Collaboration in the Studio Art Classroom: Making Meaning Together

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A Thesis

In the Department

of

Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Art Education) at Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

June 2024

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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By: *Stacey Elizabeth Cann*

Entitled: Collaboration in the Studio Art Classroom: Making Meaning Together

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (*Art Education*)

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Abstract

Collaboration in the Studio Art Classroom: Making Meaning Together

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Concordia University, 2024

Collaboration in the studio art classroom is an amalgamation of students, materials, ideas, and skills. This assemblage of human and non-human factors can create unique pedagogical experiences for students. It can also create a support network that helps students in their early careers as artists and art educators. The idea of the artist as a lone genius persists from modernism even though many galleries, biennials, and art fairs have embraced collaboration as a way of art making. The lone artist, working away in the studio on the next masterwork is dispelled by other artist periods and movements, where we see other ways of working such as the apprentice and master model, or more artist collectives and groups where ideas are interchanged, such as Dada, or the Bauhaus.

In this study we look at the experiences of students, professional artists, and post-secondary instructors who utilize collaboration. Using these experiences, the study outlines an orientation towards collaboration that can help instructors plan collaborative assignments in their class. This study uses both phenomenology and Actor Network Theory to describe the experiences of participants. Phenomenology allows for deep description of the experiences of participants, however, it does not fully account for the agency of non-human actants and privileges the subject. Therefore, Actor Network Theory has been utilized to account for these non-human factors while still privileging the experience of the participant. This was done through an interview process where participants recounted their experiences privileging both their relationship with their collaborators as well as with materials and technologies that they

used to collaborate.

These interviews overlapped in many ways and three major categories helped organize the experiences of the students, artists, and instructors. They were 'flexibility' and 'openness', 'structure and process, and 'community and relationships'. Flexibility and openness described the participants relationships to each other, as well as the materials that they used. Structure and process helped participants navigate the exchange of ideas that is necessary for collaboration without becoming fixed on the end result. Finally, community and relationships were the overarching frame and ethos that allowed for collaboration.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Juan Carlos Castro, as well as my committee members, Dr. David Morris and Dr. Vivek Venkatesh, Dr. Jessie Beier, and Dr. Michael Emme for their thoughtful consideration of this text.

I would also like to thank my participants, without whom I would have been unable to do this research. Your thoughts and time were critical for this research to take place.

Finally, I would like to thank all my collaborators, past and present, for inspiring this research. In particular, The Bureau of Noncompetitive Research: Victoria Stanton, José Cortés, Daniel Fiset, and Pauline Lomami, who have been collaborating with me throughout this process and have been an invaluable support system both academically and artistically.

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1. Introduction

It was early in the morning on a Saturday, and I was heading to the gym with my friend and training partner. We were going to do a bike and running workout, which neither of us were particularly looking forward to at 8am but we each pushed each other to make sure that we were there working hard. Later in the summer, we would be competing against each other in several races. I started to wonder about how it was possible, that we could work together, to push each other to work as hard as possible, knowing that we would also be trying to beat each other on the course.

This experience had me thinking about what it might mean to collaborate in a highly competitive environment, in this case triathlon, but also in another part of my life, the artworld. It has been my experience as an artist that despite the highly competitive nature of being a professional artist, artists were highly supportive of one another, and that in collaboration they often made work that was beyond the capabilities of either individual. Although there have been some high-profile collaborative breakdowns, for example Marina Abramovic and Ulay, many collaborations are sustained over long periods of time. Collaboration in high pressure environments can also cause preconceived unevenness if the work is not divided equally or if one person is recognized over the others. This has been true in some artworld example, with artists only later acknowledging their collaborations, but I was interested in how this would unfold in the classroom. Like all modes of doing, it involves skills and aptitudes that need to be developed. It is these skills and aptitudes that I am interested in exploring with this research. First of all, what are these skills? Secondly, can we help our students build skills in these areas?

This research foregrounds the experiences of artists and students while creating collaborative artistic works, as well as the experiences of instructors in higher education who are

teaching collaborative projects in their classrooms. The purpose of this research is to highlight

potential experiences of collaboration so that instructors can create collaborative projects that

support students' learning while engaged in collaborative projects, rather than unstructured

group work projects that can occur when guidance is not given. Collaboration could build a peer

support structure for learning in the classroom as well as create relationships that can help

support students after graduation. These experiences might also introduce students to

perspectives outside of those of their friends and instructors, especially in heterogenous

classrooms. Several of the students interviewed were reluctant to take on a collaborative project

due to past negative experiences with collaboration, so how can instructors build projects that

facilitate peer learning while avoiding unnecessary conflict (rather than productive conflict

which can also happen during collaboration)? Without understanding how artists and students

experience collaboration it is difficult for instructors to best support the collaborative process.

The interviews undertaken in this research lead to three major themes: Flexibility and openness,

structure and process, and community and relationships. These themes can guide instructors'

thoughts while creating resources and lessons for students in their classrooms.

1.1 Background/ Positionality

Over the last 15 years I have been working as an artist, with exhibitions throughout

Canada and in the United States. Over the last 10 years collaboration has become a more

important part of my practice, and I have worked with many different artists and designers on a

variety of works. Prior to working collaboratively on artwork, I organized critique groups at

colleagues' studios, and other informal ways to work together and get feedback from peers. I

also worked on the education team at a mid-sized provincial art gallery, and therefore had near

daily interactions with other artists. As my art practice grew, I came into contact with artists

who

shared interests and ways of working with me, and I began to collaborate more regularly. These experiences have allowed me to build a network of artists who I not only create work with but have found support in other professional and personal parts of my life. Because artistic work is often both very personal and involves a lot of rejection (there are low acceptance rate for both gallery submission and grant applications), creating a network of peers that understand the particularities of being an artist has been an important aspect of my continued ability to create artwork in a professional context. Saying this, I also maintain an individual practice separate from my collaborative one. I see these practices as complimentary, and each helps me become a more successful artist.

Collaborative projects, for me, have been a learning experience, with early collaborative projects often causing frustration due to lack of communication, or differing expectations for the project. Over time, I grew to realize that my communication style was a major part of this frustration, and that being clear about my expectation for the project, as well as the division of the workload was key to be able to continue working collaboratively for me. This type of communication is a valuable practice that also impacted other aspects of my professional life, including my work as a gallerist and art educator. I wondered if there were other artistic skills that could be learned through collaboration, and whether or not these experiences would be the same, or different from other artists. I was curious as to whether the ideas of the lone genius artist, which I had been reading about (discussed further in Chapter 2), affected the way that my students viewed creativity and working together. Although some of my colleagues also worked collaboratively, the majority did not, leading me to wonder about why this might be. What are the benefits and drawbacks of working collaboratively? And are they the same in professional life as they are in a classroom?

Throughout my career I have also worked in art galleries, and due to this I have had the chance to help artists mount their exhibitions, this also gave me insight into how many different artists in different stages of their careers work. In this role I saw how emerging artists struggled to establish themselves in a career that involves a lot of rejection and can be precarious financially. This led me to think about ways that we might encourage emerging artists during a difficult time in their careers. My own experiences of collaborative work in my early career came to mind, and I wondered if the professional networks built through collaboration had a positive effect of early career artists.

Thinking about collaboration as a way that we can support artists in their early careers and help them to create a support network outside of the university system for when they graduate, I began to study collaborative practices. Do these practices make them resilient to the rejection that they will face, both from granting bodies and exhibitions. Unlike many professions, artists must be both good at their crafts as well as be businesspeople from the beginning of their careers. Typically (although there are cases where they do) artists do not work as studio assistants to other artists prior to developing their own careers, they figure out the business aspects of being an artist from what they learned in school and on the fly. The business aspects of being an artist adds to the difficulties of maintaining an artistic career early on, navigating art creation, grant applications, exhibition applications, bookkeeping and other tasks. Creating a network of other artists can help both in practical (how do I do this) and emotional (I got rejected again) support.

Having completed a BFA in studio arts at Alberta College of Art and Design (now Alberta University of the Arts) and a MA in Art Education at Concordia University, I was interested in how we educate professional artists. Whether taught within the university, college

or art school context what skills and knowledge do artists need to be successful as professionals. Beyond technical skills such as how to apply paint to canvas, what do we need to be teaching students for them to be professional artists? As a PhD candidate at Concordia University, I taught a course called Professional Practices for Art Educators, and in this role, I had to consider what it means to be a professional artist and art educator, and what skills and dispositions students need to get there. How do my experiences of being an artist who works collaboratively, and also has an individual practice affect the way that I interact with my students in this class, and the syllabus that I create?

As a researcher, I view this work as collaborative, with my participants helping me to better understand how collaborative practice affects my artistic and academic (both teaching and research) life. By seeing my own practices as converging or diverging with those of the participants, I was better able to understand how collaboration is experienced. Although there are unshared aspects within the experience of collaboration, understanding the communalities of how different participants experienced it allowed me to better understand how to support this process.

1.2 Rationale

As a professional artist who has worked and continues to work collaboratively, I am often intrigued by the variety of styles and approaches artists have to collaboration. Collaboration draws on skills that are not often actively taught within art school (or a BFA program), this led me to wonder both how artists and art students learn within collaboration, and what is it that they actually learn, if anything. Are there shared experiences of collaboration across projects, or does each project and collaboration have its own set of unique characteristics?

There is an extremely low rate of continuation within the visual arts after graduation with a BFA, with most students finding employment in an unrelated field (BFAMFAPHD, 2014). Professional artists require a wide range of skills and support to be successful. Visual arts, much like academia, also involves a significant amount of rejection, whether from exhibition proposals or grants. This can be especially difficult for early career artists who also no longer have the support structures that existed within the university. Unlike other artistic professions like dance or theatre, visual arts are often solitary, with significant time spent alone in the studio. Students who were used to having shared studio spaces and feedback from their peers and instructors can feel isolated after graduation. Building the skills to collaborate with others and a peer support system prior to graduation could help students through their early careers. It also utilizes the skills and competencies of each student and allows them to learn from each other, rather than just the instructor.

1.3 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore collaborative work as a way for students to learn from each other and build support systems for their careers. Learning different ways of doing and knowing from each other expands their understanding of how artworks are created. Modernism has held up the ideals of the individual artist working alone in their studio (Woodmansee, 1994); however, this stereotype does not accurately depict the ways that contemporary artists work (and probably did not accurately describe Modernism either) (LeFevre, 1987). Grover (2016) described the artist as one part of a complex web of art making, that included the people who made the materials, and the conversations that helped develop the ideas.

As an artist and instructor, I am interested in how to support my students in their transition from student to artist. This involves teaching them some practical skills, but also dispositions that will help them integrate new ways of thinking and doing. These dispositions will help them acquire new skills moving forward, openness to new ideas is key to continuous learning as well as collaboration.

This research asks how collaboration brings together the collaborators, materials, and other factors to facilitate collaboration, and what do the human entities learn from this process? It is this web of creating that is being investigated described in this thesis.

1.4 Statement of Problem

The research on collaboration and cooperation in the arts and education is relatively limited. Beyond examples of projects that include collaboration there is limited scholarship that deals with the potential outcomes of, or frameworks for developing collaborations between students.

The lack of scholarship could be for various reasons, but the prevalent idea of artists as the lone genius is likely an important factor, as well as a reason that collaboration is not highly valued within the academy or artist institutions (Russell et al, 1998). Although collaboration is considered a 21st century skill (Trilling et al, 2009) the frameworks for teaching collaboration, as well as the skills needed for students to be successful are not explored thoroughly in the literature. Although there are more resources in areas like theatre, and dance, these forms have traditionally had a more hierarchical structure (director, producer, actor, dancer for example) and therefore a built-in collaborative framework. Therefore, this thesis looks specifically at visual arts.

Could stronger social connections through collaboration help build the skills, both artistically and professionally, necessary to create resilience within the artistic profession? If so,

how do we teach students to nurture successful collaborative practices? What are the features of successful and unsuccessful collaborations?

Using a phenomenological methodology, this thesis will describe collaboration within the undergraduate fine art classroom, as well as within professional artistic practice and create an orientation for pedagogical practices, and possible learning outcomes from collaboration within and beyond academia. The goal of this orientation is to support students through the transition between the academy and early career.

1.5 Research Questions

- How do students' experience collaboration in the classroom? What conditions do they describe when they are in a successful collaboration/ failed collaboration?
- What intersubjective and material conditions are described in collaboration?
- How does the experience of making an artwork affect the relationship between students? How do students experience difference within collaboration?
- What instructor experiences prevent collaboration from being implemented in the undergraduate classroom?

1.6 Context and Specificities

This study takes place in the Canadian context of higher education. All the artists, instructors, and students that were interviewed are currently living and working in Canada, and all have worked predominantly in a North American context. Some of the particularities of the educational and artist systems may not apply to other countries, such as the granting systems and methods and philosophies of education. However, the goal of this research is not generalizability but rather to highlight the particularities of the experiences of teaching and learning through collaboration in the instances described. These experiences can help us to understand how

collaboration might work for different individuals but are not intended to encompass all possible experiences of collaboration. Due to self-selection participants were likely to be higher achieving students, this was somewhat mitigated by having students initially express interest in participation prior to the project commencing. Regardless of this, there was a diversity of participants (given the small number of participants) those who identified as men (2) and women (6), BIPOC (3) and immigrant or first-generation Canadians (2).

1.7 Efficiency in Collaboration

Capitalism has an important effect on the way we view collaboration, and in many corporate situations' collaboration is encouraged due to its perceived benefits of maximising efficiency (Batt and Purchase, 2004; Schrage 1990; Thomson and Perry, 2006). In some cases, in education or the arts higher efficiency may be a by-product of collaboration, however, this should not be the goal within the educational setting. Rather than a focus on efficiency within the classroom the focus should be on learning outcomes, as well as understanding and acknowledging a variety of experiences and working methods within the arts. Collaboration and considering multiple viewpoints may in fact slow down the process of learning within the classroom rather than making it more efficient.

1.8 Definitions

1.8.1 Collaboration

For the purpose of this research collaboration has been defined broadly, rather than narrowly as two or more people working together towards a common goal. This is to capture a wider range of experiences that the artists, students or instructors identified as collaboration. Rather than overly defining collaboration, letting the experiences of the artists and students help

to specify what is and is not collaboration. This is however different from the literature on

cooperation, in which students work together towards individual goals, an example of this might

be giving peer feedback on an artwork, or brainstorming ideas together for individual projects.

Although they can be valuable activities for students, they are not the focus of this research.

1.8.2 Artist

An artist is defined using the Canada Council for the Arts definition:

An artist who:

- has specialized training in the artistic field (not necessarily in

  academic institutions)

- is recognized as a professional by his or her peers (artists working in the

  same artistic tradition)

- is committed to devoting more time to artistic activity, if possible, financially

- has a history of public presentation or publication.

Canada Council for the Arts (n.d. para. 1)

This definition applies to both artists who were interviewed for this study, and also is

considered when thinking about professional skills that student-artists may need in their careers.

This definition was used because it is broad enough to encompass many practices, but also gives

clear guidelines that separate a hobbyist artist from a professional.

1.8.3 Post-Secondary

This study focused on the post-secondary studio arts classroom. This was defined as an

art school, college or university classroom where art making occurred (rather than a theoretical

class) and both studio art and art education classes where making was the focus were described

in this study. In both cases preparing students for work as a professional artist was a goal of the program, and art making was a key component of that. Instructors also came from a range of institutions and were both part-time and tenured. This was important because of the remuneration and time differences between part-time and tenured faculty, and the potential time commitments that a collaborative project may take. This time commitment is also a consideration necessary for faculty who wish to include collaborative projects within their classes.

1.9 Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into 7 chapters: the introduction, review of literature, methodology and theoretical framework, research design, data analysis, findings and conclusion.

The review of literature explores the definition of collaboration, including the differences between collaboration and cooperation, the importance of collaboration, and power dynamics within collaboration. Then it looks at the literature regarding the value of collaboration in the fine art classroom, the historical roots of collaboration in fine art teaching and learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the role of the mythos of the lone genius in fine arts.

The next chapter will then look at the literature in phenomenology that led to the methodology used in this research as well as the theoretical underpinnings of actor-network theory. This review allows us to understand the research already undertaken in this area.

Chapter 4 is the research design chapter, in this chapter both phenomenology and actor-network theory will be discussed. In this research phenomenology will be used as the methodology, with the research building on the experience of the participants, rather than trying to fit these experiences into a theory. Actor-network theory will be used as a theoretical framework, primarily due to its consideration of non-human actants as important. Within artistic

creation it is also important to think about how materials affect the way that the collaborator's interact.

Chapter 5 is data analysis, which covers how the research was undertaken. This section looks at the data from the researcher, instructors, artists and students. In Chapter 6, findings, the data from chapter 5 will be organized into 3 sections, flexibility and openness, structure and process, and community and relationships. These themes will help show the similarities and contrasts of experiences of collaboration between the students, artists and instructors.

In chapter 7, the conclusion, we will look at ways that these findings might orient the way that we structure, introduce, and guide collaborative projects within the university classroom. It will also explore how we might think about collaboration as professional development for student-artists and how it could create support structures for early career artists. We will also look at the obstacles for including collaborative projects in the studio arts classroom, both for the instructor and the students. Finally, further directions for this research will be discussed.

In the following chapter we will expand on the definitions of collaboration given in the literature, explore how power dynamics might be at play, and look at the literature on methodology and Actor-Network Theory.

2. Review of Literature

This chapter will discuss how the literature review was conducted, then look at how the literature defines collaboration, explore the history of art education and how those practices, as well as the modernist idea of the lone genius artist have affected the way that we view collaboration in classrooms. The way that we understand empathy and its role in phenomenology also affects the way that collaboration is framed in this study. The chapter will also explore the literature on Actor Network Theory (ANT) focusing on how it is used to account for non-human actants in collaboration. Finally, we will look at the scholarship of teaching and learning and how they frame teaching and collaboration in the classroom.

The research on collaboration and cooperation in the visual arts and education is relatively limited. Beyond examples of projects that include collaboration there is limited scholarship that deals with the potential outcomes of, or frameworks for developing collaborations between students. For the purpose of this dissertation, collaboration will be defined as two or more people actively working together towards a shared goal. Due to limited research on the subject, frameworks have also been pulled from philosophy, research methodology, art history and other areas to develop a conceptual framework for the practice of collaboration in the visual art classroom generally, in particular the art classroom.

The myth of the artist as the lone genius may help explain the lack of scholarship on collaboration and why it is not highly valued within the academy or artist institutions that exhibit visual arts (Russell et al, 1998). The idea of the lone genius became prominent with the invention of the copyright system (Woodmansee, 1994), and remains an important myth within the arts and academy to this day. This will be further discussed later. In my opinion this is a myth which, at least partially stifles collaboration. O'Neil (2016) notes that in individualist and competitive environments collaboration is less likely to occur.

2.1 Methods

      "Collaboration" and "visual arts" were used as search terms in the Concordia Library database. This literature review uses Mathieu Templier and Guy Pare's process which is: formulating the problem, searching the literature, which includes screening for relevance, accessing quality and synthesizing the data (2015). Through this process I was able to find the relevant texts of collaboration in visual arts. Once the initial articles and books were found, the bibliography was carefully examined to find other resources on the topic of collaboration. The search was expanded to include terms like cooperation, which yielded different, yet complimentary results. Finally, research on collaboration in other areas, particularly business, was read. This allowed for a wide scope and breadth of research to be considered, as well as works that were outside of the original Boolean search terms. The breadth of the search was also expanded due to the limited quantity of results using the original terms.

2.2 Defining Collaboration

      Collaboration exists on a spectrum of activity that ranges from brainstorming together to making all decisions regarding a project through consensus with others. This is discussed by O'Meara and MacKenzie (1998) who describe two types of collaboration hierarchical and dialogic with subsections such as resonators and melding which encompass a wide range of activities. This range of activity makes it difficult to discuss collaboration as people have differing ideas of what it is. In this research instructors, artists, and students enacted the entire range of this spectrum within their practices, from making two separate artworks on the same theme, to making all artistic decisions together. Here I will look at the literature and explore the nuances of what may be considered collaboration and how I am using it in this research.

2.2.1 Cooperation versus Collaboration

We are not collaborating every time we work with others, despite a relatively broad definition of collaboration there must be a shared desired outcome (Thomson & Perry, 2006), which is not always the case when working with others. There are significant differences between cooperative and collaborative work. Communities of Practice (CoPs) have been researched within the classroom, as well as the studio classroom. According to Wenger (1999), CoPs are groups of people who create a practice together through negotiation of membership and the terms of the practice. Wenger (1999) suggested that these communities are constantly changing as new members join and others leave, as they are affected by the identities of their membership. These identities are shaped through multi memberships and boundary identities (Wenger, 1999) which can span multiple CoPs. Members of CoPs learn from each other through both formal and informal practices. This theory positions learning as a social practice, but its participants do not necessarily share goals.

