on the right side of the brain*

ARTISTS:

Kollwitz, Saret, Daumier, Delacroix, Giacometti, Floyd, Johns



Appendix 16: Lesson 4

Drawing the negative spaces

1) CRAZY EIGHT WARM-UP
Repeat lines using a number 'eight' arm and hand motion to create intersecting lines and patterns

2) STILL LIFE OF TWIGS
Try and find the lights and darks in the arrangement of twigs

Appendix 17: Lesson 5

Drawing the negative spaces 2

1) DRAW 3-4 RECTANGULAR BOXES ON PAPER
- Fill each one with a simple tree form and look at the composition of each
- Think about the edges, boundaries, and areas of interest outside of the shape

2) DRAW SMALL OBJECTS THAT HAVE OPENINGS
- Draw a rectangle and then draw or trace an object like a key in the space
- Repeat and pencil in the negative space
- Use black marker to fill in the negative space and place the completed drawing on black paper

ARTISTS: Miro

Appendix 18: Lesson 6

Lights & darks on tar paper

1) DRAWING ON TAR PAPER
Experiment with line, tone, and shape and the response of your drawing tools on the tar paper

2) COPY BLACK AND WHITE FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHS
Using white and grey conté, charcoal, and pencil crayons copy the images on the tar paper

Appendix 19: Lesson 7

Shapes, forms, line, numbers, letters

1) DRAWING WARM-UP
Using the tar paper and various coloured conté, pencils, etc draw and connect the following:

- 1 big circle, 2 squares
- 4 wavy lines, 3 numbers
- 6 letters

2) DRAWING A WHITE SCALE ON THE TAR PAPER

3) DRAW A WHITE STILL LIFE ON THE TAR PAPER

ARTIST: Paul Klee

"Drawing is taking a line for a walk" — P. Klee

Appendix 20: Lesson 8

SPACE FOR DRAWING · FALL 2012/13

LESSON 8

Abstract collage on tar paper

1) CREATE A COLLAGE WITH MAGAZINE CLIPPINGS ON DARK PAPER
2) P.A.R.C. PRINCIPLES:

- Proximity
- Alignment
- Repetition
- Contrast

ARTIST: Hannah Hoch

Appendix 21: Lesson 9

Inside/outside project

1) THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN PERSONAL SYMBOLS
Look for colours, shapes, lines that you often repeat

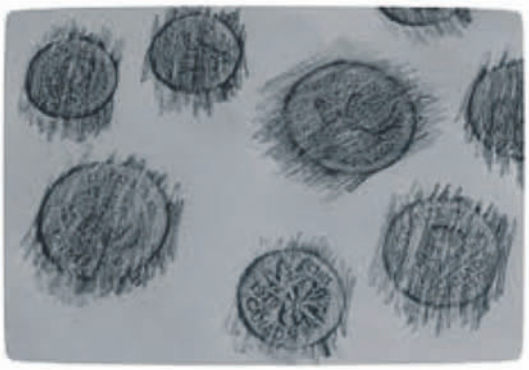
2) CREATE A COLLAGE THAT EXPRESSES YOUR INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SELF
Fold the paper collage in a way that can be opened and closed or reveals bits of both sides

Appendix 22: Lesson 10

Collage rubbings

1) USING STRIPS OF CARDBOARD AND THICK PAPER DESIGN A COLLAGE IMAGE
- Experiment with line, tone, texture, and shape
- Think about repetition and contrast

2) RUBBINGS
- Carefully lay a clean piece of drawing paper on the collage or other interesting flat objects
- Gently rub charcoal and soft pencil over the collage to find edges and marks



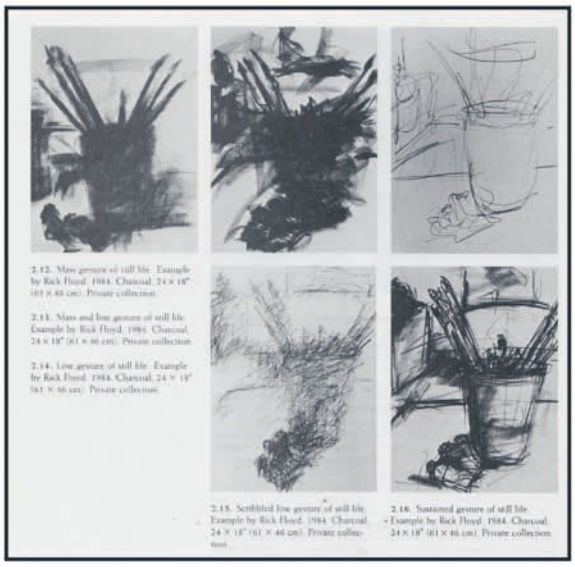
Appendix 23: Lesson 11

Learning to see; Gesture and other Beginnings

1) MASS GESTURE
Use the drawing medium to make broad marks, creating mass rather rather then line. Do not lose contact with the paper. In gesture you are not concerned with what the subject looks like but with its location in space and the relationships between forms. Keep your hand and eyes working together only referring to the drawing occasionally.