Although this places an emphasis on learning collectively it does not necessitate collaboration. There is a difference between cooperation, a non-competitive learning environment, and collaboration, working together to make something collectively. The common goal in collaboration is a key feature of this way of working. This is often built through dialogue with collaborators. This distinction may seem pedantic, however, the learning outcomes of working with someone who has different ideas and experiences than you are vital to collaboration, this cannot be accomplished from putting together work done separately. Thus, doing together is an important part of the process and involves a dialogue between collaborators. The goals of the project must be determined together, through a shared understanding of the process of making. This takes both openness and time.

Whereas the communities of practice learn from each other, through shared norms and practices, collaboration involves a deeper commitment to a shared goal.

2.2.2 Importance of Collaboration

Michael Schrage in *Shared Minds: The New Technologies of Collaboration* (1990) explored the importance of collaboration in a culture that values individual over group contributions. Schrage suggested that collaboration is a way to create new understandings of the world and can be undertaken to solve many different types of tasks using compatible or divergent skill sets. Tools can create values and many tools are not created with collaboration in mind. Schrage argued that language, and communication, are the most important tools in collaboration and that collaborators must create a shared language to communicate. Although this is an important part of collaboration, I believe that we cannot set aside the material factors present in visual art collaboration and their role within it.

Al Hurwitz suggested in "Collaboration in Art Education" (1993) that collaboration involves a great deal of trust and has a socializing value. He focused on process over product and allowed students to think together. Hurwitz argued that group art should be encouraged as well as interdisciplinarity and the use of new technology. Hurwitz outlines artists/scholars such as Lucy Lippard, Suzi Gablik and Gregoire Muller to support his opinion. These artists/scholars emphasize social relations as an integral part of their artistic practices and the relationships themselves become an important part of the work. They emphasize a form of relational practices that is collaborative and built from beginning to end with the community. The focus on process, both verbal and non-verbal is an important part of collaboration in the classroom setting.

Laura Bronstein in "A Model for Interdisciplinary Collaboration" (2003) focused on collaboration within the context of social work, but her ideas can be applied to other interdisciplinary collaborations. According to Bronstein there are five core components of successful interdisciplinary collaboration, interdependence, newly created professional activities, flexibility, collective ownership of goals, and reflection on practice. Interdependence is a reliance on interactions where each is dependent on the other. Newly created professional

activities are acts, programs, and structures that maximise expertise and could not be createdindependently. Flexibility in roles and reaching compromise is also key, this creates less hierarchical relationships. Collective ownership of goals through shared responsibility of the entire process. Reflection on the process refers to paying attention to the process of working together and incorporating feedback into that process. Bronstein also identifies four aids or barriers to collaboration. Professional roles and their socialisation, structural characteristics (such as human and physical resources), personal characteristics (the personalities of those involved and the trust between them) and a history of collaboration. Finally, Bronstein concludes that one must create and foster a culture of collaboration intentionally.

2.2.3 Power within Collaboration

If we are truly working collaboratively many factors are at play. One must consider power within collaborative practices intersectionally. It is highly unlikely (and not necessarily beneficial) that collaborative partners will have the same background and the same amounts of systemic and personal power. This can lead to uneven power dynamics, which can become more complex within larger collaborations of more than two people.

Ann Leiby and Leslie Henson in "Common Ground, Difficult Terrain: Confronting Difference through Feminist Collaboration" (1998) suggested using feminist collaboration as a starting point to consider power dynamics. The authors wrote about how their subjectivities change the power dynamic, not only between each other, but also in the classroom and how they and students can learn to acknowledge how their personalities and experiences affect their outlooks. They suggested that we must engage with our own resistance to difference. They also acknowledged that the academy is hostile towards collaboration as it privileges a male centered notion of authority and individuality.

Within classroom collaboration there will always be unequal power between the instructor and students, but it is also important to acknowledge that there can also be a power imbalance between students due to factors such as age, race, socioeconomic status, and gender, these differences should not be ignored during collaboration.

2.3 The Value of Collaboration in the Visual Arts Classroom

Collaborative practices have been viewed differently by the art world over time, from the atelier system which was highly collaborative to the "lone genius" of the modernist studio there has been a range of practices that have included or excluded collaboration. In the atelier system, apprentices worked with master artists to learn from them, and develop the skills they needed to become masters themselves, this was done through collective making and working together on larger pieces. In modernism however, the idea of the individual artist alone in a studio without outside influence became more prevalent, which presents a different story of how art is created. The next sections explore how collaboration has taken place within teaching institutions over time.

2.3.1 Collaboration Within Visual Art Teaching and Art Education

Through most of visual arts education in the West, artists were taught within a guild, or apprenticeship system, this eventually gave way to the academies of France, Germany and England. Stuart MacDonald in *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (2004) stated that medieval arts were considered "craft-trades" (p.19) and were not considered intellectual work. This changed in the Renaissance when "the demand arose for intellectual artists capable of conceiving imaginative historic, religious, and poetic compositions" (p.19-20). In each case however, technical skill was a significant aspect of this education and drawing from casts and life drawing the majority of the education (MacDonald, 2004). "An academic art training, which started with drawing each part of the body from models based on parts of Greek statuary, and

ended with compositions of Classical epics, was an obvious parallel to grammar and literature" (p.25). This changed significantly with Modernist institutions like the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College, where more experimental art and pedagogy took place. Although there havebeen many significant shifts in the practice of art, the way that it is being taught has not changed significantly.

Without training on teaching methodology however, most professors will teach the way that they were taught, creating stagnant pedagogical practices such as critiques (Barrett, 1988; Fitch, 2016) and the belief that visual fundamentals are key (Lavender, 2003) which have little to no data showing their efficacy. The lack of available literature on teaching methods and philosophies for studio arts, does not make room for new practices, and retains the status quo in assessment in the studio classroom (Cannatella, 2001; Elton, 2007; de la Harpe, et al., 2009; Harwood, 2007). Without research into classroom teaching at the university level, as well as dissemination of this research, the status quo prevails.

2.3.2 Scholarship on Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

There is a growing but small body of literature of teaching at the university level, within the studio arts *A Guide to Teaching Art at the College Level* by Stacey Salazar (2021) and Sebastian Fitch's dissertation *Critiques, Credits and Credibility: Assessment Practices in Higher Education Studio Art Courses* (2016) are notable examples. Salazar's book takes a practical route aimed at basic information for early career instructors and professors, noting that little to no instruction on teaching is given in Master of Fine Arts programs. Salazar does not talk specifically about collaboration but stated that many studio instructors cultivate "a creative community of peers" (p. 82) Similarly, Fitch looks at a staple teaching practice in the visual arts, the critique, and deconstructs its pedagogical (and lack of) underpinnings. He concludes that critiques are often given by instructors, but they have no particular pedagogical outcomes, nor

structure to this process, rather are replicating their art school experience. Here he does not speak directly to collaboration but also mentions the desire of some instructors to allow for more authority of the group rather than themselves within the critique (p.111).

Russell, Plotkin and Bell in "Merge/ Emerge: Collaboration in Graduate School" (1998) also examined the experience of collaboration of three graduate students within a Canadian academic institution. They considered how collaboration enriches research by allowing multiple voices to be heard. It also considers how the power relations between researchers must be both acknowledged and attended to, and how difference may be maintained. It also acknowledges that collaborative practices are not valued equally within the academic institution because of the traditional view that knowledge is created independently, however this varies throughout the institution and even within each field and subspecialty. Finally, the authors ask whether collaboration is inherently feminist, for this they have no clear answer.

These works show an interest in better understanding not only of studio arts, but also the way to best teach it within the university classroom. Much like Fitch's questioning of the critique, which suggests that some practices exist within studio arts due to tradition rather than pedagogical value, I would like to question the practice of individual work within the classroom as the most effective way of educating students.

2.3.3 Questioning The Lone Genius

Contemporary teaching pedagogy in visual arts relies heavily on the Modernist idea of the artist as genius. Martha Woodmansee traces the connection between copyright and the idea of the lone genius in the arts. *The Author, Art and the Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics* (1994) explored notions of authorship over time and how the market in the 1700s changed the way authorship was conceived. Authorship changed from a public to private endeavor and what was written changed from being inspired by God or a muse to being inspired

by the author themselves. This allowed authors to push for copyright laws that protected their works. The ability to make money off of original works of writing had similar repercussions within the artworld, where the artist became the central figure of creativity. This positioned the author of a work as an important figure, whereas prior this was generally not the case. Works prior to this were added onto and worked on by multiple people and were considered to be collectively owned. This shows that the perspective of the artist as a lone genius is culturally constructed rather than a representation of how artists work naturally.

To build on this Karen Burke LaFevre in *Invention as a Social Act* (1987) argued that this lone genius conception is not and has never in fact been accurate, and that artists always work within a social sphere. Burke LaFevre (1987) described these social influences as: the self is socially constituted, language and symbol systems are shared, processes are socially learned, there are unnamed contributors in particular resonators, and our ideas are influenced by institutions and social collectives. She argued that the capitalist system encouraged the lone genius view of invention, and this view has been taken up by popular culture and academia. Burke LaFevre (1987) argued that we should value collaborative practices, and expose the work that is unacknowledged within the creative process.

K.E. Grover (2016) also comes to a similar conclusion in "The Solitary Author as Collective Fiction" and looks at the role of the artist within a complex system of art making. They separated two different ideas of authorship, the person who made the thing, and the idea of the genius creator. Grover (2016) suggested that one can reject the idea of the author as sole creative force without abandoning the idea of the author as creator of the thing. That it is the author who is ultimately responsible for the work and creates its essential features, but there are many people who make the work possible outside of the creator of the work. This gives a framework for thinking about expanded ideas of responsibility within creation, and allows us to

acknowledge the production of work by an author without alienating sources of support and inspiration.

Critics and scholars questioning the idea of the artist as a lone genius opened the possibility for discussion of collaboration within the arts, education and the academy. When we dismiss the concept of the artist as genius, we open space for others to affect the trajectory of art making. Although individualism is changing in visual art practice, the classroom still relies heavily on individual assessment (Carnegie Melon University, nd).

Linda Brodkey suggested in *Academic writing as social practice* (1987) that writers enter a conversation already in progress, building on ideas that already exist. There are many different communities of practice within academia, and each has their own unique language and procedures. Each discipline has a particular way of looking at things and creates language and community around those values. To work in an interdisciplinary way, you must learn the language and procedures of all the disciplines you are engaged with. This creates specific discourses. Brodkey views collaboration as an experiment in learning and creates a discourse of difference. She believes it is important to leave differences rather than resolve them within collaboration.

Throughout art history artists have always built on the work of others. Art movements rely on sharing of ideas, and skills and techniques are developed through mentorship. Ideas are not created in a vacuum and rely on a network of works, conversations, and exchanges. This reciprocity relies on the input of others and as Burke LaFevre (1987) pointed out invalidates the idea of the lone genius artist.

2.3.4 Divergent or Compatible Skills

Although generally tied to ideas of efficiency, some business insights on collaboration can be helpful. Schrage (1990) suggested that thinking about skill sets as either divergent or

compatible helps to create strategic collaborations within business. Within the educational

context this may be a way of starting a conversation between collaborators. Thinking about

which skills, interpersonal, technical, or otherwise, students have can open a conversation about

what experiences they may share, and where they may be able to learn from each other. This

allows for a starting point for students to begin to work together. Adams and Hamm (1990) also

note that being both the teacher and the student can be a benefit to students' learning, and

creating collaboration with partners with divergent skills may facilitate this process through

informal skill sharing.

2.3.5 Empathy, Reciprocity and Collectivity

Technical skill sets are not the only ones that are applicable to collaboration, other "soft"

skills are necessary for collaboration. "Empathy, Surviving, Collective Reflexivity" examined

how we approach the other within collaborative practices (Murray et al, 2016). It examined how

empathy is an important mode of being within collaboration as one becomes implicated in each

other's lives. This empathy leads to questions of "should we?" which asks the collective to

consider their values and each other with openness. Within collaboration one shifts between

participant to observer and is constantly in a cycle of doing and reflexivity.

Katerina Reed-Tsocha's "Collective Action and the Reciprocity of Friendship" (2016)

similarly looked at the role of friendship in collective action. It defined friendship as an

empathetic identification with the other and the mutual exercise of virtues. Friendship has both

mutual risks and mutual gains, as it requires one to be open and vulnerable to the other. In

"Friendship as Method" (2003) Lisa Tillman-Healy describes using friendship as a method and

how it is friendship's pace, contexts, and ethics that shapes the research. Friends provide

emotional and identity resources, and we are likely to befriend those who are similar to

ourselves. When friendships occur across social groups, they take on a political dimension, and

the dominant person can serve as an advocate for their friends in target groups, and this dominance can shift based on the situation. This method takes on reality as being pluralist and constructed in language and interaction. Friendship as method requires a stance of hope, justice, and caring and demands reciprocity. It also allowed the participants to be heard, known and understood. Ethical considerations must be kept at the forefront when using this method, and much like collaboration it involves developing a sensitivity to the other. Although "Friendship as Method" (2003) related the results of an ethnographic study, many of the observations about friendship, and approaching inquiry through slow, complex, collaborative interactions would also apply to the art creation process.

Batt and Purchase in "Managing Collaboration Within Networks and Relationships" (2004) also forefront the importance of trust in the process of collaboration. This may mean that each individual has to put aside their immediate goals for the good of the collaborative effort. This is similar to friendship, where one person must on occasion put aside what may be most beneficial to them to support the other. Trust also allows for open communication, a quality that Batt and Purchase (2004) also described as necessary within collaboration.

Slow philosophy hints at how we might engage in working together. Michelle Boulous Walker suggested in *Slow Philosophy* (2016) that being slow, attentive, open, and generous allows one to have proximity to the other without appropriating them. This creates a bridge between self and other that allows for us to encounter the other in its strangeness, without obliterating the self or the other. Opening and openness takes time and is transformative. This requires slow reading and re-reading, with an openness to the text, maintaining ambiguity, and without coming to premature judgment, actions that could also apply to working in collaboration. For Boulous Walker this is a way of being in the world and thinking about our relationships with the world we live in. This philosophy involves prolong and open exposure to

difference, and can be applied to the collaborative process both in person and through text. Understanding the experiences of others and their perspectives is key to slow philosophy. This focus on experience is why phenomenology is used as a methodology in this study. Phenomenology focuses on the experience of the participant, rather than trying to fit their descriptions into a predetermined theory.

2.4 Phenomenology

2.4.1 Defining Phenomenology

To better understand how phenomenology is used in this dissertation, we must first explore the tenets of phenomenology and where scholars and philosophers disagree on its philosophy and application. For this dissertation I will be mainly using Husserl, as well as Merleau-Ponty's developments of phenomenology as a basis. This chapter will explore the literature on phenomenology and the next chapter how it will be applied in this research.

Merleau-Ponty and Bannan (1956) characterized phenomenology as an attempt to describe the essence of a phenomenon. This essence is being made through our lived experience of phenomena. This essence allows us to orient ourselves to the phenomenon, and therefore understand our world. Phenomenology views the world as given, and although our experiences shape the way we view the world, it exists in the for each of us, however it is constantly reorienting itself to our experiences of it. Therefore, it is an account of direct lived experience of a phenomenon that is common to us. Merleau-Ponty stated that phenomenology is not a completed doctrine but rather a manner or style. It does not seek to explain but rather to describe. To do this phenomenology relies on finding a new astonishment, or sense of wonder towards the world, rather than trying to fit it into our preconceived ideas of the way things are. Although it is impossible to do this completely, it is the goal of phenomenology to view

phenomena as though we are encountering them for the first time and describe them in order to understand their essential features.

Max Van Manen claimed in "But is it Phenomenology?" (2017) that there is a problem of research claiming to be phenomenological without displaying the tenets of phenomenology. First, he points out that not all research about lived experience is phenomenological and in fact an interest in lived experience is common to many qualitative research methodologies. He asks three questions regarding phenomenological research: are the questions or objectives phenomenological? Is it attempting to understand phenomenological insights, what it is like to experience a phenomenon. Does it look like phenomenology? Does it use *epoché* and reduction? But is it phenomenology? Does it seek deep understanding and meaning? He lays out some misconceptions about phenomenology: if it studies lived experience it's phenomenology, phenomenological questions will emerge through unstructured interviews, phenomenology is the study of how individuals make sense of their own experiences (this is psychology), phenomenological understandings will automatically emerge if you follow a certain procedure, and outcomes of phenomenological research are a list of interpretive themes. Van Manen suggested that the epoché and reduction are key features of all phenomenological research and that it generates insights into the structures of lived experiences.

Smith's article (2018) is a rebuttal of van Manen's critique in interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (2017). Smith argued that phenomenology takes a wide range of positions, and the IPA's particular focus on the reflective domain does not exclude it from being phenomenology. Smith claimed that IPA is consistent with Husserl's view of experience and that both prereflective and reflective are part of lived experience. He argued that van Manen's dualistic splitting of the personal experience from the phenomenon is over simplistic. Smith also stated that van Manen made several errors describing the history of IPA. Finally,

Smith argued that phenomenology is complex and multifaceted and one person, including van Manen, should not be the single authority of what is and isn't phenomenology and therefore what should and shouldn't be published under its banner.

Bolton (1979) argued that despite its tenuous position within the academy phenomenology is important because of its ability to form subjective truths. He argued that objectivity is useless if it is information outside of personal concern. Phenomenologists ask what it means to be human and therefore are poised to be a genuine philosophical psychology. Phenomenology is a critical reflection on the essential nature of experience and therefore is both empirical and critical. Husserl believed that intentionality (of consciousness) needs to be pointed towards something/ an object and that mental processes cannot be separated from truth and objectivity (1977, pp.32-33/ 71[1]). Husserl also believed that each moment of consciousness contains an awareness of that which has passed and what will immediately occur creating a unity (1977, p.33/71). Merleau Ponty believed that perception is not an act but a background in which acts take place (2013, p.26/49). Ideation abstractions have different forms and different layers of judgments ended with a priori universals or essences. Eidetic intuition allows us to come to the essence through bracketing, imaginary variation in order to discover what stays invariant, and critical reflection to ensure our judgments are unambiguous and non-contradictory (2013, p.416/456). One must focus one's attention on the thing itself. This is all important to education research because it overcomes narrow and abstracted research which is not based on lived experiences. Phenomenology allows us to ask what it means, why we are doing what we are doing. It also cannot be divorced from the world of practice and therefore relates to the task of teaching more globally.

Brook (2009) argued that a Heideggerian phenomenology allows for an authentic interpretation of teaching. This posits that the goal of education is in terms of being human. It

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[1] As per convention the German (Husserl) or French (Merleau-Ponty) pagination follows the English pagination

asks what is it about being-human that makes learning a possible way of being. This philosophy involves deconstruction of our everyday preconceptions about a phenomenon (in this case teaching/learning). By examining the specific experience of learning, we can circumvent what we think we know about learning, and therefore teaching. Rather than fitting experience into theory we are able to see it directly. Formal indication which is what is left after the destruction of the misconceptions and construction which is the interpretation of the being of the phenomenon. Heidegger suggested that the equiprimordial characteristics of being human are concern (dealing with things and the sense of things), care (our relation to life, the foundation of being with others and being for the sake of others) and comportment (being directed towards something). Within these there are two modalities: authenticity and inauthenticity. The everyday way of being is inauthentic. Authenticity is being one's self, caring for the sake of others, and being directed towards the meaning of our life as humans. This relates to education in that under this schema education is leading the whole human back to who we are, or becoming truly human. According to Brook, Heidegger suggested that authentic education is being a learner in such a way that we become a teacher. The formation of the student opens the possibility of being truly human, the formation of authenticity which destroys our sense of the everyday. In this way phenomenology is a way into becoming authentic, a lived experience of becoming human. Teachers are tasked with cultivating the formation of others by exemplifying learning as a way of being and as a human whose life discloses the authentic possibilities of human existence. Teachers must be ethical and consider the "ought" of being human. Teachers need to plan the how of teaching and the how of building an authentic learning environment where students can be themselves. Making room for authenticity involves cultivating a sense of ownership of how learning and the room is set up, opportunities for participation as teacher and learning, and

questioning and discussion. Different disciplines cultivate different regional ontologies, or ways of being. Teaching is about building an awareness of what is worth thinking about, and what questions are worth asking. How we perceive the other and their perspective is an important way of understanding these issues.

2.4.2 The Other in Phenomenology

Edmund Husserl discussed intersubjectivity specifically in the Fifth Meditation of the *Cartesian Meditations* (1977). Intersubjectivity within phenomenology begins with a reflection and understanding of our own selves and body. Through reflection we can come to understand that our ego or subjectivity is bodily, that without our bodies we would not be able to perceive the world, and therefore we would not be able to create thoughts (Husserl, 1977, p.113/143). Taking this further, we can see that there are others, with bodies similar to ours, and through their actions we can see that they also interact with the same objective world that we do. These actions are harmonious with our perception of the world, and therefore we can assume that this body, like ours, also contains an ego.