2) LINE GESTURE
Like mass gesture, it describes the interior forms, following the movement of your eyes. It uses lines, thick, thin, wide, narrow, heavy or light. Lines are tangled and overlapping, spontaneous and energetic. Drawing tool is kept in constant contact with the paper.

3) MASS AND LINE GESTURE
Combination of both. Define the more important areas with sharp, incisive lines. Indicate the forms as if they were transparent. Try to fill the entire space with what you see. Think about the positive and negative spaces.



2.12. Mass gesture of still life. Example by Rick Floyd. 1984. Charcoal. 24 × 18" (61 × 46 cm). Private collection.

2.13. Mass and line gesture of still life. Example by Rick Floyd. 1984. Charcoal. 24 × 18" (61 × 46 cm). Private collection.

2.14. Line gesture of still life. Example by Rick Floyd. 1984. Charcoal. 24 × 18" (61 × 46 cm). Private collection.

2.15. Scribbled line gesture of still life. Example by Rick Floyd. 1984. Charcoal. 24 × 18" (61 × 46 cm). Private collection.

2.16. Sustained gesture of still life. Example by Rick Floyd. 1984. Charcoal. 24 × 18" (61 × 46 cm). Private collection

4) SCRIBBLED LINE GESTURES
A tighter network of lines. Pens or hard pencils work well. Free-flowing, overlapping

5) SUSTAINED GESTURE EXERCISES
Begins in the same spirt as the above — loose, quick, spontaneous. However, the lines are lighter and used to map out what yo are seeing. Think of this as your under-drawing. The sustained gesture begins to look more like what you are seeing.

Appendix 24: Lesson 12

Learning to see: Unrecognizable sculpture

1) ARRANGE WHITE CARDBOARD SHAPES

2) WARM-UP DRAWING
- Begin with contour drawings, either blind or continuous line
- Gesture drawing

2) SUSTAINED DRAWING
- Draw through the objects to understand space
- Look for value, lights, and darks
- Experiment with various drawing medium

Appendix 25: Lesson 13

Learning to see: Unrecognizable sculpture

1) ARRANGE WHITE DISHES ON A BLACK BACKGROUND IN UNEXPECTED WAYS

2) WARM-UP DRAWING
- Begin with contour drawings, either blind or continuous line
- Gesture drawing

2) SUSTAINED DRAWING
- Draw through the objects to understand space
- Look for value, lights, and darks
- Experiment with various drawing medium

Appendix 26: Lesson 14

Learning to see: Drapery Study

1) Examine the drapery, and break it down into shapes. Find the majour shapes. These shapes include pipe or tube-shaped folds, zig-zag-shaped folds, spiral folds and U shapes. The drapery folds break down into even simpler geometric shapes. Identify the locations, directions and attitudes of these shapes before you begin.

2) Look for the darks and lights and identify these using black paper and the collage method. Tear your paper to add texture. You are simply blocking in the shapes.

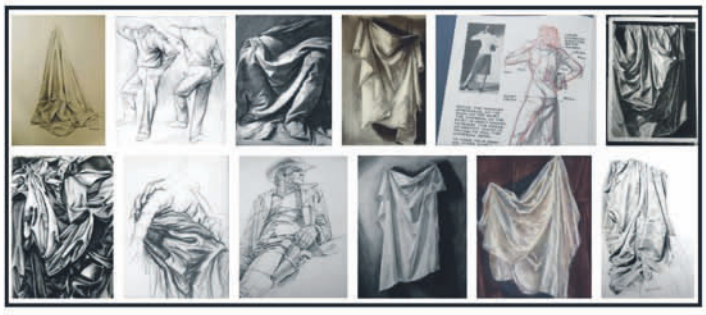
3) Begin again, using brush and ink. You are primarily concerned with the lights and darks but at this point you may begin to add value.

4) Sketch the structure of the drapery still life. Think about what is holding the drapery, human body or furniture for example. Leaving out the underneath structure will make the fabric appear flat. Lightly map out the drapery to guide your drawing.