Husserl (1977) related this to the phenomenological concept of appresentation, that when we see an object, we never see it all at once, rather only one view of it at a time. Despite this incomplete view we are still able to understand the object before us as a table giving it meaning (p.40/ 78). As we walk around the table, and observe its other legs, this confirms our perception. Husserl stated that there is a similar phenomenon with the other, which he calls co-presentation, but there is a distinct difference between appresentation and co-presentation. With appresentation we can, in time, view the complete object and confirm its identity, whereas with co-presentation we can never truly confirm the ego, we can only know the other through their objective, bodily,

actions (Husserl, 1977, p.112/150). We project our own ego onto the other, this allows for a conception of the other while still centering our own subjectivity.

Husserl (1977) claimed that we can understand the other by considering how we would act if we were in their place. If our here was there, where the other is, we would act in the same way as them. Husserl refers to this as pairing (p.112/142). This involves reciprocity, we create empathy for the other by putting ourselves in their place. "The "Other", according to his own constituted sense, points to me myself; the other is a "mirroring" of my own self and yet not a mirroring proper, an analogue of my own self and yet not an analogue in the usual sense" (Husserl, 1977, p. 94/ 125).

Cultural objects are also important to Husserl's intersubjectivity, these objects create community through shared meaning within a culture (1977, pp.134-135/ 161). This shared sense of the world helps to refine the category to which each person belongs. Husserl's understanding of intersubjectivity relied predominantly on the subjective, however, it would not be able to exist without a shared objective reality (1977, p.104/pp.134-135). This is a departure from pure subjectivity, where the outside world is entirely an individual experience. Husserl did not go so far as to extend agency to the object, and the world continues to be viewed primarily through the subjective lens. It is our interactions with others that shapes our understanding of the world (Bredlau, 2018)

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's views of intersubjectivity further leave behind subjectivity. He theorized that bodily perception is key to our understanding of the world, and shapes our subjectivity (1968; 2013, p). Rather than an intellectual understanding of the other as Husserl contends, Merleau-Ponty (2013) argued that we innately understand the other as ego and that we live in a shared world with them (p. 374/415). Without bodily perception there would be no ego,

and that all subjective thought emanates from and is shaped by the perceived world (Merleau-Ponty, 2013, p.49/pp.74-75). That by sharing an orientation towards the world, we can come to understand one another, creating a "shared landscape of possibilities" (Bredlau, 2018, p.50). This philosophical understanding of the other is key when thinking about collaboration. We can understand the other as being present in the same objective space as them, and despite differences in perspective, we understand that we live in the same space and reality.

Phenomenology allows for an understanding of the other within our world, however, the other cannot be understood from a perspective outside of our own. The other is always in relation to what we would do or what we perceive. There is also no way to account for the impact that objects make outside of their relationships to humans. For this reason, a combination of Actor- Network Theory and phenomenology will be used in this research.

2.4.3 Applications and Limits of Phenomenology within the University Classroom

We can look to philosophy to consider how instructors might guide students to be open to ambiguous processes, however, there does not seem to be a clear method that will create a successful outcome. Collaborative processes are unique because they bring together many variables, take time, and may require both students and instructors to rethink what they deem as success. Due to this there seems to be very little practical research on how to guide students to create successful collaborative projects, or how collaboration may affect students' ways of being in the classroom.

Many pedagogical best practices remain relevant for teaching collaboration such as creative constraints, and clear outcomes and assessment criteria (Salazar, 2021). What remains less clear is how we prepare students to be open to other ideas without appropriating them, and creating spaces where multiple ideas are not immediately resolved and reduced into one.

Hurwitz (1993) suggested that collaboration involves a great deal of trust and has a socializing value. He focused on process over product which allowed students to think together. Hurwitz (1993) argued group art should be encouraged as well as interdisciplinarity and the use of new technology, which often occurs during collaboration. In describing communities of studio practice, Gaw and Fralick (2020) stated through studio art education students are allowed to experiment and learn through doing. The goal of a community of studio practice is for students to focus on doing what artists do. This means learning both from peers and dialogue with the teacher. Students are allowed to follow their own desires and preferences for learning, and teachers demonstrate, inspire, and model artistic behaviour. This allows students to pose and solve their own problems leading to critical thinking skills. I would argue, and this study explores how these practices also occur when learning collaboratively with peers who can help guide learning through their own experiences. Successful collaboration requires students to listen to and learn from each other, as well as model artistic behaviour to achieve their mutual goal of creating an artwork. This could be seen as an extension of Gaw and Fralick's (2020) observations regarding communities of studio practice.

Based on my experience there are benefits to collaboration in the classroom, time and assessment become issues when implementing collaboration in the classroom. The time necessary to fully engage in collaboration may mean that students do not have a finished product by the end of the class and assessment may be primarily derived from process reflections, sketches, and working documents. This may require a re-evaluation of the goals of the university classroom, both for the instructor and students. This may involve a more complex process for creating learning objectives for the course, which actively involves students' participation. Instructors might focus on process rather than product to evaluate collaborative projects; this will be discussed further when looking at the data.

McPhail (1995) described phenomenology and why it is useful in researching special education. Positivist inquiry and phenomenology have significantly different orientations to the life worlds of people and are able to create different types of knowledge or understandings. In special education this is a difference between an ontological position (phenomenology) and an epistemological one (positivist). McPhail goes on to describing phenomenology as a descriptive philosophy that is interested in consciousness in the lived world. Rather than trying to find discoverable, regular patterns, such as positivist research, phenomenology looks towards finding understandings of phenomena. Phenomenologists are interested in understanding things as they appear in an individual's consciousness, and how this brings significance to experiences. They reject dualisms especially that of the objective and subjective world, rather they view consciousness as something that is always constituted in reality and therefore is both subjective and objective. They believed that individual consciousness carries the past, present and anticipation of the future with it; there is a historicity and futurity in all its relations. Finally, phenomenologists believe that the cultural world is co-constructed in lived experiences on both the individual and group level and therefore must be taken into account. Phenomenology does not follow prescribed rules but rather has guiding principles. These principles are: phenomenology is not interested in verifiable knowledge but rather meaning that is constructed in the act of living; how experiences of phenomena lead to their essence, rather than phenomena fitting into a preset theory. They value understanding not explanation. This understanding can be judged by its effectiveness in addressing the inquiry. Openness regarding the possibilities for humans to uncover their own categories or organizing themes rather than being prescribed by the researcher. Phenomenology effectively communicates the other's way of seeing things (McPhail, 1995). This has implications in special education in that it can help us understand the child's

relationship to the world and reveals the participants' way of viewing the world. It also challenges researchers to make our own consciousness an area of inquiry.

Webb and Welsh (2019) looked at the applicability of phenomenology in the area of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). SoTL is a research area that encompasses various disciplinary and interdisciplinary practices; therefore, it is challenging to create links across SoTL. There is also a tension between theory and practice. They suggested using van Manen's (1997) step to do phenomenological research. 1. Turning to a phenomenon of interest or orienting. 2. Investigating experience as lived rather than conceptualized. 3. Reflecting on essential themes. 4. Describing the phenomenon through writing and rewriting. 5. Maintaining a focus on the phenomenon. 6. Balancing the research by considering the parts and the whole. Using two examples, the authors suggested that phenomenology can be useful in this area because it offers a philosophical grounding for methodology and methods that explore lived experiences. It is a flexible and adaptable approach. Participants are co-constructors of finding and the perspectives of participants are valued and at the center of the research. Its disadvantages are that researchers must adjust to phenomenology. Researchers need to acknowledge how their assumptions, biases and epistemologies shape their research. The findings and conclusions are highly influenced by the population of study and the specific time frame of the research. There are no universal criteria to determine the trustworthiness of the research. They suggested using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

2.4.4 Post-Phenomenology

Post-phenomenology has started to consider the relationship between humans and non-humans within experience. This could create bridges between phenomenology and ANT; however this still needs further development. Ash

and Simpson (2019) proposes a style to think about post-phenomenology. They identified the relationship between human and object to be problematic within phenomenology as it does not take into account the agency of the object. They have three main criticisms of phenomenology: that it assumes a subject that exists prior to experience, rather than a subject that comes through experience; that objects have an autonomous existence outside of how they appear to humans which is not accounted for in phenomenology, and the subject's relations with alterity (2019). With this in mind, the authors ask how post-phenomenology may be practiced. They suggested a style, rather than a method. A style is able to attend to shifting expressions of objects and is based on a set of habits. They suggested two styles for post-phenomenology: Allure and Resonance. Allure is the being of the object apart from its qualities, this is set up as opposed to metamorphosis, or the shifting nature of the object. The object is constantly alternating between the allure and metamorphosis. The resonance is the effect of one object on others around them, simultaneously changing both. Resonance is both an encounter and an impact (Ash & Simpson, 2019, p.140). The authors suggested that these styles are not methods and must be developed in response to a particular phenomenon or object. Post-phenomenology creates a sensitivity to the world and those who practice it must remain open to the strangeness of objects.

2.4.5. Examples of phenomenology as method

There are many examples of phenomenology as method in art, art education, and education. These examples helped to guide this research both in style and philosophy. In this section I review examples of phenomenology in art education, then education, art appreciation, and finally from art.

Bresler (1993) examined the importance of teacher knowledge in art education research by reviewing three studies, one action research, one phenomenology, and one using case studies to

highlight potential methods of creating narrative using teacher knowledge. Each study had

different amounts of teacher involvement in the research. Bresler suggested that one should use

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for judging this research: credible, transferability,

dependability and confirmability. Bresler acknowledged that teacher research is not usually

generalizable as it points to a specific situation, but it can be transferable. This involves a deep

description so that the reader can transfer the knowledge of this situation to other similar

situations. Teacher knowledge is hard to capture in a grand context free theory as it is based in

practical not theoretical knowledge with an emphasis on process and local knowledge.

Ellett in "Narrative and Phenomenology as Methodology for Understanding Persistence

in Art Teachers: A Reflective Journey" (2011) explored the process of researching why

exceptional art teachers with 20+ years of experience remain classroom teachers using narrative

and phenomenological inquiry. Using stories as data and exploring the lived experiences of

teachers to allow for a better understanding of the importance of the lives of teachers. Ellett used

reflective journaling to explore her preconceptions of the phenomenon. She explained via

Dewey that learning occurs from an experience, an interaction between oneself and another

person, object, or idea. Ellett used Dahlberg's notion of bridling rather than the more traditional

epoché or bracketing. Bridling is a way of restraining, rather than cutting off, one's pre-

understandings and preconceptions. Ellet used snowball sampling and field notes, open ended

interviews, journaling (researcher), recorded phone calls and emails, as well as artwork samples

as data collection methods. The results of these were member checked. Commonalities were

identified between the stories of the teachers, showing each teacher is unique yet connected.

Lankford (1984) applied the tenets of phenomenology to art criticism. Lankford

suggested that students can use receptiveness, orienting, bracketing, interpretive analysis and

synthesis to create a description of the form and content of the work. Lankford noted that there are plural valid interpretations of every artwork, but that they must still correspond to the object. Criticism takes place in a particular time and place, and by a person with particular experiences and therefore there is no definitive interpretation. The more experiences students have with art, the deeper and more nuanced their criticisms will be.

Popovich (2006) explored how to create well designed curriculum and assessment in art education using governmental standards and interdisciplinary integrations. Above that, Popovich looks at how postmodernism, phenomenology and autobiographical text can be used to build curriculum. Postmodernism can be used to allow for a diversity of voices and cultural identities in the classroom, in particular using visual culture methods. Phenomenological texts can be used as a reflective statement to understand the lived experiences of the students and help them construct their own meanings. Finally, autobiographical text can help students understand how academic studies contribute to the understanding of their lives. For assessment Popovich suggested involving students by the use of process journals, reflections, critiques and formative assessment. For assessing the end product using scoring rubric that establishes clear and consistent criteria.

Streb's (1984) article outlined Husserl's phenomenological method, including intentionality, the epoché, reduction and essence of phenomena. According to Streb Husserl seeks to avoid the natural attitude and views phenomenology as a method of thinking and describing thinking. This applies not just to physical objects but also objects of thought. Streb related this to the understanding of the mode of being a teacher, who must embody the spirit of the discipline and opens to view objects in the field of study thought. They must foster a I-You relation with their students and encourage them in becoming something that the student is not.

Art can be described phenomenologically as an object that stands between, and in relation to both the author and the viewer, an ontological duality of being-in-the-world and being-in-the-world-of-others. It is not merely material but a sign that seeks to communicate the world of the artist. The teacher must guide their students to the experience of the work and its author.

Strumbo (1970) studied whether students would come up with richer descriptions of objective and non-objective artworks by starting with subjective description, then objective, then the relationship between the two. The study consisted of 13 undergraduate art education students describing 3 objective and 3 non-objective art works twice, reading expert descriptions in between. The study confirmed the following hypothesis: If students are taught to make clear descriptive statements about integration of meanings in the work the number of those statements will increase. If students are taught to make clear descriptive statements about complexity those statements will increase. If students compare their observations to those of experts their agreement with experts will increase. If students are exhorted to remain open to new meanings in a work of art new meanings will increase.

Zurmuehlen (1981) looked at symbolisation as a way of creating intersubjectivity and shared experience. Through symbolisation we call on one another to create a shared meaning in a world which is common to us all. Others, and their interpretations become elements of my own situation as I do of theirs. This means that meaning is shaped socially. This is also applicable to artwork which is made by and interpreted by people. This combined intersubjectivity and imaginative integration.

Ganeson and Ehrich (2009) examined the experience of transitioning from primary to secondary school for 16 students from one school. Ganeson and Ehrich identified 4 main themes of phenomenology, description, reduction, essences and intentionality and use Giorgi's

translation of the phenomenological perspective into a methodology. Giorgi used reduction as one begins to analyse the descriptions, seeks essential structures of the phenomenon, and identifies the inseparable connectedness of human beings to the world. This study used journal entries as the sole method of data collection and analysed them in the following way: 1. Reading the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement. 2. Discrimination of meaning units within a psychological perspective. 3. Transformation of the subject's everyday expressions into psychological language with emphasis on the phenomenon being investigated. 4. Synthesis of transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the experience being investigated. The data is the lived experience of the participants rather than reflections, opinions, and analysis. The journal entries were divided into experiences and seven themes were created. The themes were school supporting transition through programs and activities, the significance of peers in helping or hindering transition, learning new procedures, locations and routine, learning occurs through academic, practical and extracurricular activities with some learning being more difficult than others, the feeling of confidence, achievement, and success can enhance the transition, homework volume is a challenge, and teachers' attitudes and abilities can affect the integration of students. This study places importance not on how students experience things but what they experience.

Iared and de Oliveira (2016) suggested that aesthetics is a way into creating an embodied and sensory pedagogy and methodology in environmental education. They suggested that there is a non-representational problem in social science and humanities. The incorporation of environmental and nature aesthetics into aesthetic education would be an important part of this turn. They argued that since Plato relegated sense experience to the lowest form of knowledge there has been a devaluation of sense knowledge in Western thought. Phenomenologists reject

the notion that sense is lesser and believe we are in the world, and in a relationship with the object of contemplation. This allows us to unveil the essence or meaning of phenomena from a situated existence. We are part of the world, and therefore there is no dichotomy between subject and object. These theories lead to an ontological ethics that is important to environmental education. These frameworks require new methodologies to support them. This seeks to understand the bodied-temporal-spatial and affective nature of our lived experiences.

Kirova and Emme (2006) discussed a phenomenological study in which six grade 5 students on the first day of school after immigrating to Canada were studied. Due to language barriers, photography, in particular fotonovelas, were used in conjunction with interviews to create a thick description of the experience. Kirova and Emme argued that visual language works differently, but parallel to linguistics and what can be expressed in visuals cannot be fully expressed in words. This created a different way of seeing. Students re-enacted their first day of class, and the use of performance allowed students to have insights into their lived experiences. Further, manipulation of the images and the addition of text worked as a phenomenological reduction finding the essence of the experience. Image and text are not identical, but complementary, and the use of visuals can enrich the phenomenological description.

Lewis (2018) discussed why consciousness raising techniques are insufficient for teaching anti-racism to pre-service teachers. Using Merleau-Ponty's conception of the body schema, the way that the body moves intuitively (Merleau-Ponty, 2013, p.49/ pp.74-75), Lewis suggested that one can have racist actions without racists beliefs. To solve this, one must deconstruct the white body schema, and the way of relating to the world that it creates. This can be done through interactions with non-white bodies where the white schema is thrown out of rhythm and is no longer neutral and through radical reflection, reflection that returns to the

embodied experience. This requires the breakdown of the schema itself and the tacit knowledge of the body schema that is predicated on white privilege. They also state that this can happen through radical reflection. Lewis calls for a focus on embodied, perceptual experiences and being critical of practices, gestures, comportment and perceptual grip which are informed and constituted within a racialized world.

Yacavone (2016) argued that although most uses of phenomenology in film either focus on the form or apparatus of film (content or medium) Merleau-Ponty suggested that both should be considered. This article speaks to film, but the author stated that many of Merleau-Ponty's ideas were also in relation to other forms of art, such as painting. These bring us from non-sense to sense. Merleau-Ponty suggested that art can defamiliarize us with the world, allowing us to see it through a phenomenological mode. Not all art does this however, mimetic art is abstracted from lived perceptual experience and therefore does not elicit a defamiliarization. Merleau-Ponty stated that the temporal and rhythmic aspects of film are important for creating this effect. By creating a world of its own art and film are able to remove us from the natural attitude. Deleuze criticised Merleau-Ponty for ignoring certain types of film in his theory, and Paul Crowther suggested that Merleau-Ponty is not engaging in the philosophy of art, but rather applying his philosophy to art.

Phenomenology gives us a detailed description of the human experience of phenomenon, but it does not allow for agency within non-human actors. Due to the importance of non-human agents within collaboration, Actor-Network Theory in combination with phenomenology allows for both the thick description as well as non-human agency. This additional aspect creates space for the connections between the experience of the human and the objects that make a difference within the collaboration.

2.5 Actor-Network Theory

2.5.1 Defining Actor-Network Theory

Bruno Latour argued in *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (2005) that our understanding of the social and its relation to reality is flawed. He argued that the social is created through the relations of actors, rather than the cause of it, and that we overstate the importance of humans in the construction of reality. In Actor-Network Theory (ANT) he stated that we should treat non-human and human actors symmetrically, and that actors should be considered anything that makes a difference and therefore need not be animate objects. These actors form a network through associations which he calls an assemblage, and through force can bring new actors into the assemblage. Each actor is influenced by other actors within the network. Obligatory points of passage include and exclude certain actors within the assemblage. To describe the network the researcher must follow the actors within it, rather than impose limitations or boundaries in advance. The researcher and the research objects also become part of the network, and cannot be separated from it, the assemblage does not exist without the researcher. There is also no local and global with ANT and actors oscillate between the two. Networks are not static but can become more or less durable through the strength of the connections between actors.

Latour clarified some of the ideas of ANT in "On Recalling ANT" (1999). First, he clarified that ANT is not a technical network rather a series of relations. ANT rejects an agency/structure debate and rather tries to frame the network and sum it up. It does so by moving between the local and overarching, focusing its attention on movement. Latour claimed that ANT is not a theory but rather an ontology, and that it follows and learns from the actors rather than imposing a theory on them.

Harman framed his article as a way to understand why Latour has not had uptake within the philosophical field that he (Latour) claims to belong to, while having uptake in various other fields. Harman suggested that Latour's philosophy does not fit in with the Kantian split between perception and reality and this may be a reason for it not to be considered. He then explained the main tenets of Latour's idea: actants, translation, non-reducibility and associations. Harman argued that Latour's ideas should be interpreted as occasionalist, with the distinction of explaining interactions as inscribed through the world, rather than God or the human mind. In this way he views the criticisms of Latour to be the same as other occasionalists, a lack of explanation of how potentialities are expressed when actants are not in action, a lack of explanation of change or motion, how the actant remains the same in multiple relations, and what links actants to themselves through the trajectory of time.

Law's (1999) article explored the tensions between the actor and the network in Actor-Network Theory. It described how the proliferation of ANT allows it to both become fixed but also have translations that were not intended. Law argued that ANT is not fixed but rather a fluid theory which opposes dualisms and fixed points. It is rather the relations of entities, which become more or less stable through repetition. ANT is not an explanation of this phenomena and lives in complexities and tension. This allows for differing methods within the methodology of ANT.

Lee and Brown (1994) asked us to consider the dissolution of the human/ non-human boundary in sociology, looking particularly at Actor-Network Theory (ANT). ANT asks us to be suspicious of humanistic determination of agency and grants agency to all things. This is an expansion of liberal democracy to its extreme limit, through the enfranchisement and appropriate representation of all things. ANT does risk creating an ahistorical grand narrative by giving the right to speak for all. ANT seeks to recognize the object's labour and see this as a principle of

equality. ANT rejects social explanations and the division between social and natural. If we are all equal at the beginning it allows us to see where the production of inequality happens through translation, interessement, enrollment and obligatory points of passage. Lee and Brown suggested that ANT, because of its treatment of everything, has the ability to colonize everything through incorporation, order and unity (1994). ANT also limits its ability to circumvent the circle of expansion, domination, and collapse due to its reliance on the play of forces within the network. Lee and Brown wondered whether ANT is a totalizing system despite its decentering of the human. The researcher/ narrator of the story is ultimately human. They suggested the focus on obligatory points of passage may also silence actants on the peripheries, and ANT should focus not only on territorialization but also de and re-territorialization. The centering of the human is, however, true of all research methods, as ultimately it is a person who is writing up the data with all their biases and experiences (which perhaps the exclusion being emergent types of Artificial Intelligence). What ANT does, as well as phenomenology, is to acknowledge and account for this within the research narrative. This allows for us to think about how actants are included and excluded from these narratives.

Lee and Stenner (1999) asked whether ANT is particularly adept at inclusion and recognizing where credit is due. Not only is its ability to follow actors and their relations with other actants, but also in its inclusion of the natural world as actors. ANT uses both belonging-by-assemblage and belonging-by-banishment to describe its networks. The article suggested that ANT is ethical rather than moral as it cannot be approached with a prescriptive moral formula.

2.5.2 Examples of Actor-Network Theory

Reading accounts from educational and other uses of Actor-Network Theory helped me to understand how to describe the complex web of actors and actants within the network.

There were different aspects of these studies that influenced my writing in this dissertation.

Fenwick's (2010) article described how actor-network theory might be applied to accountability in adult education. Using examples such as learner portfolios and Individual Learning Plans, Fenwick looked at how the material objects affect the way that learning takes place, as well as how the objects affect the interactions between teachers and students.

Accountability also defines what is visible, what counts and does not count in education. Fenwick described both non-counting and counting multiple narratives as ways of resisting oppressive forms of surveillance. Fenwick suggested that ANT is well positioned to describe accountability as it takes into account the whole network, rather than the individual, and also accounts for both human and non-human actors. This article's account of visibility makes an important point about how we count and what counts, as we only account for the things that make a difference in ANT. In any description can we truly report all of the things that make a difference? For example, in this study, we account for the students' interactions with each other, and ideas and attitudes towards collaboration, however, we only briefly delve into all the experiences of making, both individually and collaboratively that form these beliefs and dispositions.

Actor-Network Theory can be a useful tool in looking at educational reform as it has the potential to look beyond social factors that affect the classroom. Fenwick (2011) suggested that although ANT can be used for researching educational reform after-ANT offers an expanding toolkit to explore these assemblages. In particular she warned that if using ANT, we must be careful not to impose explanatory frameworks, focus on big actors, be aware of the colonizing potential of the network and how we speak about both marginalized humans and objects. Fenwick suggested that after-ANT strategies can be used to look at the peripheries and the spaces between the nodes. Fenwick also suggested that it is useful to look at actants that are only partially translated through the network and how the network extends itself. Fenwick pointed

out the importance of identifying and incorporating all the things that make a difference, even those who have marginal effects. This is important when thinking about collaboration because of the multitude of actants that are recruited into the collaboration.

Flohr Sorensen's (2013) article explored how Latourian symmetry may affect the ethics of archaeology. Flohr Sorensen suggested that despite the emergence of Symmetrical Archaeology it is a field that has focused on the human. They suggest that there are several ways that archaeology might focus on the object. First, they examined Heritage practices, which could be said to protect and give rights to the object, however Flohr Sorensen pointed out that this only applies to certain objects, usually those of particular uniqueness, rather than the masses of mundane objects, that arguably have a more important impact on human culture. Therefore, this does not satisfy the requirements of a flat ontology. They then looked more specifically at how the human/ non-human paradigm might be understood in the field of archaeology. Does a tattoo become human, how about a prosthesis? Flohr Sorensen argued that the distinction between human/ non-human is on a continuum rather than a duality, and that even tools may be seen as an essential extension of the human body. Finally, they argued that perhaps objects have the right to dissolve or disappear rather than be incorporated into human heritage processes. Flohr Sorensen ended with the thought that rather than focus on the human, one should consider the relations of human, object, society, nature etc. when considering archaeological significance. This article is important to my thoughts on how the object(s) should be treated in an account, and how the objects of our daily lives often make more of a difference than those that seem special or important. This is because of our daily interactions with these mundane objects, in which we become habitualized. They then disappear in our accounts, even though they make a significant difference.

Gomart and Hennion (1999) described a subject-network using drug users and amateur

musicians as examples. These subjects created an active passion, where they simultaneously act and are acted upon. This entangles the actor within the network of objects, techniques, and ideas. Rather than describing the action as coming from the actor they described an action that comes from the network itself. The network action makes the subject/object, active/passive, agent/structure dichotomies impossible. This is important because it reminds us that the human does not only affect the object, but rather there is a give and take between the two that creates a dynamic network that is in constant movement.

Koyama (2013) explored how actor-networks are formed around refugees within the resettlement process. It looks at how refugees are assessed for educational and employment opportunities through a vast network of forms, human interactions such as interviews, social norms and other factors that often span multiple countries. The resulting networks often undermine notions of social mobility such as educational achievement, English skills, and past employment history as alternative trajectories are described. Some networks even undercut and expose the contradictions in the idea of the 'American Dream' and raise questions about opportunities for migrant communities, in particular refugees. This shows the expansiveness of the networks that can be created through seemingly simple interactions. Latour (2005) described the network as endless, where the limit is that of what the researcher can describe.

Moser and Law (1999) focused on the passages of a woman named Liv, who uses a wheelchair and aids to communicate. It looked at how these aids allow access to some obligatory passages, while some still remain unpassable. This changes the agency of the subject. The notion of technological aids as being simultaneously other while also being part of the subject is discussed as partial connection/ partial disconnection. This showed how the built environment allows for some agencies but not others. For example, if there is a ramp to enter the building a wheelchair user has the same agency as everyone else, however, if there are only stairs this

agency is curtailed. This related to collaboration due to the lone genius myth, which passages does this open, and which does it close? What agencies do online conferencing software such as Zoom, allow and which are prevented? This becomes especially relevant due to the fact that this study occurs during several phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mulcahy (2016) looked at the socio-material enactment of school policy through the Building the Education Revolution infrastructure program. Using interviews and videotaped interactions with the space they traced the interactions of the students, teachers, and principals in the implementation of 21st century learning policy. The material and social interactions between each group and the policy were different, leading to questions of not only how policy is enacted but also for whom. The authors concluded that looking at the assemblage allows for a fuller understanding of the factors that influence the sociomaterial realities of policy. This is relevant to the design of this research, as it takes a similar form. Using actors with different experiences of actant and the same experience allows for a fuller view of the assemblage as a whole.

These studies guided the research that follows, rather than being used in a prescriptive manner, they were used as a starting point as to how to approach this research. As Law (1999) stated ANT is a fluid process, and by incorporating its understanding of non-human actants into the philosophy of phenomenology we can enrich the thick description that comes from phenomenology. This inclusion of non-human actants follows the trajectory of phenomenology away from the subjective, as described above. Although this combination was not foreseen, it is within the spirit of both phenomenology and ANT.

2.6 Conclusion

Although there is not much written about how to teach collaborative projects in the classroom there are many scholars who deal with the practical and theoretical implications of collaboration and the idea that the lone artist is a myth, rather than a reality.

In this chapter I have examined the literature on collaboration and cooperation and how they differ, further refining the definition of collaboration. Looking at the history of art teaching we looked at how collaboration and apprenticeship models changed during modernism and the rise of the artist as "lone genius". This paradigm was challenged by many authors as untrue even during the period it persisted. Finally, the ideas of empathy, reciprocity and collaboration are explored through the literature.

The literature shows that both phenomenology and ANT privilege the experience of phenomena over theory. Although they do so in different ways, they both recognize the complex relationship between the subject and their world. In the next chapter, I will further expand on the use of these frameworks and methodologies.

3. Methodology and Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will look at how the literature on phenomenology and Actor-Network Theory and how it was used in this study. There have been studies undertaken in education and the social sciences using phenomenology and ANT that have influenced this research. Using phenomenology as a guide to create descriptions of the phenomenon of collaboration and ANT as a framework for the interactions between human and non-human actants, these studies gave structure to my research.

3.1 Use of Phenomenology

Phenomenology was used to guide the interview and descriptive methods in this study, there were several studies that guided my methods.

I used McPhail's "Phenomenology as Philosophy and Method: Applications to Ways of Doing Special Education" (1995) as a philosophical guide to understand how phenomenology may be applied to education. The article described phenomenology and why it is useful in researching special education but is equally applicable to education generally. Positivist inquiry and phenomenology have significantly different orientations to the life worlds of people and are able to create different types of knowledge or understandings. In special education this is a difference between an ontological position (phenomenology) and an epistemological one (positivist). McPhail described phenomenology as a descriptive philosophy that is interested in consciousness in the lived world. Rather than trying to find discoverable, regular patterns, such as positivist research, phenomenology looks towards finding understandings of phenomena. Phenomenologists are interested in understanding things as they appear in our consciousness, whether that be an individual or collective, and how this brings significance to experiences. They reject dualisms especially that of the objective and subjective world, rather they view

consciousness as something that is always constituted in reality and therefore is both subjective and objective. They believe that individual consciousness carries the past, present and anticipation of the future with it; there is a historicity and futuricity in all its relations. Finally, phenomenologists believe that the cultural world is co-constructed in lived experiences on both the individual and group level and therefore must be taken into account. Phenomenology does not follow prescribed rules but rather has guiding principles. These principles are: phenomenology is not interested in scientific knowledge but rather meaning that is constructed in the act of living. They value understanding not explanation. This understanding can be judged by its effectiveness in addressing the inquiry. Openness regarding the possibilities for humans to uncover their own categories or organizing themes rather than being prescribed by the researcher. Phenomenology effectively communicates the other's way of seeing things. This has implications in special education in that it can help us understand the child's relationship to the world and reveals the participants' way of viewing the world. It also challenges researchers to make our own consciousness an area of inquiry.

In considering the way to collect and work with the data I considered the methods used in several studies. "Transition into High School: A phenomenological study" by Ganeson and Ehrich (2009) examined the experience of transitioning from primary to secondary school for 16 students from one school. Ganeson and Ehrich identified 4 main themes of phenomenology, description, reduction, essences and intentionality and use Giorgi's translation of the phenomenological perspective into a methodology. Giorgi used reduction to analyse the descriptions, seek essential structures of the phenomenon, and identify the inseparable connectedness of human beings to the world. This study used journal entries as the sole method of data collection and analysed them in the following way: 1. Reading the entire description to

get a sense of the whole statement. 2. Discrimination of meaning units within a psychological perspective. 3. Transformation of the subject's everyday expressions into psychological language with emphasis on the phenomenon being investigated. 4. Synthesis of transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the experience being investigated. The data is the description lived experience of the participants rather than reflections, opinions, and analysis. The journal entries were divided into experiences and seven themes were created. The themes were school supporting transition through programs and activities, the significance of peers in helping or hindering transition, learning new procedures, locations and routine, learning occurs through academic, practical and extracurricular activities with some learning being more difficult than others, the feeling of confidence, achievement, and success can enhance the transition, homework volume is a challenge, and teachers' attitudes and abilities can affect the integration of students. This study places importance not on how students experience things but what they experience. Although the data collected in this dissertation was through interview and journal entries, rather than only journal entries, the reading and re-reading of the data, as well as categorizing into major themes was an important part of this study. The procedures that this study used to understand complex social relationships through description and categorization were translated to this research. Although the majority of the data collection took place as interviews, these were transcribed and became texts that were read over and over pulling out repetition of experiences, such as anxiety, communication, and achievement.

I have also referred to Petitmengin et al (2018) to guide the data collection and analysis. They suggest interviewing subjects on a single experience of the phenomenon, which they called "micro-phenomenology" (p. 692). This allows both the researcher and interviewee to reorient themselves towards the phenomenon and leave the natural attitude. Using these interviews "generic structures" (p.692) can be identified in the phenomenon. These are the

structures that belong to the experience as a whole, rather than just the individual. The interview is used to notice what otherwise would remain unnoticed in lived experience. The interviewer guides the participant to describe the phenomenon thoroughly, asking them to re-enact the experience. Later, the researcher sorts the interview in descriptive and non-descriptive statements, focusing on the first. Finally, the researcher looks at the structure of the experience, both for the individual and as an experience.

3.2 Use of Actor-Network Theory

These examples of ANT are examples of how non-human actants become important within the lived experience of the educational realm. In my study, non-human actants such as schedules and video conferencing software played a significant role in the experience of collaboration.

Fenwick (2010) described how actor-network theory might be applied to accountability in adult education in *Accountability practices in adult education: Insights from actor-network theory*. Using examples such as learner portfolios and Individual Learning Plans Fenwick looks at how the material objects affect the way that learning takes place, as well as how the objects affect the interactions between teachers and students. Accountability also defines what is visible, what counts and does not count in education. Fenwick described both non-counting and counting multiple narratives as ways of resisting oppressive forms of surveillance. Fenwick suggested that ANT is well positioned to describe accountability as it takes into account the whole network, rather than the individual, and also accounts for both human and non-human actors.

Likewise, Fenwick (2011) argued that actor-network theory can be a useful tool in looking at educational reform as it has the potential to look beyond social factors that affect the classroom. Fenwick suggested that although ANT can be used for researching educational

reform, after-ANT offers an expanding toolkit to explore these assemblages. In particular she warned that if using ANT, we must be careful not to impose explanatory frameworks, focus on big actors, be aware of the colonizing potential of the network and how we speak about both marginalized humans and objects. Fenwick suggested that after-ANT strategies can be used to look at the peripheries and the spaces between the nodes. Fenwick also suggested that it is useful to look at actants that are only partially translated through the network and how the network extends itself.

Koyama's "Resettling notions of social mobility: locating refugees as 'educable' and 'employable'" (2013) explored how actor-networks are formed around refugees within the resettlement process. It looked at how refugees are assessed for educational and employment opportunities through a vast network of forms, human interactions such as interviews, social norms and other factors that often span multiple countries. This combination of human and non-human interactions highly influences the outcomes of the migrants.

These examples of how human and non-human actants play important roles dictating the direction of lived experiences is why ANT was used in combination with phenomenology in this study. There are, however, critiques of how phenomenology can be evaluated as a method, given its focus on the lived experience.

3.3 Evaluation of phenomenological research

One critique of phenomenology is that it is not generalizable, and therefore not a reliable source of data (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013). It is correct that phenomenology is not generalizable, however this is not its objective (Creswell, 2007; van Manen, 1982). Rather the goal of phenomenology is to capture the experience of human life, or the lifeworld (van Manen, 1982), rather than merely producing data or theories about experience. Phenomenology allows us to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon, and how people may experience it. The goal of

phenomenology is not to create generalizable data, but rather use a systematic methodology that can be understood by those who are trained in a similar way, that the work has a systematic logic (Mays & Pope, 1995). This allows for a systematic approach to understanding individual experiences and allows for a better understanding of the phenomena when it occurs in similar contexts (Schon, 1995). Rather than generalizability this is referred to as transferability (Creswell, 2007). Collaboration is not a uniform experience between people, or by the same person in different contexts, because of the differences of actants within the assemblage. If we see both actors and actants as both changing over time and in orientation, each collaboration must be unique. Therefore, it is not the goal of this research to create a prescriptive definition of the experience of collaboration, or techniques of collaboration that can be applied in every situation. Instead, the goal is to find commonalities between collaborations that can be used as a guide for those interested in collaborating, or teaching collaboration to students. These guidelines help students and instructors think about the collaborative experience differently, and to consider how others may experience it.

Creswell (2007) suggested that there is a better way to evaluate phenomenological research than generalizability. They suggested that trustworthiness be used by evaluating the research on three aspects: Credibility; authenticity and transferability (2007). This means that the more systematic the data collection and analysis the more useful the study. Trustworthiness becomes the basis for evaluating the description of the phenomenon, rather than generalizability, because the context of the phenomenon cannot be replicated exactly and therefore conclusions regarding generalizability cannot be made.

Although neither phenomenology nor ANT allow for generalizability, they both give us insight into experiences that can be missed by quantitative methods. Merleau-Ponty (1989) echoes this idea by stating, "empiricism cannot see that we need to know what we are looking

for" (p.28). Data without context does not give us a true understanding of the human experience. Rather than dismissing either qualitative or quantitative methods we can see them as complimentary, capturing different aspects of the world and human experience. Phenomenology captures a deep understanding and contextualizes human experience.

3.4 Phenomenology

"Phenomenology provides a sound philosophical framework for studying the multifaceted dimensions of experiences and associated meanings of events" (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013, p.57). Phenomenology is used to describe our experience of the world through close observation which allows us to create categories or types using the essential aspects of the object. This allows us to identify the aspects of phenomenon that are common to all experience. Husserl (1977) wished to create a "true science" by putting aside the assumptions we hold about phenomena that colour the way that we perceive them (p.13/54). Phenomenology is a "critical reflection on conscious experience, rather than subconscious motivation, and is designed to uncover the essential invariant features of that experience" (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013). Husserl believed that the way of doing science contemporary to him relied too heavily on theory, rather than building theory from direct observation (1977 p13/54). Husserl believed this also obscured the role of the researcher in the scientific method.

Phenomenology uses reduction to observe the main features of a phenomenon. Using reduction, we can understand the essence (or features) of each category of thing (Husserl, 1977 p.34/72). The phenomenological reduction allows us to open our consciousness to different modes, or attitudes, that allow us to see different aspects of phenomena. These modes are the basis of science. "The purpose thus is to systematically analyze and compare the feelings, moods, thoughts and convictions of different individuals in order to draw patterns and describe variance that characterize an event experience" (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013, p.58). Through

reduction we are also able to understand horizons: aspects not perceived, but meant, we can use the example of a die, we are able to understand it as a die, without being able to perceive all six sides of the die at once. We understand that if we change our viewpoint the characteristics of the object will change, without it becoming a new object, it remains as purely meant (Husserl, 1977, p.40/78) throughout. This seems to leave us with two sorts of interrelated but separate knowledge, on the noetic side which is an understanding of the pure consciousness that is able to perceive the object, and on the noematic side the object as it is meant. This allows us not only to understand our world, but also our own thinking about the world.

Eidetic reduction allows us to imagine infinite variations of an object, to see which characteristics are essential. In eidetic reduction we can think about how the object can be changed while still remaining the same object, and which features if changed would change the object. For example, if we have a table, it could be blue or brown, made of plastic or wood, and still be a table, however, an essential feature of all tables is that they must have a flat surface and legs to hold up this surface, without this it becomes another type of thing. This is important because it helps us to understand the borders of complex phenomena such as collaboration. What is collaboration and what is not is not always apparent and differs between those who are describing the phenomenon. This study will describe and illuminate the features of collaboration through different types of experiences of it. Although collaboration is highly variable, it will look for places of commonality between collaborations in an attempt to describe what makes them that way.

We must orient ourselves to the phenomenon that allows us to see it in context (Lankford, 1984). Orienting ourselves allows us to observe the phenomenon outside of the natural attitude, our normal, intuitive way of understanding the world (Husserl, 1977 pp.33-34/ 72). In our daily lives we must take and understand phenomena as it appears, without an attitude

of questioning and deep observation. To eat breakfast, we do not have to consider what makes a fork a fork, and how its features are different from that of a spoon or a table. This is called the natural attitude. If we did not live our lives within the natural attitude, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to complete the daily tasks of life. However, to fully understand a phenomenon, the natural attitude is not sufficient, we must use close observation to describe and understand the features of our experience. This does not only apply to objects, but also to objects of thought (Streb, 1984). In the case of this research, we can collaborate with others, without considering how we are collaborating, and what it means to collaborate. It is only through describing the experience afterwards that we are able to understand the experience more fully.

A contentious aspect of phenomenology is the bracketing, in particular, how plausible it is. Figures like Husserl and Van Manen considered it an essential but difficult feature, a disposition where the natural attitude can be set aside for a period of time, whereas Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty think it is only partially possible, if at all. Phenomenology posits that the researcher is always implicated in the research that they are doing. Bracketing allows the researcher to put aside their knowledge of a phenomenon in order to observe it as though they have never seen it before. This process is meant to attenuate assumptions from the research. In this research, rather than attempt to set aside my knowledge, I will consider how it affects me as a researcher, as well as my description of my experience of teaching collaboration. Rather than trying to suppress the prior knowledge, as Husserl or Van Manen (1997) suggested, understanding how it affects my description and actions in teaching collaboration and acknowledging this is more in line with Merleau-Ponty and Actor-Network Theory. In both Merleau-Ponty's understanding and ANT, the researcher cannot be fully separated from the research, this is not a fault in the research, but rather a feature of it. The researcher, even in quantitative studies, is inextricably linked to the research, they set the questions to be studied,

determine the methods, and therefore the researcher cannot be completely objective. The difference being, that in phenomenology and ANT, as a researcher, one can acknowledge how these biases might affect the research, and how they are communicated. This is done through describing past experiences with the phenomenon, and considering how these experiences might affect the way that we perceive it in other instances. For example, does our knowledge of what a teacup is affect the way that we might utilise the vessel, could we, through careful observation of its form, find other and perhaps better or alternative uses of this object. Similarly, through careful observation we might find otherwise ignored features of collaboration that may allow us to understand it better and utilise it in new ways in the classroom.