3) Find the major shapes again.. Use medium pressure to create guidelines that break the drapery down into its major components. Work from least detailed to most detailed. Visualize the drapery as a series of interconnected planes.

4) Create minor shapes. Detail smaller shapes inside the larger planes. Keep them in proportion to the main forms of the drapery.

5) Add the shadows. Drapery shadows tend to form as large, bold shapes. Fill in entire areas of shadow in the folds. Try to maintain strong contrast; this helps imply the form of the drapery. Pay attention to lighting direction.



Improperly shadowed drapery will look out of place. Add midtones. Many drapery drawings use only the shadows and the white of the paper to show form. Place midtones between the highlight and the shadow, and blend them into the shadows.

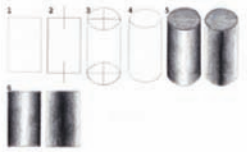
Appendix 27: Lesson 15

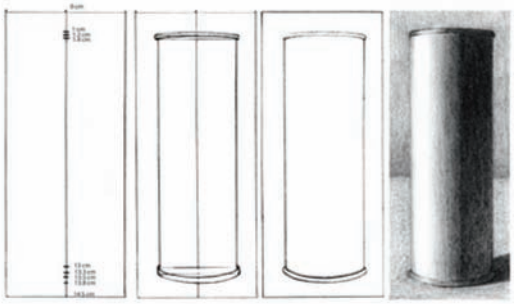
Learning to see: Drawing cylinders

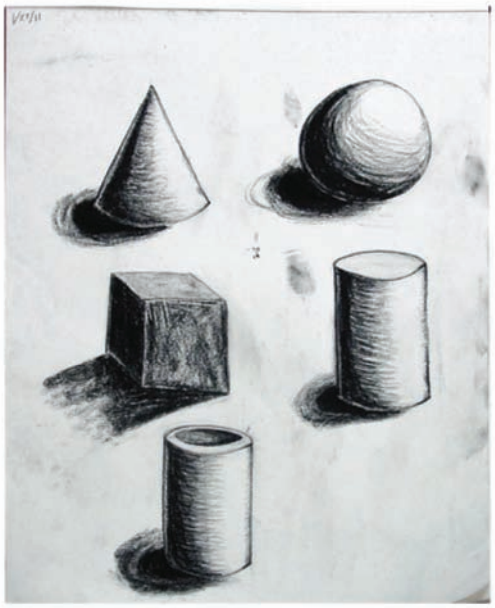
1) ARRANGE A VARIETY OF WHITE CYLINDERS ON A DARK BACKGROUND

2) WARM-UP DRAWING
- Begin with contour drawings, either blind or continuous line
- Gesture drawing

2) SUSTAINED DRAWING
- Show YouTube clips of drawings cylinders
- Draw through the objects to understand space
- Look for value, lights, and darks
- Experiment with various drawing medium







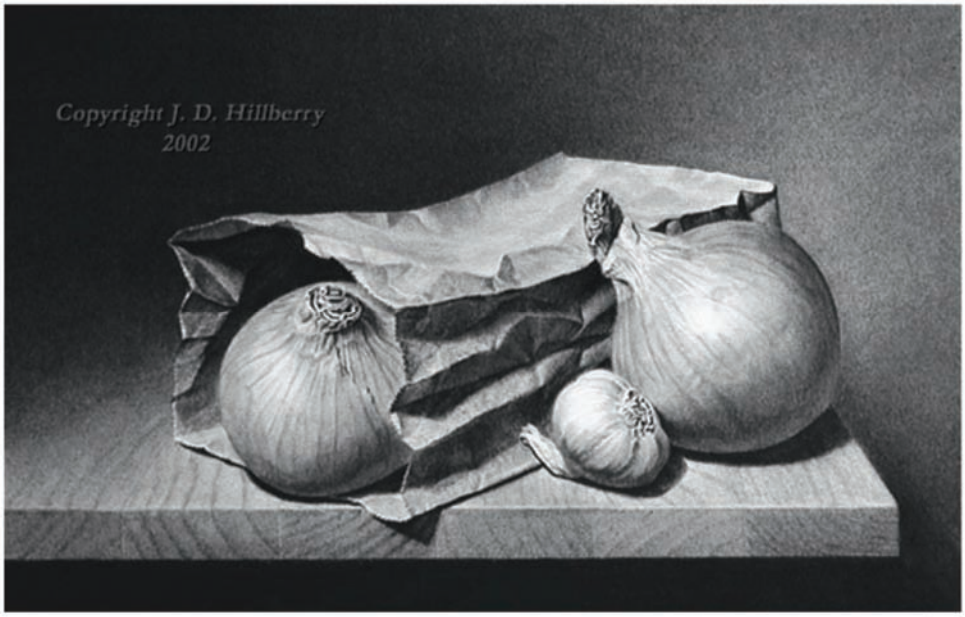
Appendix 28: Lesson 16

Learning to see: Onions on crumpled paper

1) LABELING YOUR STILL-LIFE OBJECTS OR TRYING TO DRAW WHAT YOU SEE?