This close observation allows us to understand the world that we live in. This is the basis for phenomenological philosophy, that we as subjects can understand the objective world. This underpinning allows for the possibility of understanding that we comprehend the world through our body, via our perceptions. According to Husserl this sets us apart from the object, and allows us to perceive ourselves as subjects (1977, p.106/136). This is the first step towards intersubjectivity.

3.4.1 Intersubjectivity in Phenomenology

To be able to understand collaboration we must have a theory of how people come to know each other, or intersubjectivity. If we use a theory where this is impossible, then collaboration becomes meaningless.

Husserl spoke to intersubjectivity specifically in the *Fifth Meditation of the Cartesian Meditations* (1977). Phenomenology posits that we can understand objects through close observation which allows us to create categories or types using the essential aspects of the object. Using reduction, we can understand the essence (or features) of each category of thing (Husserl,

1977, p.106/ 136). It allows us to understand which aspects of a phenomenon are required and which are mutable. Categorization is also an important aspect of intersubjectivity within Husserl's phenomenology. It allows us to understand the nature of a thing based on its characteristics. These features do not change from each example within one category. Intersubjectivity begins with a reflection and understanding of our own selves and body. Through reflection we can come to understand that our bodies are what contains our egos, or subjectivity, that without our bodies we would not be able to perceive the world, and therefore we would not be able to create thoughts (Husserl, 1977, p.109/139). Taking this further, we can see that there are others, with bodies similar to ours, and through their actions we can see that they also interact with the same objective world that we do. These actions are harmonious with our perception of the world, and therefore we can assume that this body, like ours, also contains an ego (p.107/137).

Husserl (1977) related this to the phenomenological concept of appresentation, that when we see an object, we never see it all at once, rather only one view of it. We can only perceive the object from our own point of view. Using the example of a table from earlier in the chapter, we might only see the top and front legs of the table, but we still categorically understand it as belonging to the category table without having to perceive its entirety As we walk around the table, and observe its other legs, this confirms our perception. We are also able to understand horizons: aspects not perceived but meant such as the unseen table legs. We understand that if we change our viewpoint the characteristics of the object will change, without it becoming a new object, it remains the same object throughout (p.39/77). Husserl stated that there is a similar phenomenon with the other, which he calls co-presentation, but there is a distinct difference between appresentation and co-presentation. With appresentation we can, in time, view the

complete object and confirm its identity, whereas with co-presentation we can never truly confirm the ego, therefore, we can only know the other through their objective, bodily, actions (Husserl, 1977, p. 92/124). We project our own ego onto the other, this allows for a conception of the other while still centering our own subjectivity.

Husserl (1977) claimed that we can understand the other by considering how we would act if we were in their place. If our here was there, where the other is, we would act in the same way as them. This creates intersubjectivity and involves reciprocity, we create empathy for the other by putting ourselves in their place. "The "Other", according to his own constituted sense, points to me myself; the other is a "mirroring" of my own self and yet not a mirroring proper, an analogue of my own self and yet not an analogue in the usual sense" (Husserl, 1977, p. 94/ 125). This empathy or mirroring is not limited to humans, and Husserl includes animals within those to which intersubjectivity can extend, however he considers animals and those with perceptional differences as 'abnormal' humans in regard to how we understand their subjectivity. This points to a primacy of the 'typical' human within Husserl's understanding of the world, and this is problematic in a pluralistic society. There are other ways that humans can come to know each other; cultural objects being one of these ways.

Cultural objects are also important to Husserl's intersubjectivity, these objects create community through shared meaning within a culture. This shared sense of the world helps to refine the category to which each person belongs. Husserl's understanding of intersubjectivity relies predominantly on the subjective, however, it would not be able to exist without a shared objective reality. This is important, because phenomenology posits that there is only one objective world, rather than each subject having their own world (p.130/158). This is a departure from pure subjectivity, where the outside world is entirely an individual experience. It is what

allows for subjects to collaborate and understand one another. Husserl does not go so far as to extend agency to the object, and the world continues to be viewed primarily through the subjective lens. However, by acknowledging a shared world Husserl allows for a shared experience of said world.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's views of intersubjectivity further leave behind subjectivity. He theorized that bodily perception is key to our understanding of the world and shapes our subjectivity (1968; 2013). Rather than an intellectual understanding of the other as Husserl contends, Merleau-Ponty (2013) argued that we innately understand the other as ego and that we live in a shared world with them (p.372/413). Without bodily perception there would be no ego, and that all subjective thought emanates from and is shaped by the perceived world (Merleau-Ponty, 2013, p. 210/246). This further breaks down the subject/ object dichotomy proposed by Descartes but does not rid itself of it completely. Merleau-Ponty described sensation as being both touched and touching the world, although he believed that we cannot feel these sensations simultaneously (1968, p.133). These moves towards an objective agency are not complete but give us a sense of what a phenomenology without the primacy of subjectivity might look like.

Both actor-network theory and phenomenology consider objects as an important part of how intersubjectivity is theorized; neither relies solely on subjective experience to theorize the world. This can be seen in phenomenology as early as Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* (1977), where in the fifth meditation he discussed the importance of cultural objects and the shared objective world in our conception of the life world. Merleau-Ponty also used the body as a way of thinking about the subject/ object relationship with the world (2013, p.364/406).

Phenomenology also allows for the other to be treated as an object. Husserl's (1977) conception of intersubjectivity relies on reciprocity and empathy to see the other as a subject, and

even then, only indirectly through their actions. This opens the possibility to refuse the other's

subjectivity and to interact with them only as an object, and this is especially true in cases

where it is not easy to understand the actions of others, which could be shaped by radically

different experiences of the world. Since phenomenology does not extend agency to the object

this can reduce the power of the individual. Even when subjectivity is granted, Husserl (1977)

suggested that we can only know the other indirectly, through their actions, which does not

allow for any deeper understanding of difference (p.131/159). This is different from the

conception in ANT.

In actor-network theory, Bruno Latour in *Reassembling the Social* treated subjects and

objects symmetrically within the assemblage; acknowledging that both have agency and the

impact they can make. Although there are many similarities between actor-network theory

(ANT) and phenomenology, such as starting from observation and thick description, there are

also very important distinctions about how they view the subject/ object relationship within the

world. It is important to note that neither phenomenology nor actor-network theory are

monolithic, both Latour and Husserl wanted them to be open and adaptable, and this means that

there are a wide range of theories and conceptions within each theory, some of which are

contradictory (Husserl, 1977; Latour, 1999). For the purposes of this dissertation, Husserl and to

a lesser extent Merleau-Ponty's formulation will be the focus for phenomenology and Latour

will be the focus for ANT.

3.5 Actor- Network Theory

Collaboration is complex and involves interactions between many different entities. Both

human and non-human factors depend on one another to create a successful collaboration.

Because of this complex network, collaboration is difficult to describe and understand what

makes one collaboration successful and one not. Actor-Network Theory creates a framework

that takes into account both the human and non-human factors that affect how we experience

collaboration, and because of this ability to describe complex phenomena, it will be used in this

study. The mediation of interaction through technology is especially true due to the context of

the collaborations in this study, some of which happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. This

means that the interactions between students and instructors during this time was heavily

mediated by technology.

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) allows for the circulation of ideas, people, and materials to

be tracked through the complex network of actors within collaboration. Bruno Latour argued in

Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory (2005) that the social does

not cause the relationships between the actors in a network but rather is created by them. This is

similar to phenomenology's insistence on describing experiences, rather than theorizing why

they exist. Actors in ANT need not be human or even animate, but rather are considered

anything that makes a difference. Making a difference means that the actor or actant influences

the outcome of the situation, the actant could be human, object, or idea. This is important

because it expands agency within the experience of subjects.

In this study the artists, viewers, materials and ideas, are considered as actors within a

network, and circulate through the network through different pathways. This study examines

how the actors circulate through the network of collaboration, as well as how the networks shift

over time. Collaboration creates complex networks of actors who interact with each other in

various ways. Rather than trying to explain the cause of the network, ANT seeks to trace actors

and create a thick description (Lezaun, 2017). Another important aspect of ANT is that it does

not pre-define the boundaries of the network it studies. Actors can enter and leave the network

based on the strength of their bonds to other actors (Latour, 2005). John Law (1999) suggested

that it is the repetition of ideas within the network that creates durable bonds and stability within the network, this would suggest that the more relationships between actors are repeated the more stable they become. It is important to note here that although actor-networks can become more or less stable they are not permanent or fixed networks. This allows for the possibility of change within the network, as actors are recruited in and out of the network. This is particularly relevant within collaboration, where actors and actants can come and go throughout the process, and their relationships shift over time. Several of the collaborations in this research happened over multiple years with significant shifts in boundaries. Actors are marked by inclusion or exclusion from the network as they are recognized as making a difference or not (Lee and Stenner, 1999). Actor- network theory also centers the interactions between subjects and objects as important to its theory. Rather than centering the subject as the main point of action within the assemblage Latour is interested in what "makes a difference" (2005, p.71). This means that Latour ascribes agency to both subjects and objects within the assemblage. The assemblage is the phenomenon, and the web of actants that make a difference to it. Latour referred to both subjects and objects as actors or actants, which play an active role within the assemblage. He does not treat the agency of objects and subjects as the same, rather as symmetrically, having different types of agencies of equal importance. This is different from the agency ascribed to objects through theories such as Object-oriented ontology (OOO) or New Materialism, which treat the agency of humans and non-humans as the same (Boysen, 2018; Harman, 2018) and creates a significant difference between these three sociomaterial theories. Non-symmetrical agency allows for objects to have agency with less likelihood of anthropomorphizing, as their agency can take different forms than that of human agency and does not need to be viewed as the same as that of humans.

Rather than the social creating the interaction between actors within the assemblage, Latour views the social as being created by these interactions (2005, p.8). This is an important distinction, as it means that we cannot use the social to explain these interactions (Latour, 2005, p.48). In the case of collaboration for example, it is the interactions between materials, ideas, and collaborators that creates the trust (or lack thereof) within the collaboration, rather than the social creating the trust necessary to collaborate. It accounts for biases in the same way as it accounts for other ideas and concepts, as part of the assemblage that change the temporary bonds between actants. This aligns with the phenomenological emphasis on the experience dictating the theoretical, rather than vice versa. It is the interactions of the actants that create the social in ANT, not the social dictating the interactions. The goal of ANT is to use thick description to illuminate these interactions rather than trying to explain them through overarching theories, such as the social, or the economy. ANT is focused on the interactions between the actants, which is illustrated in its motto "Follow the actors themselves" (Latour, 2005, p.12). This has a strong focus on the 'I can', or actions of the actants, rather than a static identity. Each actant can have an effect on the other, recruiting them into the assemblage. It is the actants themselves within the assemblage that creates the boundaries of the group formation, and this is a constantly fluctuating process. Group and assemblage membership changes and is only generally stable when the assemblage no longer makes a difference (Latour, 2005, p.35). The activity between the objects at the boundaries of the assemblage is particularly vital within ANT, as their recruitment (or lack thereof) into the assemblage defines its very nature. Boundary objects are of particular importance to the group formation within ANT, as they help clarify what is and is not part of the group.

ANT allows for the objective world to have agency and affect the way that subjects interact with it and each other. This allows one to take into account the built environment when

discussing difference. Although still built upon Cartesian dualisms ANT rejects the stance that only the subject has agency. This allows for different ways of interacting with the built environment, and accounts for difference when understanding things like disability or race. ANT rejects the idea that the social causes interactions and rather posits that the interactions themselves create the social (Latour, 2005, p.5). The historicity becomes embedded within the interactions which can become more stable over time. As they stabilize, they become ingrained patterns which shape the ways that we habitually interact with the world. There is always the possibility of changing or dissolving the assemblage, and membership within the assemblage is created through recruitment by other actors. This is important to collaboration because the other actors/ actants can change one's habitual patterns of interaction.

Obligatory points of passage include and exclude certain actors within the assemblage. Group formation is caused by the interaction of these actors. Each actor is recruited by another, human or non-human, actor. This creates an assemblage with actors who are more central and those on the periphery and may cease being part of the assemblage because of their weaker links to it. To describe the network the researcher must follow the actors within it, rather than impose limitations or boundaries in advance (Latour, 2005, p.184). This, more so than phenomenology, allows us to question the systematic aspects of how we interact, and the importance of objects and built environments in these interactions.

Although this allows for a broader view of difference ANT does not account for Indigenous ways of knowing that precede it and does not acknowledge them even though ANT is a relatively new theory and access to these ontologies has been available to ANT scholars. Given that major works in ANT were written in the last thirty years, non-European modes of thoughts and scholarship were accessible, and ideas surrounding colonialism were being discussed in sociology. This will be discussed further later in this chapter.

3.6 Phenomenology and Actor-Network Theory

Both phenomenology and ANT rely on objects to create intersubjectivity, but in very different ways. They both acknowledge that we live in the same objective world, even if our experiences of the world change our understanding of it. This is an important foundation for intersubjectivity, as for without a shared world there would be no possibility of understanding the other. Both place importance on actions within intersubjectivity, using our interactions with the world as a basis for understanding. They both rely on thick description and seek to minimize or eliminate the assumptions they see in scientific and sociological methods. Rather than using explanations and theories to understand the interactions of subjects and objects, they wish to build these categories again based on observed phenomena. These similarities create a way to relate the tenets of phenomenology and ANT, but there are also very important differences.

The way that agency is distributed between the subject and object differs in phenomenology and ANT. Phenomenology centers the human as the one who has lived experience and therefore their account of the object as well as other subjects is primary. ANT rejects the separation between subject and object and instead considers how things act in relation to one another. Whereas in phenomenology, the subject holds the agency in ANT agency is dispersed throughout all the actors in the assemblage. This difference is important to how we see the roles of objects within the life world, and how they interact with us. In this study objects will be considered to have agency and have an impact on the life world of the participants.

Rather than a contradiction to the tenets of phenomenology, ANT is a logical continuation of the stated purpose of Husserl, to question the assumptions that underpin our views of the world. Merleau-Ponty already further dismantles the subject/ object duality that is passed down to Husserl through Descartes. Until recently this dualism (among others) has underpinned much of Western philosophy, and this is the exact sort of thing that Husserl

believes needs to be questioned. ANT and phenomenology bring up similar questions about how we see the world, and the bases for our understanding of it, such as the scientific method, psychology, and sociology. Indigenous ways of knowing open the possibility for non-human actants to play a larger role within phenomenon, and what makes a difference. This is discussed later in the next chapter.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter we looked at the literature relating to the use of phenomenology and ANT not only as philosophical positions but as ways of doing research. This chapter also engages the ways that these two orientations are combined to give a thick description of experience of phenomenon. In the next chapter we will outline the steps taken during this research and how they relate to both phenomenology and ANT.

4. Research Design

Much like any artistic creation, collaborative activities do not unfold in a linear and predictable manner. Collaboration in the classroom is a complex and multifaceted experience, which ties together many different agents. To understand the experience of collaboration this study will use phenomenology as a methodology, and Actor-Network Theory (hereby referred to as ANT) as a theoretical framework. Both focus on the experience of the actors and actants, as well as prioritize the experiential over the theoretical. This helps to eliminate what we think we know, and helps the researcher focus on the individual's experience of the phenomenon, in this case collaboration.

Both actor-network theory and phenomenology focus on experience as a way to understand a phenomenon. This occurs through a deep description of the experience. Rather than building a description of collaboration based on a theoretical framework both ANT and phenomenology use the experience to build a theory based on the shared aspects of experience. Whereas phenomenology prioritizes the human agent, ANT sees both human and non-human agents as making a difference, and both are considered active parts of the experience. Using ANT to underpin the phenomenological experience of collaboration brings in an awareness of the non-human actants who affect the collaborative projects. This enriches our understanding of the experience, and particularly how it is mediated by materials and technology.

This chapter will describe the sites of research, research design, how the data was collected and analyzed, and ethical considerations. There are four distinct sites of research that illuminate different aspects of collaboration. The research design helps to clarify the similarity and differences of these sites, as does the data analysis. There are also important ethical considerations when studying collaboration, especially within the classroom context, as it never involves only one person and there are power imbalances, such as between the instructor and

students who are graded by them. Therefore, consideration as to how to best protect all those involved was needed and will be discussed.

This chapter will also highlight areas of phenomenology and actor-network theory that are relevant to this research and then explore how they will be used. Both phenomenology and actor-network theory are conceived as guides rather than prescriptive rules, both shifting over time as they were used by researchers and philosophers, and in this research have been used in a way to best illuminate the features of collaboration. In this chapter some of the differences between ways of using phenomenology and actor-network theory will be discussed and why certain methods have been used over others.

Finally, the academic implications of appropriating while simultaneously ignoring Indigenous ways of being in sociomaterial philosophy will be discussed. Although in no way a comprehensive discussion of the topic, it is important to acknowledge the intellectual debt we have to indigenous ways of thinking in all sociomaterial research.

4.1 Sites of research

There are four different intersecting sites of research in this study. The researcher/instructor/ artist, the student participating in a collaborative project, the instructor of the collaborative project, and the artist who collaborates. Each of these participants will be described further below, and the intersections between them further explained.

4.1.1 Researcher/ Instructor/ Artist

This encompasses my experience as both a researcher investigating the experience of collaboration but also as an instructor teaching a collaborative project within the university classroom. This account is coloured by my experiences of collaboration as an artist, and how they affect my perceptions as both a researcher and instructor. This account is important to the

study as it reveals both my experiences and biases towards the subject. This experience is also coloured by my experiences as a student in visual arts, having worked with other students on artistic projects in my undergraduate degree. As I studied printmaking it is common for students to work together to effectively use the large presses, in particular during lithographic processes. Although this does not fit this study's definition of collaboration, it was an important part of my student experience. In studio arts there are many different roles while working together that differ from collaborators, including apprentice, studio assistant, or in this case co-worker. These intersections of collaboration, as student, instructor and researcher, play a major role in the motivation behind the research and permeate the descriptions of collaboration.

4.1.2. Students

This category includes students in the Art Education program at Concordia University. Concordia University is situated in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. They were students in ARTE 434, Professional Practices for Art Educators, this course has many components, one being studio work. This course is the last required class in the program and is typically taken right before graduation. As such all students in the class were asked to collaborate on making an artwork and creating a lesson plan based on it. This was the third project out of four, so they had time to get to know each other prior to the collaboration. Many but not all the students had had classes with each other prior to this course. Due to the nature of the Art Education program, students came from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, and their ages varied. Of the students who volunteered two of the students interviewed are female, and one is male.

4.1.3. Instructors

This site included three instructors from two universities in Canada. Both universities are located in cities of over one million people, one in western Canada and one in eastern Canada. Two of the instructors co-taught one course, and were interviewed together. All the instructors

had taught prior to the pandemic; however, all chose to describe experiences that happened during Covid protocols or hybrid teaching experiences. This may be because the interviews happened during the beginning of the return to in person teaching, and the most recent experiences in teaching were during the pandemic. The isolation of the pandemic was also cited by all three instructors as a motivation to have students do a collaborative project. The pair of instructors H.A. and S.L. are in tenured positions, whereas S.V. is part-time faculty. All the instructors are female.

4.1.4. Artists

Two interviews took place with mid-career artists who have each had multiple collaborative experiences throughout their careers. Both artists had been practicing and exhibiting for than ten years. Both described long term collaborations that took place over multiple years. One artist, C.J. also described a shorter-term project that happened over several months. Both artists were working in a North American context, one in Canada and one in Mexico and the United States. One of the artists is male, and one is female.

4.2 Data Collection

Participants for this study were solicited in three ways, self-study, snowball method and personal contacts. Having worked in the visual arts as an artist, instructor and gallerist, I have extensive contacts in the visual arts, many of whom fit the criteria for this study. Therefore, the first method of solicitation was through my personal contacts. Due to similar levels of professional activity, there was not a large power imbalance between myself and the professionals that I interviewed, who were all established professionally. This minimizes the ethical implications of using personal and professional contacts.

The instructors that I interviewed worked in a studio arts context, two were tenured or tenure track, the other was part-time. These instructors had all been teaching over five years at the university level. They all valued collaboration as a part of their teaching practice. The university with the collaborative instructors has an undergraduate program only, whereas the university in which S.V. taught is a research university with a graduate program in studio arts. Although the instructors worked for two different institutions, I was familiar with both, but had not been an instructor or student in either program. This helped me to understand the context of the institution, as well as the type of students that they serve.

Instructors were solicited through personal contacts of the researcher. They were all interviewed using Zoom. One of the instructors, S.L. co-taught the course she wanted to discuss and therefore her co-instructor, H.A. was interviewed at the same time. H.A. and S.L. built on each other's experiences during the interview and interviewing them at the same time brought different information than if they had been interviewed separately. Although there are benefits and disadvantages of both approaches, the instructors felt more comfortable being interviewed together, so this is how we proceeded. S.V. the third instructor was also interviewed via Zoom. These interviews were also transcribed using software and checked by hand.

All the students in my class were asked to participate in the research by a third party, and their consent forms were stored in a secure location until the grades for the course were submitted. After the submission of grades, students who agreed to participate were contacted via email, to confirm that they would still participate, of the four who originally agreed, three were interviewed. They were given the choice of whether to be interviewed in person at a public location, or via Zoom. Two were interviewed on Zoom and one in person. Although the Zoom interviews were more convenient for the participants, I found it more difficult to create a fluid

exchange of ideas over Zoom. The participant who was interviewed in person was interviewed in a park that they selected. This informal setting allowed for more relaxed conversation, although recording was a bit more difficult due to wind and other noises. The interviews were transcribed using transcription software, and the transcriptions were reviewed by hand.

Artists were solicited through personal contacts of the investigator, as well as through snowball method. Snowball sampling is when the interviewee is asked to suggest others who may also be interviewed, in this case the artists and instructors who were interviewed in the first phase were asked if they had recommendations for people to interview (Goodman, 1961). This led to two mid-career artists, with different practices, one land art and one performance, agreeing to be interviewed. Both interviews were conducted using Zoom, and were transcribed using transcription software, and the transcriptions were reviewed by hand. Here I was interested if how the experiences of artists collaborating differed from those of students, in particular, whether the context of the professional milieu (studio or gallery) created different interactions than that of the classroom.

It is interesting to note that other than the two instructors, no collaborative teams were interview (students or artists), so we only have the perspective of one collaborator for each project. Having all the collaborators on the same project describe their experiences would be a compelling area of future study.

4.3 Data Analysis

The researcher in the phenomenological study must collect data from multiple people who have experienced the phenomenon, using quotes from the interviews to create themes (Creswell, 2007; Ziakas & Boukas, 2013). In this research, participants who have different perspectives on collaboration due to their different roles in relationship to it have been

interviewed. This allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the experience of collaboration within different context. My own experiences of collaboration helped to guide the research, and the questions asked to each set of participants (see Annex C).

There is a lack of a prescriptive method or methodological framework for both phenomenology and ANT (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013) that allows the researcher to customize their research methods to the phenomenon being studied. Although this can be a benefit since it allows a large amount of flexibility, it also makes it more difficult to create a systematic methodology using phenomenology. In this research, the experience of collaboration was captured by doing interviews with those who experience different aspects of collaboration. "Consequently, the interview questions should be unstructured and open in order to allow the informants to describe and reflect on their experiences" (Ziakas & Boukas, 2013).

The interviews were conducted, transcribed, and read multiple times, looking for the unique and common experiences within each interview. These common themes also connected to my experiences as a collaborative artist. Due to the fact that the experiences and therefore the interviews were not uniform, both the individual and the common themes from the experiences were analysed and each discussed individually. The participants were made confidential so that collaborators and students could not be identified. Although many participants agreed to be identified during the process, upon further reflection it would have been impossible to make confidential the other people tangentially involved in their collaboration or their students if they were not made confidential, therefore they have each been given a code.

The participants were separated into three groups: student, instructor, or artist. Some of the participants fell into multiple groups, however, they were interviewed based on one role in particular. The interview questions were crafted based on each particular role, and the

experiences that may come up for each. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for the differences in experience of the participants, and flexibility during the interview. Due to the unique nature of each role, each had its own interview questions as well as its own section within the data analysis (interview questions in Appendix C).

Finally, the observations of the experience of collaboration were synthesized into recommendations for teaching collaboration in the university studio art classroom. These recommendations can help guide instructors to support their students through collaborative processes and help them build structures of support within the classroom. These recommendations will not encompass all possible outcomes or students' needs but rather a flexible structure for instructors to use to start thinking about the skills associated with collaboration and how to best introduce and support students during the experience of collaboration. Much like collaboration itself, these recommendations should be supple, and moldable to the specificity of the classroom context.

4.4. Ethical Consideration

Due to the nature of collaboration as well as interviewing my students as part of the study there were particular ethical considerations that were addressed.

The students in my class all participated in a collaborative project as part of the class, regardless of their participation in this research. After the course had started but prior to the project beginning, Dr. Juan Carlos Castro, read a description of the research, and collected consent forms from students who wished to participate. This occurred while I was out of the room, and Dr. Castro retained the consent forms until the final grades were submitted and approved by the chair of the department for the class. This course was in the final semester for most students in the program, and it was highly unlikely that Dr. Castro or I would teach the

students in the future. This mitigated the power imbalance that existed between instructor and student, as I would not know who participated until after the course had concluded and was unlikely to teach the students again.

Once the course grades were submitted, I contacted the students who originally agreed to participate. Of the four who originally were interested, three agreed to be interviewed, and one withdrew consent. Participants were given the option to do the interview in person or on Zoom, an online meeting software, and two decided on being interviewed over Zoom.

Another issue that occurred was confidentiality. Originally in the ethics protocol interviewees were able to choose whether they would use a pseudonym, and several of them chose not to use a pseudonym. After conducting the interviews, I realized that it would be impossible to make confidential their collaborators and students if the interviewees were named. Therefore, all interviewees were made confidential in the thesis to protect non-participants who were involved in their projects.

The only exception to this is my account, due to the impossibility of confidentiality. Due to this I was careful in re-reading my description to exclude any details that might identify particular students, whether they were interviewed or not.

4.4.1 Other Ethical Considerations with Socio-material Philosophies

Many western conceptions of importance center the experience of the human over the other actants. This is important because it can dismiss how other actants affect our lives, as well as non-human phenomena. This is especially important given the mediation of interactions through technology during the Covid-19 pandemic and its continued aftermath. It is also key due to the impact of climate change on our interactions with each other and the world around us.

It is not just an issue of a narrow conception of difference as abnormal within these theories but a larger systematic neglect of non-Western ways of knowing and those epistemologies being considered as inferior to those typically presented within the academy. Not taking seriously and neglecting non-Western philosophy is rooted in colonialism as well as intellectualism. Dolleen Tisawii'ashii Manning stated that "Indigenous ways of knowing have been delegitimized, pathologized, and reduced to obscurantism, or primitive and infantile ineptitude" (2017, p.156). Rosiek et al. also argue that the lack of engagement with Indigenous ideas surrounding the object/ subject dualism is due to the ingrained colonialism within academic institutions (2020, p.333).

The neglect of other ways of knowing and being in the world stems from an academy that has predominantly favoured theories of European men. As we begin to question colonial ideas and expand our ways of knowing and being within the world, through theories such as Critical Phenomenology, and sociomaterial theories such as ANT, the continued neglect of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies weakens our understanding of the world. The important contributions of these ways of knowing need to be acknowledged for phenomenological and sociomaterial theories to continue to move forward.

Rosiek et al (2020) suggested that many of the ideas of sociomaterial theories are present in Indigenous studies and cultures and questions why scholars have not significantly engaged with Indigenous ideas and cited them in their work. They stated that by not acknowledging Indigenous scholarship we are engaging in colonialist behaviour and argued the lack of engagement with Indigenous scholars is unjustified and it is the responsibility of Eurocentric authors to engage in a meaningful way with Indigenous thought. Indigenous scholars engaging in scholarship regarding non-human agency are not being acknowledged and cited by ANT and

other sociomaterial theories. This undermines their ability to remain relevant in a pluralist society. This is particularly important given that one of the goals of collaboration is to create connections between students, listening to, acknowledging, and promoting the voice of the other within the collaborative framework. This involves the promotion of accepting and validating different ways of understanding and seeing the world.

Interaction with the other is paramount to education. In a world that is increasingly connected we often interact with people who are radically different from us and must have an understanding of how to engage with difference. Within the contemporary educational context scholars aim to create a curriculum that allows for pluralism and seeks to be able to describe the richness of interactions between different points of views and experiences. Openness to the other is a vital part of working together and necessitates understanding both ways of being in the world and ways of knowing that are different from ours. Being able to describe the process of coming to know the other through a variety of experiences is key to explaining the way we can expand students' thinking about the world. To do this we must expand our understanding beyond a white Western paradigm that separates the subject from their environment. This means that the inclusion of non-human actants in our descriptions is important, but also that we must acknowledge where these ideas originated, and the impact of non-western philosophy in our worldview. Although ANT is open to non-human actants, it does not acknowledge the non-western roots of these philosophies. This remains problematic as it continues to center western thought over indigenous voices. The focus on the human centric, generalizable, and 'scientific' or 'objective' ways of understanding the world limits our ability to understand complex phenomena as well as acknowledging how our view of the world as a researcher affects the

results of a study. Thinking about methodology using different paradigms allows us to be open to new experiences of the world.

4.5 Conclusion

There are many ethical considerations when researching both student learning and collaboration. In particular, how does one best describe these phenomena while keeping confidential those who are tangentially involved but not participating in the study. For this reason, all the data has been made confidential, including in most cases the universities where the instructors teach. The exception to this is my own account, which cannot be confidential as it is self-study. This account focused on my experiences as a researcher and instructor, and therefore did not implicate students in the account, which helped keep students' identities confidential. In the case of the artists keeping their identities confidential protected their collaborators, as information about their projects has been published. Although the collaborations of the students have not been published, their colleagues may read this research and be able to identify the collaborators, therefore, to be extremely cautious, their names have also been made confidential.

To understand complex phenomenon, we must use methods that can capture the variety of experiences of them and synthesis the connections between them. The experience of collaboration must be understood to be able to better support collaborative projects within the classroom. Through phenomenology, with an understanding that objects also make a difference in our experiences of phenomenon, we can better describe the complexity of collaboration within the artistic milieu and within the classroom. By understanding the features of the experience of collaboration we can create better structures to support our students through their experiences of collaboration. We are also able to model different ways of creating knowledge within the

classroom through openness to experiences significantly different than our own. By thinking about what makes a difference within the phenomena, we are better able to find its essence or features.

The research design illuminates different facets of collaboration by interviewing those with different experiences of it. Rather than seeking out a large sample of participants each was interviewed in depth regarding their experience. This allows for a deep rather than broad view of collaboration. Both through in-depth interviews with each participant but also by choosing participants who have experienced different facets of collaboration, as a student, instructor, or practicing artist. By highlighting these different experiences one can understand how to best think about the needs of students and instructors during a collaborative project, but also what skills they may need once they enter their professional lives.

5. Data Analysis

In this chapter the interviews and research journal of the participants and researcher will be analysed. The chapter is divided into four parts, the first interviews with other instructors who teach collaborative projects in the studio classroom, the second looks at my experience as an instructor and researcher, the next explores the experiences of students involved in a collaborative project, and finally artists who collaborate. These sections are further divided into the experiences of each individual participant and the themes that arise in collaboration more generally. The themes derived from the interviews are Flexibility and Openness, Process and Structure and Community and Relationships. These themes were determined using the interviews, as well as though my experiences as a collaborator, instructor, and researcher. As I read through the transcripts, they stood out to me, and repeated over the interviews in various forms. These themes permeate the interviews, in some cases more and others less.

The interviews with the instructors took place prior to the collaborative project in my own class commenced. This allowed me to consider how to best prepare the collaborative project in my course. Although there was some overlap, my teaching environment was different to those in which they were teaching, art education compared to studio arts, as well as in person versus online or hybrid. My course was an in-person art education course with a studio component, whereas H.A. and S.L.'s course was studio arts and hybrid, and S.V.'s was fully online in studio arts. Because of this and my hybrid role as both instructor and researcher, the data regarding other instructors has been separated from mine.

Although there are many theories of how to maximize efficiency within business collaboration (Batt and Purchase, 2004; Schrage 1990; Thomson and Perry, 2006) there are not many descriptions of both the interactions between artists and materials within collaboration. How we view the agency and importance of materials within artwork plays an important role as to how we would conceive the relationship between collaborators. The ability of materials and

tools (both physical and digital) to make a significant difference within the collaboration is taken into account in these descriptions, and is aligned with actor network theory principles. The materials that we work with changes the way that we are able to work together.

ANT theory suggests that without the shared objective world (one physical world that is the same, but perceived differently, for everyone) between people we would have little to no basis for creating understanding as we could not assume that we lived in the same reality (Harman, 2007). In the case of artistic collaboration this shared world could be cultural, a shared understanding of materials, or concepts. This allows for a potential point of departure for working within collaboration. To better understand the experience of collaboration within the visual arts I used four sets of experiences of collaboration, three instructors of two studio classes in studio arts who have major collaborative projects as part of the syllabus, my own as an artist, researcher, and the instructor of an undergraduate art education class, three students in that class, and two artists who work collaboratively as part of their practices. Each of these experiences elucidates different aspects of the collaborative process and allows us to consider how we might teach the skills and attitudes necessary to collaborate. All the participants have been made confidential to protect the identity of their students and/or collaborative partners.

The interviews were transcribed using Trint, a transcription app, reviewed by the researcher, and carefully read and re-read. This was discussed in detail in the Methodology chapter. Through the reading of the interviews the researcher developed a sense of the experience of the participants. The interviews were then compared to locate any areas of intersection that may lead to a better understanding of collaboration. Using Petitmengin-Peugeot's (1999) methods the interviews were conducted in a way to get participants to describe their experiences of collaboration without further explanation. In phenomenology it is important that the explanation stems from the description of experience, rather than vice versa, Husserl

(1977) believed that a major problem with science was that it used theory to explain phenomena, rather than allowing the phenomena to create the theory (p.12/52). The participants' experiences will be broken down chronologically and categorically (Petitmengin-Peugeot, 1999; Petitmengin et al, 2019). The experiences of participants will then be compared to make a generic description of the experience of collaboration (Petitmengin-Peugeot, 1999; Petitmengin et al 2019). The interviews are divided by the role of the interviewee, and discussed individually and as a category, for example what it is like to collaborate as a student within a class.

Using the framework of both ANT and phenomenology, large sections of description have come directly from quotation, interviewees have been given the opportunity to revise their statement, ensuring that the participant's meaning is not lost and is as they intended. One participant, S.V., chose to revise their statements for clarity after the interview. This is explained in further detail in the earlier methodology chapter.

There are several challenges in using phenomenology within an ANT framework, one is the volume of data collected. The combination of using deep description and taking into account both human and non-human factors create a large data set, and it will be difficult to determine what features are essential to collaboration. This was especially true because of the mediation of almost all the interviews via Zoom. Although this technology has definite benefits, as I would not have been able to interview several of the participants in person without significant travel, it makes it more difficult to connect to the emotions and experiences of the participant through the screen. I found that this aspect of online interviews difficult.

However, through the process of reading and re-reading the interviews, the data becomes distilled, and its features become more apparent. This part of the process helps the researcher understand the experience of each interviewee, as well as make connections between their experiences of collaboration.

Another challenge is the perception of researcher and participant influence in both phenomenology and ANT. Due to its reliance on human description (either researcher or participant) it can be argued that phenomenology can be highly influenced by both the participants and researcher. However, Husserl (1977) argued that all science is based on human observation, and that phenomenology minimizes this by questioning assumptions that are made in the natural attitude (p.34/73). This is discussed in detail in the methodology chapter.

5.1 Instructors' Perspective on Collaboration

5.1.1. Introduction

Prior to undertaking my course, and the collaborative project with my students I wanted to understand how other instructors took on collaboration in the classroom. Although I had previous allowed students to work together on any project, there had not been a required collaborative project in my previous classes. From my own experience as a student, as well as an instructor, I knew that collaborative projects were not always welcome by students. I was curious as to how my colleagues structured their collaborative projects, and the response of their students to the collaborative work. I also wanted to preemptively address potential issues that may come up in collaborative projects, by understanding how my colleagues had dealt with them.

Three instructors from two Canadian universities were interviewed regarding their experiences teaching collaborative projects. Their names and universities have been made confidential. Two of the instructors worked collaboratively on one class, the other instructor taught alone. Both classes were undergraduate visual arts studio classes in Canadian cities. These interviews gave me ideas of how collaboration within the classroom might unfold, as well as other instructors' perspectives and rationales for the inclusion of collaborative projects within

the studio classroom. This helped to contextualize my work as an instructor and think about what challenges and benefits students may experience through the process of collaboration.

5.1.2. H.A. and S.L.

H.A. and S.L. were co-teaching a class for second year students in a university context in a mid-sized Canadian city. They are also both practicing artists. The university offers only undergraduate programs in studio arts. The interview was conducted with both instructors together over Zoom. H.A. and S.L. both answered most of the questions, unless they felt the other had fully described the experience, sometimes they would defer to the other on one particular issue or another. Although there would have been other benefits to interviewing them individually, being able to see the interaction between the instructors and how they built on each other's ideas regarding collaboration was helpful. The context of the course being described is hybrid instruction as Covid protocols were lifting, therefore students were able to meet in person despite the class being online.

H.A. and S.L. were teaching a studio class that would be the final course for many of their students as the university has both a diploma and degree program. The students were asked to work collaboratively on a project, which could be a single artwork, multiple works, or an exhibition. This project was introduced as a collaborative project, where students would work in teams to create projects. They left the definition of collaboration relatively open, which will be described later. Once they introduced the project, they asked students in small groups to brainstorm themes and parameters for their collaborative project. This was guided by the instructors, but the themes were dictated by the students. The parameters of the project were heavily directed by the students and some projects were more collaborative than others. Some groups "were really working collaboratively, whereas other groups were more like a theme was

chosen. And then each artist worked pretty much independently with moments to exchange and get feedback from their group members" (H.A. 2023). H.A. and S.L. wanted students to consider that "there can be all kinds of ways of thinking of what collaboration is" (S.L. 2023). H.A. felt "some anxiety about having the collaborative project, like things around group selection. Like in my classes, I often assign groups because I feel like that moment when people have to pick groups can be really stressful. So, you know, really thinking that through with [S.L.] and sort of being like, how can we do that they can still have these working relationships with each other." (H.A. 2023). H.A. had had experience in their undergrad where "one person would take charge, or take over, or everything would fail, you know, just having had those bad experiences in the past." (H.A. 2023). This was also an experience that I had experienced both in my student and professional life, and one which I assume is relatively common, as it had come up in informal conversation with many of my students. Because of these experiences it was important for H.A. and S.L. to "talk about collaboration not as a project driven or a goal driven thing around creating an object together or something, but a process, a peer support process" (H.A. 2023). The students themselves defined how collaborative the project would be, allowing them to engage in the collaboration at different levels, but with the support of the group. Students were also allowed to change groups based on the ideas generated by each group as H.A. and S.L. wanted to keep the process fluid, so although they originally picked one group there were able to change groups early on in the process if another idea felt more relevant to them.

They had anticipated that some students would be reluctant to do group work based on past experiences getting encumbered with all the work, "we made it pretty clear that it wasn't going to be the type of a group project where, you know, somehow one member would get saddled with all the work or like it couldn't really work that way" (S.L. 2023).

Students had some concerns regarding the expectations for the project and H.A. and S.L. which came up in one-on-one meetings. "One of the situations here is to start to understand this particular group and your goals that you've created, what would be what would be relevant for you, and then to try to understand for ourselves" (H.A. 2023). Students were given both a group and individual mark on the project, based on a rubric that was "combined to make the total mark" (S.L. 2023). S.L. and H.A. also had several deadlines throughout the project, so that students were working towards clear tasks and that the final project was not the only thing being assessed. The syllabus was an important document in outlining these expectations throughout the project and included checklists and other resources to help guide the students through the process of collaboration. This document played an important role of creating clear and even expectations in a diverse and open project.

This course also took place within the context of a loosening of Covid 19 protocols and was in a hybrid university context (some aspects online and some in person courses resuming). So, technology played an important part in the process, "we utilized some of the features of the online platform we were using for breakout groups to do the first ones randomly. So that and I think they were pretty used to those. So, this group I thought was really strong in terms of understanding that they might be thrown in with people who they don't, you know, they might not hang out with or see eye to eye with, but that they were ready to participate in something with. And so, I think that that was an advantage coming from working online" (H.A. 2023). "The cohort that we were teaching was really one that had come in during COVID and done most of their most of their program online. So, they were kind of missing some of that sort of bonding as a cohort that usually happens. So, it was also a good way for us to really get them interacting with each other and giving each other feedback and working together too" (S.L. 2023).

There was a desire, especially because of the context of Covid, to create support networks between the students "we really wanted to encourage them to know that when they're out there, they're not alone, that there's a huge network that they already have or that they could decide to try and build" (H.A. 2023). This was a strong motivation for both H.A. and S.L.. "That these young artists are going to go out there and have to kind of figure out ways to do things in ways to keep going" (S.L. 2023).