2) WARM-UP DRAWING
- Begin with contour drawings, either blind or continuous line
- Gesture drawing

2) SUSTAINED DRAWING
- Draw through the objects to understand space
- Look for value, lights, and darks
- Experiment with various drawing medium



Appendix 29: Lesson 17

Learning to see:
Tactile drawing experiment

1) CHOOSE A SMALL SOAP STONE SCULPTURE FROM DINII'S COLLECTION

2) WARM-UP DRAWING
- Begin with contour drawings, either blind or continuous line
- Gesture drawing

2) SUSTAINED DRAWING
- Use a combination of pencils
- Close your eyes and try and draw the object by feeling it
- The aim is to create a direct line of communication between your two hands
- Touch the object with one hand and respond with pencil on paper with the other
- Interesting marks are made, don't worry about how it looks

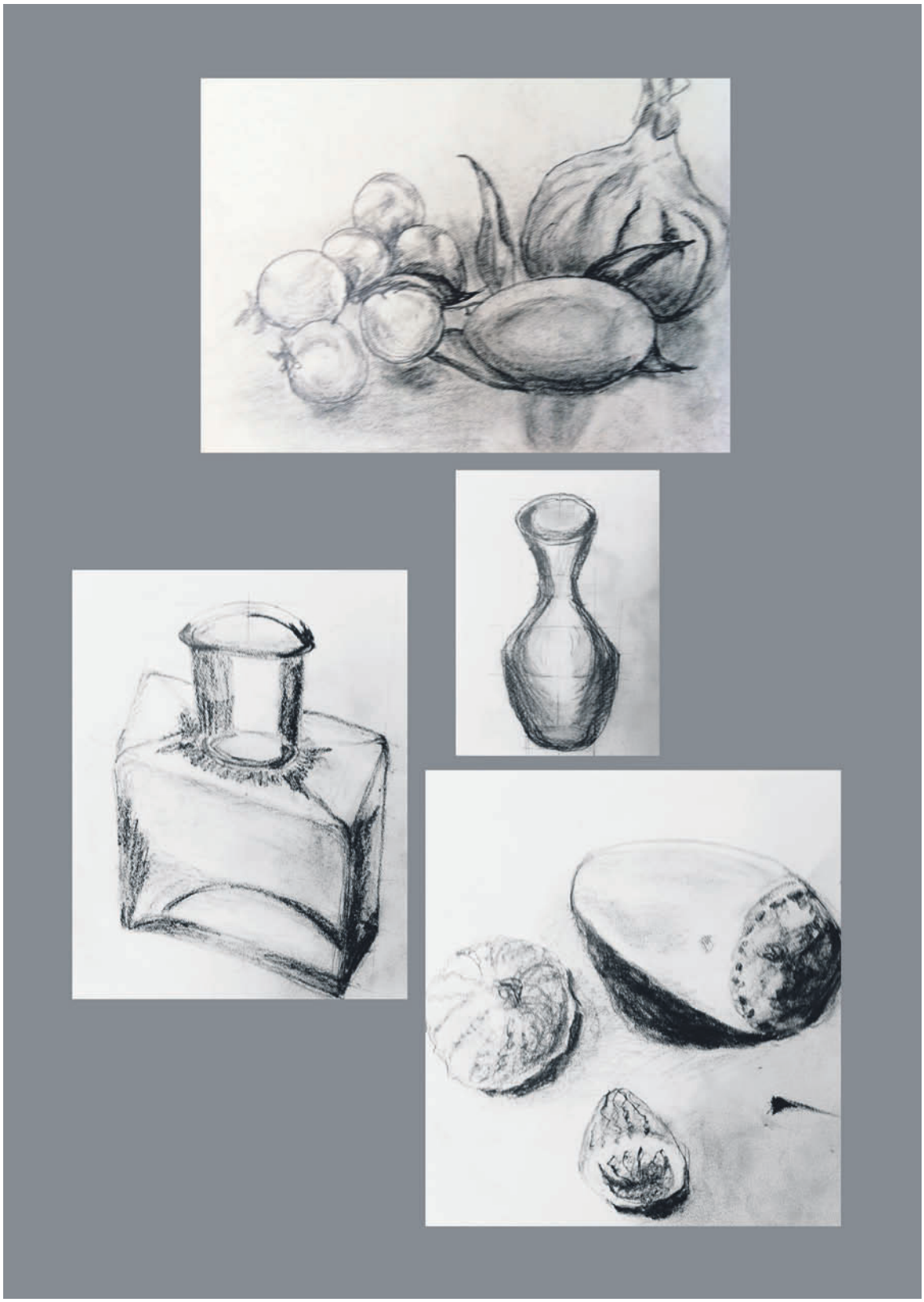
Appendix 30: Dinii's's drawings

Appendix 31: Linda's drawings

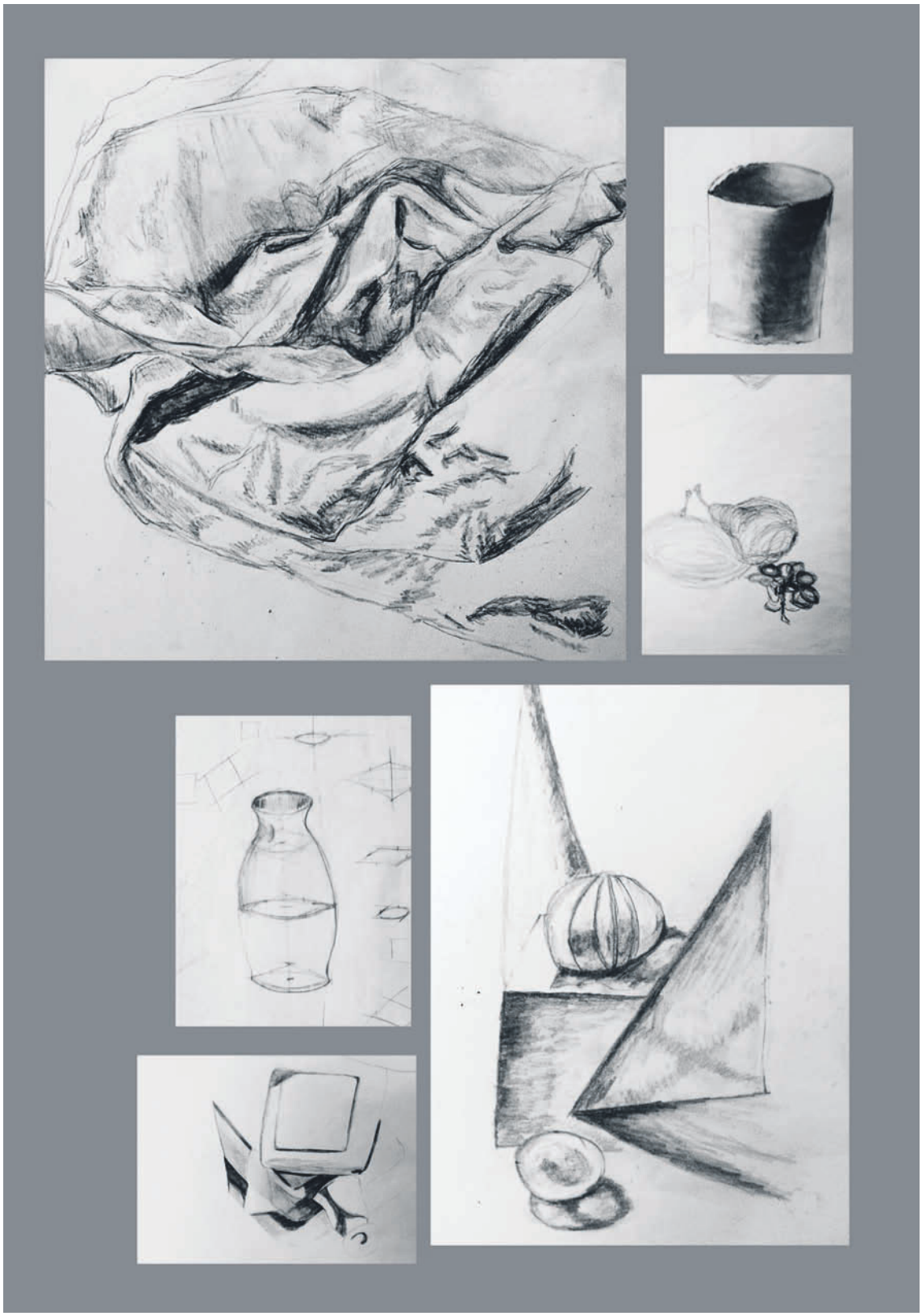