The students were able to give feedback on the project, and frequently met with the instructors online one on one, and although the intent was to have fluid and open projects, some students found that the parameters that their groups created were too restrictive. "I didn't want anybody to have those feelings that they couldn't do what they wanted. Navigating that was tricky because, you know, I would tell the students, like, I don't think you need to, but I can't go into the group and then say, okay, forget the size parameters… I couldn't change the rules in the group, you know, they had to do that" (S.L. 2023). "How can we say something to and intervene in that process as the instructors in our roles, as you know, as people who are giving mentorship and providing critical feedback. How can we discuss certain kinds of things that might be preventing people from taking things a little further?" (H.A. 2023). This reflection about controlling the classroom was interesting to me, as instructors we often dictate a large part of the activities that happen in the classroom, by having a collaborative project, a lot of this power is given up to the group. To allow students to make their own decisions, especially if you do not agree with them, can be very difficult as expressed here.

H.A. and S.L. also benefited from their collaboration co-teaching the class "I've thought many times about how like teaching is I mean, you're not alone when you're teaching, but it's kind of solitary in a way that you don't really get to observe your peers or see how they work,

except in sort of really formalized like observation situations. So actually, working with another faculty member, I feel like I learned so much talking positive things that I've taken to my other classes, you know, the kind of things that I could kind of learn from her. And then by working together, things that we could kind of, you know, I feel like we also really bounced back and forth" (H.A. 2023). Likewise, S.L. felt "it's provided some sense for me of ways that especially for an older instructor to learn more from my peers, you know, and what they're bringing and to have exchanges around learning that though of a certain within a specific class. So that process I think just collaboratively teaching has been really amazing for me as an instructor" (2023). H.A. and S.L. felt that both working collaboratively as instructors, as well as the collaborative project for students allowed for learning outside of the typical instructor teaching students dynamic. In this case the collaborative dynamic was beneficial to both the instructors and the students in the class.

5.1.3. S.V.

S.V. teaches a visual art studio class in a research university in a major Canadian city. She is a practicing artist with a long history of collaborative projects with several collectives. The context of the course being described was during Covid safety protocols, in the case of S.V. her city implemented a curfew, as well as restricted access to public spaces and gathering, and the course took place completely online. Students were forbidden by the university, except in exceptional cases, from doing research in person and therefore could not meet in person inside or outside of the university for the purpose of this class. These restrictions of meeting changed the ways that students could work together, sometimes prompting students to have creative solutions for exchanging materials and ideas.

S.V. 's motivation for creating these collaborative projects for her students was highly influenced by the context in which the course took place.

"The circumstances are really exceptional. This being, of course, that I was teaching during the pandemic. And I had this idea that, because of the fact that everyone was in the midst of a more intensive, isolating lockdown process, it could be beneficial creatively, academically, personally, and socially, to be able to have opportunities to find ways of communicating with each other outside of the class time—and that hopefully these would be meaningful ways to communicate and creatively find ways to be together outside of class time. So, I think that the pandemic was in large part the very real and concrete motivating factor."

The project was initially set up as an exchange where students sent each other digital or material works and responded to them. S.V. planned this to create a support structure for the collaboration, so that students would have a place to start their collaborations. The students found ways to interact with each other despite the Covid 19 protocols, such as performing over projections of each other's performances, and leaving objects for each other in places they could both access asynchronously, such as mailboxes or even public spaces. Due to some of the pandemic protocols, students had to collaborate in non-traditional ways, as it was difficult to work together at the same time in the same place. This shows a flexibility in what is considered collaboration, and how it takes place.

The project was introduced to the students with the objective of them finding ways to satisfy "the need for them to find creative ways to connect with each other outside of class" (S.V. 2023). S.V. put an emphasis on the process rather than the product of the collaboration and saw it as "a performance exercise that would produce potential outcomes in the making process and in

the production of this was a performance project which could involve material components"

(S.V. 2023). "The sense of possibility and curiosity was quite present. The sense of my emphasis

on my interest in process was also well understood: the fact that I didn't necessarily hold forth on

how to produce a finished, polished final project. I imagine in some it might have created a little

bit of anxiety, but I think overall it created more of a sense of, look, we can't go wrong. Let's just

do something." (S.V. 2023) There was another case of anxiety for one student "And the more

acute example of that anxiety surfaced with one student in particular who met with me two or

three times to express her concern around past collaborative projects that were not necessarily

just unsuccessful, but that produced certain anxiety in her. And she was concerned about having

to face that, doing a project again in a collaborative way" (S.V. 2023). The student agreed to talk

with S.V. about the project, and after discussing her concerns agreed to participate in the

collaboration. However, S.V. was also open to other options: "If the final outcome was that she

absolutely had to do something by herself I wouldn't have refused it" (S.V. 2023). Although

S.V. was happy that "after we talked, you know, there was an openness there for her" (S.V.

2023).

This openness to listening to the experience of students is the same type of openness instructors

hope to foster between students through collaboration. It does, however, take time, and effort to

be open to the experience of others and to incorporate those experiences into ways of doing in

the classroom.

     S.V. 's openness was an important part of the collaborative experience for some of her

students, the student who was originally hesitant needed support from S.V. "So, in the end, she

ended up doing the collaboration and beautiful surprises emerged from that experience. But it

wasn't an easy trajectory for her and our crew while we were in it. She came back and said, I'm

doing it, but stuff is coming up, I still need to talk to you about this process" (S.V. 2023). S.V.

felt connected to her otherwise online class through this process of one-on-one meetings (also online). "The opportunity to have that conversation was an opportunity for me to feel more connected to my group one person at a time in this context, so I really appreciated that" (S.V. 2023). Zoom, an online conferencing software, allowed students to meet with S.V. both as a group and individually. These interactions were very important to S.V. and made her feel as though she was a successful teacher, there were also moments of surrender to the process. "I did what I could and knew there was only so much I could do to interfere or intervene in a process and then I just have to let it go. And so, whatever is going to happen is going to happen. Then I'll deal with the outcome" (S.V. 2023). This was especially true because of the constraints at the time, although video conferencing was an essential tool during the pandemic, the interactions were very different from those within a classroom. In a physical space students all come together at the same level, whereas in their personal spaces students often kept video off to keep a personal boundary (this was especially true of students who had to attend class in their bedroom spaces). Although understandable, it made creating connections more difficult.

S.V. allowed students to partner with who they wanted, or be partnered up by her. The course had students in various stages of their studies, this was particularly true because of the disruption due to Covid (some students taking less courses than they may have in person). This meant that some students may not know others in the class initially. This course is generally for second- and third-year students, but due to the pandemic, some students changed their educational timeline, causing a mix of students at various levels.

Students also had questions regarding the expectations of the project given by S.V.. The students were "asking me, what are your expectations anyway? Like, we're doing it this way. Did you want that or did you want something else? They kept asking: Is this enough? Is this good

enough? Is this just enough? You know, that was always a question" (S.V. 2023). These are questions that persist into professional artistic practice, what is enough? Is this good enough?

S.V. gave her students a lot of freedom to direct their own projects "I gave them that freedom to decide what to do with that time" (S.V. 2023). Due to this freedom S.V. felt disconnected from some of the projects. "I felt very disconnected" (2023). This was not the case so much for students who were struggling or had bigger questions regarding the project because they were meeting with S.V. more often. Each pair of students was required to meet with S.V. once during the process, this often-elicited questions regarding "the brass tacks" (S.V. 2023) of the project, for example questions regarding the length of a final video, or whether or not they had to use certain materials. These concerns often related to how they were being evaluated and each project was graded as a group. This was also something that I felt as my students were collaborating, no news is good news, other than one pre-scheduled meeting I let them work knowing that they were able to meet with me if they needed.

In the end S.V. is still considering how to transfer what she has learned into the in-person classroom since she had only taught collaborative projects online, in her previous classes she only assigned individual projects. Whether that means leaving more time for students to collaborate in the syllabus or doing full class collaborations. "So, my head is really there with regards to thinking about what kind of classroom am I really interested in moving forward: what kind of space that am I interested in nurturing and what kind of creative processes am I most excited about proposing to classroom situations" (S.V. personal communications, 2023). How instructors answer these questions might be key to whether including collaborative projects in their classes is right for them.

5.1.4 Teaching Collaboration

The instructors that I interviewed all had several things in common, flexibility, a focus on process and structure, and a desire to create community within their class. I will discuss these more in depth here, pulling from the instructors' experiences in the classroom.

5.1.4.1 Flexibility and Openness. All of the instructors were flexible and open regarding their processes. They allowed students to choose whether they wanted to pick their own groups or be assigned groups. There was also a very wide range of materials that were used, as the instructors did not dictate the materials to the students but rather allowed them to use what worked best for the project as well as their own aesthetic sensibilities. In the case of S.V. pandemic restrictions and access to physical objects may have restricted some materials, however, there were no prohibitions because of the class, other than that you could not physically meet. The instructors were also flexible in their definition of collaboration and the students and instructors worked together to come up with a definition of collaboration, with different groups working together to greater or lesser extents.

> At the beginning, there were a number of activities that we created to kind of get them into just the whole process around discussing what is collaboration, developing some ideas together about what collaboration kind of meant for them based on looking at other works and reflecting on those or reflecting on questions. And I think that that kind of helped build this little seed in a way for them to, like, have things brewing.
>
> <div align="center">S.L. 2023</div>

This openness is a defining part of teaching collaboration, as the projects shift throughout the process of students working together. It caused both some anxiety in certain students as they wanted clear and specific instructions. In the case of S.V. this flexibility led some students to

have questions regarding the expectations, and what they were expected to deliver at the end of the project.

H.A. and S.L. had a clear rubric for their students "In the project handout, it really spelled out a schedule for what was expected when from the groups. And also knowing that a particular deliverable would have X amount of percentage of the grade attached to it. So, they did know that they had certain responsibilities in terms of bringing things at certain times" (S.L. 2023). This helped students navigate some of the ambiguity of the project as it set a structure for and deliverables throughout the process.

S.V. also built in some structure to the collaborative project to help the students navigate it:

> The beginning of the project was that each pair would offer something either through the mail—or they could find another way as well—an element of something they're working on or interested in. It could be their previous work. It could be something that they're currently constructing and that could be in any form. That could be something crocheted or knitted. That could be a drawing that could be writing, that could be a video clip… the sky's the limit. It was up to them to decide.

<div align="center">S.V. 2023</div>

This balance between openness and structure allowed students to navigate their collaborative projects, in the next section process and structure will be discussed.

5.1.4.2. Process and Structure. Likewise, the instructors focused on the process of collaboration rather than the product that was generated. The focus on process allowed instructors to create a structure around each project while leaving space for student input and creativity. "Despite the fact that we end up with projects that they presented a critique, it is very process driven. And so, there is a lot of discussion and reflection on the process" (S.L. 2023). Due to the

nature of collaboration the process couldn't be decided beforehand, the students needed to work together to direct the process.

Sometimes allowing students to control the process caused difficulties:

Some people felt that they were being too constrained by the group. So, you know, in those groups I tried to sort of say, you know, I didn't want anybody to have those feelings that they couldn't actually do what they wanted. So, navigating that was tricky because, you know, I would tell the students, I don't think you need to, but I can't go into the group and then say, okay, forget the size parameters. You can do whatever you want. I can't say that I can make that rule for the group. I can encourage them to open it up a bit, but I don't but I feel like it ended up still being a little bit restrictive in one specific group for and for some members.

H.A. 2023

Navigating the process was also difficult because of Covid, particularly in the case of S.V. where her class was completely online and students were not allowed to meet in person.

[I introduced this project as] a performance exercise that would produce potential outcomes in the making process and in the production of. This was a performance project which could involve material components. But it was carried out in stages. So, I presented it in the various stages in the ways that they could come together to try to work. And I keep bringing up this notion of creative ways of coming together because they wouldn't be meeting, for example, together side by side, inside in the studio, as we knew that that was impossible at that time.

S.V. 2023

This was also clear when S.V. presented the project:

I presented it, or I was trying to present it, not as something that placed emphasis and

importance on the final outcome, but that was really, really interested in the process of how they, like I said, creatively found ways to come together to work on this project.

S.V. 2023

The focus on process in the university setting where often the product is emphasized allowed students to focus on how they worked together over what they made. This focus on process over product is also something I strive for in both individual and collaborative projects within my class. Due to the context of the projects, where some students did not meet in person, this forced them to navigate not only new ways of working, but also new technologies such as Zoom, or other video conferencing software. These technologies became important mediators between both the collaborators as well as the students and instructors. Despite the fact that they were necessary they shifted the routine ways of face-to-face conversation we are used to in a classroom, such as crosstalk, and informal discussion over breaks.

5.1.4.3 Community and Relationships. Both projects took place during or at the end of Covid 19 protocols in their respective cities. Both cohorts of students were not able to meet in person during their previous two years of school due to restrictions on meeting during the pandemic. In the city where S.V. lived students could not meet in person during the course. In the case of H.A. and S.L. students were allowed to meet in person, however, the class took place online. This context is important to the motivation of instructors to create collaborative projects.

The cohort that we were teaching was really one that had come in during COVID and done most of their most of their program online. So, they were kind of missing some of that sort of bonding as a cohort that usually happens. So, it was also a good way for us to really get them interacting with each other and giving each other feedback and working together too. So that worked out really well as well.

H.A. 2023

S.V. also had "a personal goal which was providing this space for them to have social interaction in this new other way. Although I think it was understood that that was an underlying unspoken goal" (2023). I wanted them to "create these performative ways of connecting with each other, even if it was invisible. So, I really emphasize thinking about what it means to connect" (S.V. 2023). Although it has always been a part of post-secondary education to create professional and social support systems, during the pandemic this needed to occur more intentionally, due to the move to online courses. In studio programs, it is common for students to work in shared spaces outside of class time, due to the messiness or space required for their projects. During the pandemic these spaces were not accessible, and students did not have social time with their peers. This made it harder to create a peer support system organically.

This "support system" (S.L. 2023) of peers was also important to H.A. and S.L.. They invited artists who worked creating peer support networks for BIPOC artists to come speak to their class, as an exercise in thinking about collaboration outside of making. They did not necessarily expect students to continue to work collaboratively after the class, but rather start to create the networks of support necessary to foster a creative practice. This group of artists does not create artwork together per se but rather supports each other through processes of grant and exhibition writing and provides support and mentorship for BIPOC artists. This widens students' thoughts about the possibilities of artists' collectivity beyond that of just making, but rather as a way of supporting each other professionally in other ways.

5.2 My Perspective as an Instructor

5.2.1. Introduction

At the time this data was collected I was a Ph.D. candidate in Art Education at Concordia University. I have previously taught one other course in the department, Time Based Media, and was in my third year of study. I had already completed the interviews with other instructors prior

to the collaborative project in my class commencing. This gave me insight on how collaborative projects proceeded in other contexts and was done with the idea that I might be able to adjust some of my practices based on what the interviews revealed. I have a BFA in Print Media and completed my MA in Art Education at Concordia University in 2012. As an artist I had collaborated on exhibitions and public art works in the past, and was aware of some of the challenges that might occur in artistic collaboration within the classroom. The data in this section is taken from my research journal (in italics) and my reflections after the course. My experiences as a collaborative artist not only influenced me to take on this study, but also gave me experiences of collaboration that I could compare to those of the students and artists. I have done collaborative projects with both individuals and collectives, with several lasting over 2 years, while others have been for single works or projects.

As the instructor of ARTE 434, Professional Practices for Art Educators, I taught 21 students, mostly in the Art Education Major at Concordia University. As part of this course students had both an internship and classroom component, which involved practical activities such as grant writing, learning about student populations and lesson plans, and art making. Students in the undergraduate art education program at Concordia University can choose two streams, one that leads to teaching in the schools and another in the community. This course is part of the community program, and the internships are at community sites. Since many of the students in this stream are also pursuing art making as a profession, making and studio work is an important component of the course. Most of the students wanted to pursue their artistic practice as part of their professional work alongside teaching in the community. One major assignment within the course students created a work of art collaboratively and then, based on what they made, created a lesson plan for a group of learners. The project description and rubric are included as Appendix A. It is important to note that this project emphasized the making of

the artwork first, and then creating a lesson plan based on it, rather than creating a lesson plan and making an exemplar. Therefore, the artwork did not have to match the lesson plan precisely but rather be its inspiration.

I was nervous to introduce the project, memories of being saddled with all the work in group projects and the disdain it caused for said projects was forefront in my mind. How are my students going to react? This project was the major project for the class and spanned 5 weeks, how would it go? I knew it was a risk, even though these students were mostly in their last year of university most of it had been during Covid so they didn't know each other as well as students would generally at this phase. I was also concerned about the way that Covid may have deeply affected them in other ways. -Research Journal

I waffled between letting them pick their collaborators and me assigning them. I wanted them to have to confront difference, but I also wanted them to be set up to succeed. In the end I comprised. They could pick their own group, however, they had to meet with all the other students prior to discuss their ideas and see if there was a better fit. They came to this meeting with ideas of concepts and/or materials they would like to use in the collaboration to see if others shared their interests. I set up the equivalent of "speed dating" but for art projects, they each met for 5 minutes with each other to discuss their ideas before moving on to the next student. Some of the shyer students did not talk as much as others, this made me nervous, would they be able to find collaborative partners or groups? Some students already knew who they wanted to collaborate with based on having other classes with them, in the end there were 6 students who didn't have groups by the end of the process, they sat together and discussed their projects more in depth, in the end they all paired off. This was a relief, no one refused to work with others, and everyone seemed to find a collaborative group that was a fit. Some of the students asked to be in larger groups and I reluctantly agreed, warning them that a larger group

would involve more administrative work, such as finding meeting times, and might actually be a disadvantage. There were two groups of four students, one group of three, all the rest of the students worked in pairs. In my opinion, and based on the students' reflective journals, it was difficult for the larger groups to find time to meet outside of class, and I wish that I had been firmer about group size.

They were given the majority of the class time (4 hours) over four class periods to work (16 hours total) on the project together, this project also encompassed reading week. Several students were sick during one or more of these weeks, and I wondered if I had allotted enough time for the project, as I really wanted them to work together in a more than superficial way. I was not sure if this was going to happen. I felt from the students an anxiety about how they were to be graded, even with my reassurances they seemed nervous about the way that they would be evaluated on this project. They had been given a grading rubric (See Appendix A) and project description prior to the project beginning. As I wanted them to come up with ideas together I had not supplied exemplars of potential projects, rather told them to consider the time that was given when thinking about how complex to make the project. Many of the questions seemed to stem from this ambiguity, "is this enough?" was a question asked several times by several students. I wondered if I should have given them more direction in this regard. I often find it difficult to navigate between having clear instructions and allowing an openness to the projects so that students can explore their own interests. I wanted them to make these decisions for themselves, this class was meant to prepare them for the realities of being an artist and teacher, where there was no one to answer these questions but yourself. After Covid I sensed both my and their apprehension regarding their impending graduation into the professional sphere. Were they ready?

Two weeks in I met with each group, things seemed to be progressing, although in some

cases less than I anticipated. I reminded them of the deadline, and that they would each be required to fill out a self-reflection that outlined what they, and their group members did for the project. This reflection asked students to reflect not only on their own contributions but also how they worked as a team. It was used to help in the evaluation of individuals within each group. A concern that was voiced by several students was the inherent "unfairness" of group projects in relation to grading, however, in this case, students in each group were evaluated separately. In most cases, especially when the reflections confirmed that the work was divided evenly the group members had the same grade, however, this was not always the case. For the most part I did not hear much from the groups after this point, any issues that they were having seemed to be working out on their own. Two groups had changed ideas several times so I was not certain what to expect, but having not heard otherwise, I anticipated that they were moving forward with their ideas. They met with me once during class time, and during this meeting the groups confirmed that they were moving forward with their ideas.

Critique day. Each group must present their finished work and idea to the entire class for feedback and comment. This notion of critique is typical of visual arts but giving feedback at several periods during the process by the whole class, rather than just me, could be beneficial. This, however, is difficult due to time constraints. The range of skills and time put into each project is evident. It struck me that evaluating these projects would not be as straightforward as I had hoped. The students had one week to submit their self-reflections, and I hoped that these would clarify the evaluation process.

Much like the projects themselves the quality of the self-reflections varied greatly. Some were insightful and honest, others seemed like an afterthought. While they were helpful to get a sense of who really excelled and who was barely involved, generally they pointed to things like time management and communication as being major issues within projects. This was also

reflected in conversations I had with students, especially those balancing several courses and this one, which also involved a stage or internship, and therefore was very time and energy consuming. Collaborative projects can be more time consuming for both students and instructors so it is important to allow adequate time.