Appendix 32: Sylvie's drawings

Appendix 33: Monique's drawings

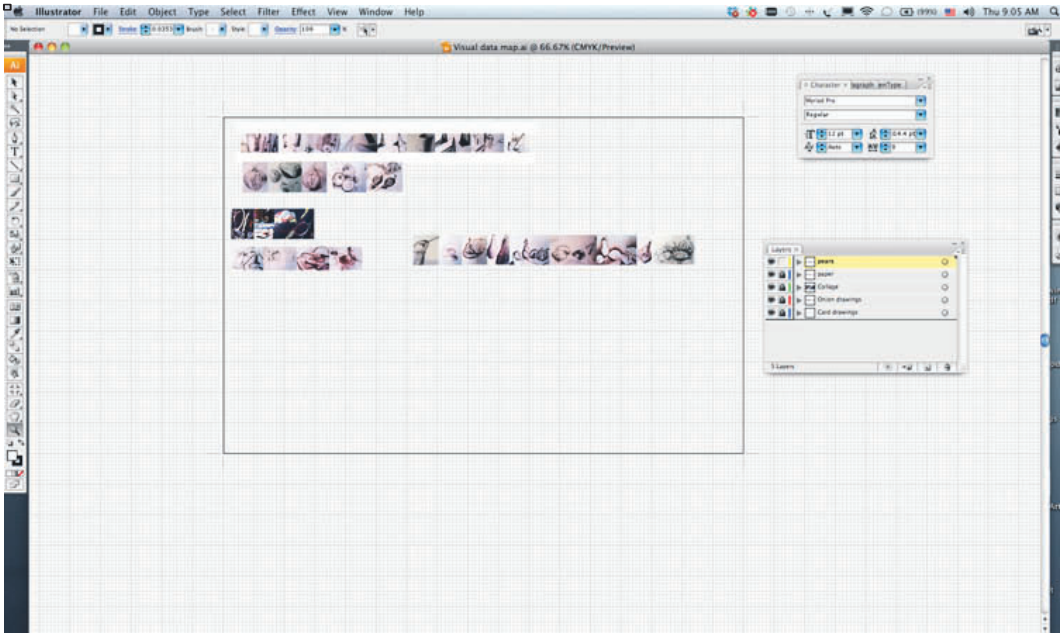
Appendix 34: Hilke's drawings

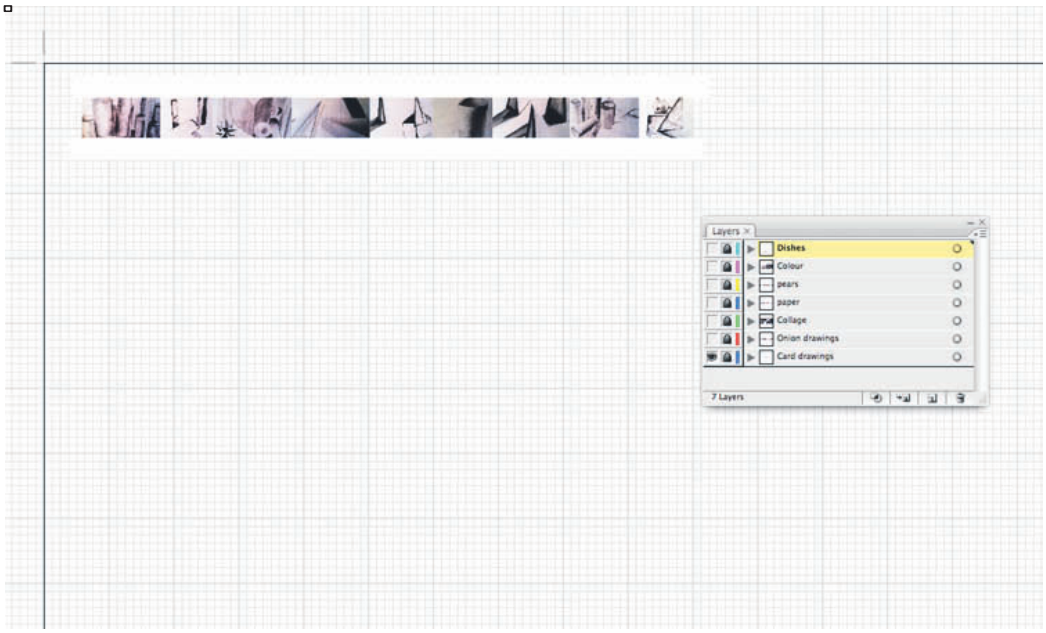


Appendix 35: Trudi's drawings

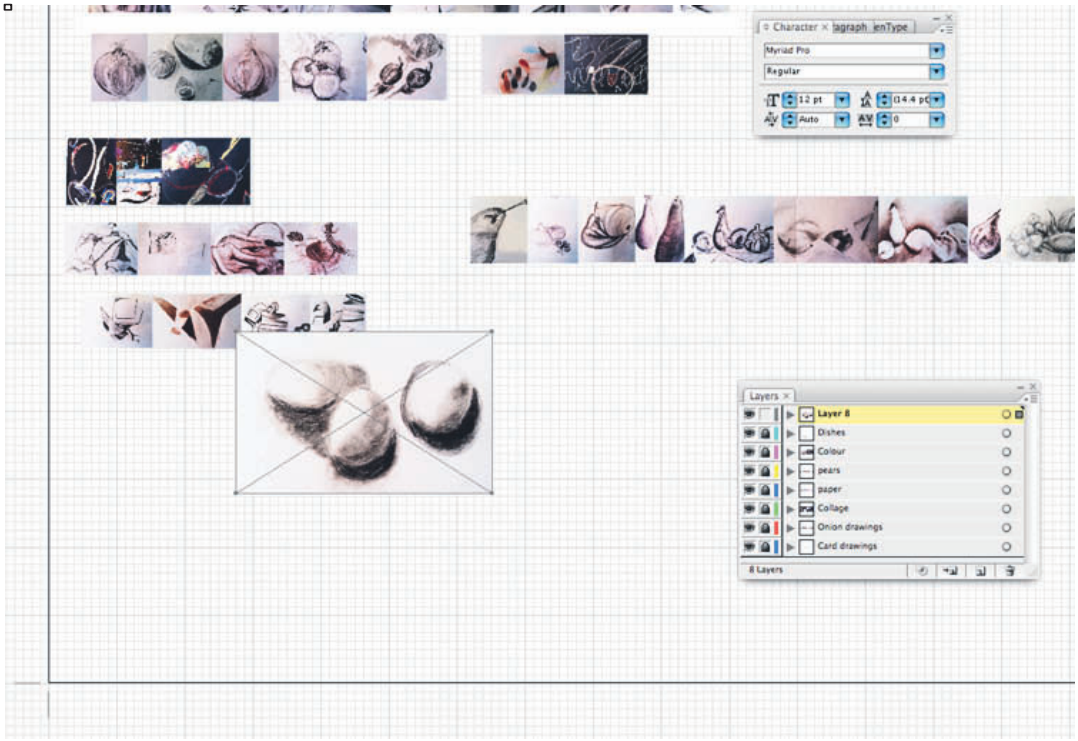


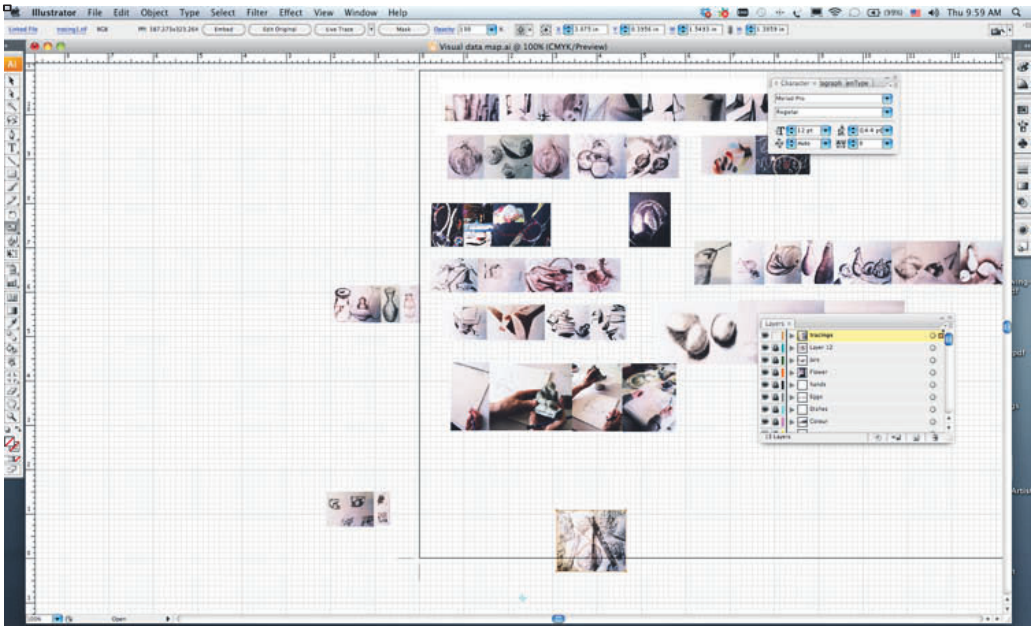
Appendix 36: Digital Map



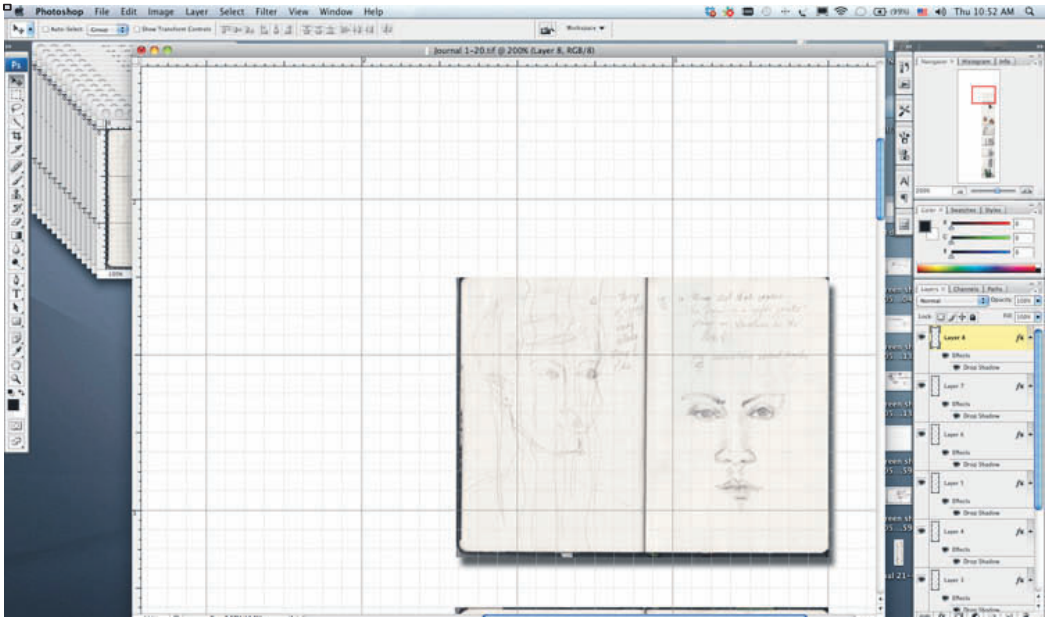


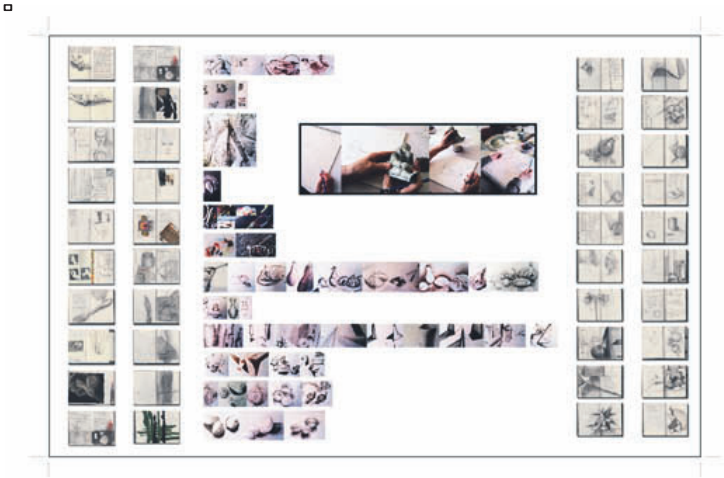
Appendix 37: Digital Map

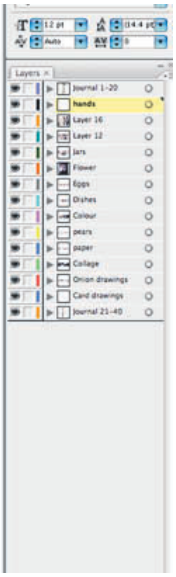




Appendix 38: Digital Map







Appendix 39: Data Collage

Appendix 40: Video links

Space for drawing

https://vimeo.com/74288717