I assigned grades, based on the project, and the process of collaboration. Although process was weighted significantly more than the end result, artists are fundamentally judged by the product they produce rather than the process, so I felt it necessary to include this as a portion of the grade. I felt conflicted about the success of the project, I didn't feel like most of the students connected with each other beyond a superficial level. *Was it even possible to complete such a project within the context of the university, where grades and pressure to perform are deemed the most important characteristics of success? My research on collaboration had suggested that it could help to create a social network and solidarity between artists, although in this case, I feel that this was not achieved within this project. It felt like students viewed it as just another assignment in the context of the university. It felt like both time and the fact that a grade was assigned impeded students' ability to create significant relationships with each other through the art making process.* - Research Journal

5.2.2. Researching and Teaching Collaboration

5.2.2.1. Flexibility and Openness. The push between what students wanted to do for their collaboration and the structure that I had initially set out was an important part of the unfolding of this lesson. Students pushed back on group sizes, which disadvantaged them given the scope of the project. However, I felt it was important for students to feel as though they had autonomy with this project, especially given that most of the students would be graduating into professional life after this course. Therefore, I allowed them to choose their group size, despite my concerns about scheduling with the larger groups. I did however mention these concerns to

them, letting them know that larger groups would make it more difficult to work together outside of class, and that they would have to be more organized. They assured me that they could handle it.

Although some students seemed to respond well to this freedom, others felt as though they would have liked to see examples for the project, and to have more structure within the process. This was often because they were concerned about the grading of the project, rather than a lack of ideas.

Process and Structure. The emphasis on process rather than the final artwork was important for me in this project. I wanted the students to feel able to take risks with both their process and the materials that they were using to create the project. For this reason, most of their grades were focused on process rather than outcome, see the project rubric in Appendix A. Self-reflection was also an important part of the project, with students reflecting on their own outcomes, as well as how they worked together. During the project each group met with me at least one time, to discuss their ideas and how they planned on completing the project. This gave them time to ask questions, and also check in with me about timeline and expectations. This structure also allowed me to gauge whether students needed more support at this stage in the process.

Some groups did very well with time management, while others did not. Due to the fact that they had their internship as well as other courses I gave them several classes to work on the project, as I thought that it might be difficult for them to coordinate their schedules outside of class. B.P., who will be described in detail in the next section, found it difficult to coordinate a time to work with their collaborative partner, as they both worked, and one had a child they were the primary guardian of. If I were to do a collaborative project again, I would ask students that they speak to each other regarding their schedules at the very beginning of the project, as this

seemed to be an area of tension with several groups

5.2.2.2. Community and Relationships. The goal of the project was not only to have the students make an artwork and lesson plan together, but also to build a relationship and sense of community with one another. Although students had time to create an artwork together and create a lesson plan from it, they often didn't have time to meet regularly throughout the project. This often led to less engagement with each other, and more of a division of work into individual sections. This did not allow for some of the objectives that I had anticipated, such as building stronger bonds between students. However, rather than pointing to making the project longer, this points to the intense schedules of undergraduate students, who are often taking five courses if they are taking a full course load, and frequently work as well. Giving more time outside of class to complete the project may not remedy this situation, however, more structured exercises together in class might be a way to have students engage more deeply in the collaborative process rather than relying on them working together both in and outside of class time.

My experiences as an artist and teacher influenced the way that I structured the collaborative project in my course. I have collaborated on both short and long term projects with many artists throughout my career, and this helped me to build the skills I needed to become a successful artist. It also showed me that peer learning is highly beneficial, which I have incorporated into my teaching philosophy. Interviewing three students in my course about their experiences of the project further illuminated the experience of collaboration in the classroom.

5.3 Students' Perspective on Collaboration

5.3.1. Introduction

Each of the students had a different experience of collaboration, and worked together with their collaborative partners to different extents. Students were asked if they would participate in the study prior to the collaborative project beginning, as to avoid bias towards

projects that went well, however, due to self-selection, the students who participated in the study were some of the strongest overall students in the course, which may affect their experience of collaboration. These experiences are not meant to encompass every experience of student collaboration but rather to find commonalities between experiences and the relationships between the actants and actors throughout the process of collaboration. There will be an overview of each collaboration and then a synthesis of all the interviews.

Students were initially asked to meet with each other one on one to talk about their ideas and to help facilitate finding a collaborative partner. They were allowed to choose their own partners with whatever criteria they deemed appropriate. The description they were given of the project can be found in Appendix A.

5.3.2. B.P.

B.P. is a mature part time student who is already employed as an instructor in the arts. He is pursuing his degree in Art Education to build his skills as a teacher. The course he is taking is described in the Methodology chapter. We met in a park on the side of the St. Lawrence River and sat on a picnic table to discuss his experiences of the project. This was the first of the three interviews with students, and I wondered what his reaction to the collaboration would be. I had thought the final work was strong, but that does not necessarily reflect the process of collaboration. As I walked to meet him, I wondered how the interview would go.

"I was a bit nervous, because, like, I have a bit of a hard time working with other people" (B.P. , 2023). Collaboration for B.P. was difficult because he had an entrenched way of working within the creative process, this led him to feel as though he might have to change his processes to be able to collaborate with someone else. He likes to allow for "spontaneity and for things to just happen" (B.P., 2023) and was concerned that collaboration would lead to more rigid processes. "I get very nervous if there's something that's very structured" (B.P. , 2023).

B.P. and his collaborator originally decided to work together due to their interest in music and sound. B.P. had originally thought of creating a walk as part of his project, and this morphed into a sound walk through several neighbourhoods in Montreal. Although they shared this

interest their processes with sound differed; B.P. prefers "sounds to die" whereas his collaborator creates samples and loops using sounds. This led to two different perspectives on the same project "I also think there is a part of it that I got from it, and there's a part that he got from it where he would take it next and then it would go in two separate ways". Although there were differences in the ways that they work B.P. "enjoyed working with him a lot because… he had a completely different take on things." This was ideally the type of interaction between students that I hoped to culture, where students were able to be open and learn things from each other.

Time was an issue in the collaborative process as the partners could only find one day to do the walk that worked for both of them. Therefore, they used technology, such as Zoom and text messaging, as a way of communicating. This led B.P. to do the walk once by himself, on this walk his different approach from his partner became evident: "Then thinking okay well if I did it by myself, no technology. I even left my phone at home and I walked. That was great." (B.P. , 2023). The walk took place from Mount Royal in Montreal, through the adjacent neighbourhoods to a skate park. This included parks of various sizes, residential neighbourhoods, and commercial areas. The walk highlighted the sounds of certain locations along the trajectory as a way of place making and mindfulness. B.P. felt that this could be accomplished through each individual listening in the locations themselves. This is a very different approach to his partner who is much more comfortable with technology and recording and making sound recordings of the locations.

As B.P. described in one case:

So, we will walk into the bagel shop. Just recording, and he's showing the recorder and people see him. And they said, what are you doing? I'm recording sound. Yeah, nonchalant. Perfect. I wouldn't be able to do that. I would walk in and say, "Excuse me. I hope you don't mind. Blah blah blah and this and that".

There were enough connections to hold together the project, and both collaborators were able to be flexible enough to allow for tangents that included their particular interests. "I think what was great about [my collaborator] is that he's kind of open and inviting" (2023). Although B.P. originally described himself as "a bit stubborn" (2023) a sense of flexibility and openness permeates the collaboration.

5.3.3. T.D.

T.D. is also a mature student. Her interests in art education are to work with her home community within northern Canada. Her own sense of identity was a strong part of this and other artwork that she had done in the class. This played a part in the choices that the group made regarding their work together. We met over Zoom, as this was what T.D. decided, compared to meeting in the park with B.P. this made recording straight forward, however, I found it more difficult to read her reactions and tone over Zoom.

T.D. found a collaborator where they "both clicked together with our ideas" (2023). They both came into the project with separate ideas, but both wanted to create something that could be used as a gift, or a fundraising item. Using the same materials (oven dried modeling clay and wax) they were able to create two candles with very different themes, based on what inspired them: "And while I was creating that I thought to myself, each and every student might be inspired by something else and it would have been interesting to see all of their projects" (T.D. , 2023). This echoes the work T.D. had previously made in the class, which had a strong

connection to her personal identity. This is where I see allowing two students to make different works on the same theme, or overall concept being very useful.

T.D. had not worked with oven dried modeling clay before and "watched some YouTubes and TikToks about how to create the candle" (T.D. , 2023). It surprised me that her collaborator, who had worked with this material before, did not give T.D. more guidance on how to use the material. Once they decided on candles, each collaborator made their own version, rather than making one together. This choice led to two products "with two different ways" (T.D., 2023).

T.D. and her collaborator communicated mostly through messenger, but also by email, and they were "quick to answer" (T.D. , 2023) to each other. They were both open and flexible with the process "you create what you want to create, and she creates what she wants to create" (T.D. , 2023). This allowed the collaborators to work on their own schedules, using their own methods and processes of creation. This was also a strategy that I could see them both applying to their teaching, giving constraints but allowing their students a lot of freedom for self-expression.

Time was not an issue because they chose to scale the project to the timing "it was a good timing, but if it were to be a bigger project, bigger candle, it would not have been enough time" (T.D., 2023). They considered the amount of time given and their other courses and chose a project that suited their timetable.

T.D. and her partner considered how they would work together and the scope of the project that they could make during the timeline. T.D. used online tutorials to help her master the materials that she was unfamiliar with. Although the project was well executed, I wished that the two collaborators had worked together more on the project, especially with the materials, which one was familiar with and the other not. However, I acknowledge that this conforms to my

notions of collaboration rather than the desires of the students in the group, who seemed happy with the results.

5.3.4 J.G.

J.G. is a psychology major who is taking this art education course as an elective. She, much like B.P. and T.D. was a very diligent student in my class. I had the sense from other projects that her grades were very important to her, and I knew that the grading of collaborative projects can be stressful to some students, as they do not have total control of the end product.

J.G. was initially excited because "I knew someone personally in the class. If that wasn't the case, I would have been worried" (J.G., 2023). It was important for her that the work is divided evenly, at some points you might do more work. "At another point in time, they'll put more, and you'll put less. And, you know, there's going to be a balance" (J.G., 2023). Therefore J.G. was happy to work with someone who was also very committed to the project. She was put at ease because she trusted her collaborator and knew that they would take the project seriously.

It was this sense of dedication that brought the two collaborators together rather than a shared idea for the project. "We both have our own mediums of preference" (J.G. 2023). One worked in sculpture the other in drawing and they both liked working with recycled materials, so they started with that idea.

They did "pretty much everything together" (J.G. 2023) and made decisions collectively. When they weren't together, they used messenger and phone calls to communicate and made commitments to meet ahead of time. This "forced us to come and do the work and even more" (J.G. 2023). This dedication to each other and the work was evident when they presented their final project. Despite setbacks due to a personal emergency, the group communicated with me, and each other and were able to work through their project. Their professionalism and commitment in their interactions with each other and me were evident. This open communication, and clear care for each other and their work suggested to me a deeper

commitment to the process of learning from and supporting each other.

Time was less of an issue for this group as they started with "the deadline of the project, and then we went back a week and a week further and we planned what was feasible within that week. What days' work for us and what we hoped to be done by a certain date." This schedule allowed them to work towards a shared goal while managing their time and other obligations. In future collaborative projects this could be replicated for students by giving more specific deliverables throughout the project, rather than allowing them to dictate their own timeline. The drawback of this is that it does not teach students how to manage their own time, it would be up to each instructor to decide whether students needed this support or not on a case-by-case basis.

5.3.5. Collaboration as a student

These students experienced some anxiety regarding collaboration as they gave up total control of their process in art making. As they proceeded some chose to retain different amounts of control of the projects by creating different versions of the same project that kept their own style or processes, while others fully engaged in a melding of processes and interests. These different methods also influenced how and why they picked their collaborators, and they had different motivations to choose their partners, however, they all chose based on a spectrum of interest in the same materials and ideas and the personality of their collaborator. This was not surprising to me, as I assumed students would gravitate towards others that they knew, or whose ideas matched closely to theirs. If I had assigned the groups, there may have been more diverse projects, however, students may have felt less at ease collaborating. There are benefits and disadvantages of each approach and they should be considered carefully.

5.3.5.1. Flexibility and Openness. Students displayed different levels of flexibility and openness, J.G. was open to combining her working processes with those of her collaborator because she already had worked with her before. B.P. was hesitant at first but became more comfortable with the collaboration as he got to know his collaborator, who he had not worked with prior to this project. Although T.D. was very open to working with her collaborator, they chose to create separate artworks rather than one, this allowed them both to explore different themes within one larger prompt, to create a candle. These distinct approaches shows that different students will have variable comfort levels within collaboration, and that allowing them to work in the way that they feel comfortable can be beneficial.

These differing processes show the flexibility of the project to respond to the needs of different students who have unique relationships with each other, from close colleagues to relative strangers.

5.3.5.2. Process and Structure. Students chose the level of collaboration that they wanted. This ranged from highly collaborative projects where almost all decisions were made collaboratively, such as J.G., to collaborations that used both participants skills but did not always combine them, such as B.P., and projects where the concept was generated collaboratively and two different projects were made, such as was the case with T.D. Leaving the structure open for students to decide allowed them to dictate their process, based on time and comfort level, and how much of the work would be done individually and how much would be done together.

5.3.5.3. Community and Relationships. Building relationships takes time, and as discussed in the Flexibility and Openness section the ease at which students took on the collaboration was reflected in how well they knew their collaborators prior to the project. The collaboration took place over 5 weeks, in a 14-week course (13 weeks of instruction and 1 week

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break during reading week), which is a relatively short period of time to build a relationship with a collaborator, however, the students found ways of working with each other and getting to know each other's processes to various degrees.

The relationship of the collaborators prior to the project had an effect on the way that they proceeded through the process of collaboration. Collaborators who knew each other well had already established a level of trust, whereas those who did not know each other had to build that trust. When looking at artists collaboration in the next section, we can see that they often work together over long periods of time (multiple years) as the trust and processes are developed. This short period of time becomes a challenge for collaborative relationships, as much like a friendship, they take time to develop.

Students are developing skills, such as flexibility and openness, through collaboration that will help them succeed as both artists and teachers. Their experiences are important to understand how instructors can structure collaborative projects in the classroom to better support students and their creative process. The correct amount of openness and structure is necessary so that students feel supported in their process, and that will look differently for different groups of students. Instructors must be adaptable to suit the needs of the students.

5.4 Artists' Perspective on Collaboration

5.4.1. Introduction

Artists were interviewed regarding their collaborative projects to better understand the skills that would be necessary for students once they exited the university. Two artists working in two different contexts were interviewed about their experiences with collaboration. Both are mid-career artists who have established careers in visual arts and have collaborated with other artists throughout their careers. These artists valued collaboration as a way of learning about their artistic practice, as well as their collaborators.

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5.4.2. C.J.

C.J. began collaborating with other artists in his bachelor's degree. There was a group of around a dozen artists who were doing projects together, one of them saw C.J. 's work and invited him to join them. They started exhibiting together, "these [collaborations] kept on going for several months, and then it turned into years" (C.J. 2023). This group shifted over time, and its borders were porous; it was not "defined like who was who or is the collective or not" (C.J. 2023). These exhibitions and projects helped C.J. to "professionalize certain practices" (2023) during his undergraduate career, with artist who were also in early stages of their careers. Showing artwork in a more professional context gave him the skills and confidence to see himself as an artist rather than a student. "I think that really was a

game changer for me" (C.J. 2023). Being involved early on in the professional aspects of being an artist was seen by C.J. as helping him be successful in his artistic career and made him an "engaged person in the field" (C.J., 2023). These early professional opportunities allow artists to make connections with more established artists, galleries, and curators, which starts to build their professional networks beyond that of the university.

In this collaboration they ended up running a gallery space together. "We didn't collaborate in making artworks. We collaborate to put together a space and we run a space, a project which turns into our artistic practice as well. So yeah, so I don't know if it's really formally a collaboration, but it is a way of working together and learning together" (C.J. 2023). One might consider this collaboration more of a curatorial project; however, it still allowed them to build their skills and networks as artists.

During his master's degree C.J. worked mostly independently, but after he had completed his degree, he and a close friend were asked to put on a show together. "We decided to make works together, which was kind of fun, a statement or a radical act" (C.J. 2023). C.J.

felt that this was radical because of the way that artistic works were valued as property of the individual artist, and that collaborative works were not viewed with the same prestige as individual works. This was the first time that he made physical artworks with another artist. "We had a lot of trust and I think it was awesome" (C.J., 2023). They decided what to make by "finding connection points and things that were connecting our practice" (C.J., 2023). Once they were in the space with the materials, they "started to make a list of the things that needed to be done. And it was very spontaneous to say that, oh, I can I can be in charge of these. I can be in charge of that." (C.J., 2023) "It was based on the capabilities of each of us" (C.J., 2023). During this time C.J. suffered a minor injury and was not able to be as involved as he liked. He felt that this disrupted

the balanced nature of the workload, although he was still able to participate in other ways. Regardless of whether it is students or professional artists, this perceived balance of work and effort seems to be an important aspect of collaborative practice.

These collaborations led up to a collaborative project where C.J. collaborated with six other artists culminating in a series of public street exhibitions and performances by artists. C.J. viewed this collaboration not just with the artists themselves but also "collaborating with people around in the street there with different commerce and business around" (C.J., 2023). This openness regarding who is part of the collaboration parallels the first collaborations during C.J.'s undergraduate degree. The process of who to invite to perform ran "very fluidly" (C.J., 2023), "let's just start talking or just speaking about it" (C.J., 2023).

> This was a great experience because we also, during this time, got to know each other's work better because we visited each other's studios. We were kind of creating together and we consider this project as part of our artwork quite a lot because it was very strange for the time and the context

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The collaboration was "very, very dynamic and there were certain rules that we put together" (C.J., 2023). These rules consisted of things like whether to have a budget, as well as who would make final decisions. For example, they rotated between having a king or queen, who had final say on the decisions. They found that they worked better "not consenting to everything, because that could lead you to nowhere" in a group of six or seven people. This was " a process that allowed the whole process to always flow, but not keeping the same authority structure or decision structure" (C.J., 2023). There was always a flexibility with the rules, and an understanding that the rules were meant to be broken (C.J., 2023). This balance between structure and spontaneity allowed collaborators to know what to expect, without becoming overly bureaucratic and bogged down by rules. The structure of the project held it together and connected the actors within the project.

Within the street project, there was also an openness about who owned the project. Due to the fact that the work was being exhibited in a public street, there was nothing stopping other artists from exhibiting. The street itself became an important actant in this project, and other artists exhibited their work there with and without permission from the collective.

> So, whoever can do these projects in their own street is, look, there's no copyright to this, of course. And so, we open this space, or we open our I mean, our space or the space of the street is already open mostly so anybody can do whatever with or without consent or because we don't own the space, we are just visitors.

This openness to new collaborators, and the leaving the work as open to change through new interaction is a persistent theme in the large group collaborations of C.J. There are moments of more and less engagement in these large open collaborations, where there is a flow of people

who are contributing in many ways. Whereas with smaller shorter-term collaborations there is a more intense period of making and creating together. These collaborations require fewer formal systems for creating than the larger collaborations, as they can accommodate more flexibility and consensus building.

Issues involving ideas regarding fair work, and the amount of time and effort going into the collaboration sometimes arose. "There were just moments of unequal work" (C.J., 2023) which sometimes occurred for reasons beyond one's control, for example when C.J. hurt his ankle just before an exhibition. "That's part of something that you could feel like in a certain disadvantage you are not really putting enough of yourself" into the project (C.J., 2023). This was the only consistent conflict within the collaborative projects, the balance of workload. Although there were disagreements within specific aspects of each project, they were project specific rather than related to collaboration more generally. When deciding who would do what, the collaborators decided by who had expertise in the area, for example, when working with neon lights C.J.'s collaborator took charge because he had previous experience working with the material.

5.4.3. L.S.

L.S. also has a background in collaborative projects. She has worked with various collaborators in various media. In the interview she focused on a multi-year land art project. Unlike, C.J. she chose to focus on one collaborative project, rather than several. Originally, there was no plan for the outcome of the collaboration, but rather an exploration of the land.

> I had some ideas for site specific work that I wanted to make, and so there was no real
>
> plan initially, there was no real sort of plan for it other than I was going to come out and
>
> see what I could do. So, for the first couple of summers, it was mostly about that and
>
> getting to know them better and the family, because it's sort of a haven for this extended

clan and getting to know the site and what the limits were and what I could do.

<div align="right">L.S., 2023</div>

The collaboration grew as the project progressed; "we started in a very organic way to start planning the project a little bit more" (L.S., 2023). As a collaboration they maintained a "very open approach to it" (L.S., 2023). "So, over the years, it's had lots of different sorts of threads" (L.S., 2023) but the relationship with the land and the collaborators was maintained. This amount of time allowed them to slowly become familiar with each other as well as the site.

In 2020 they received grant funding to continue the project during the pandemic:

So that became a very intense period where it was a very powerful collaboration. We were out there together a lot over the course of the summer and fall, you know, often for a week and a half at a time working and doing research, because as this project evolved and we got more enmeshed together in it.

<div align="right">L.S., 2023</div>

The social context of their relationship was important. There was "unofficial communication that drew us together into social contexts, also laid the groundwork for a very rich collaboration over time and allowed us each to understand each other better the way we each worked, how we thought our basic philosophies in terms of the materials for the initial part of the collaboration" (L.S., 2023). The materials themselves were dictated by the land they were working on and were found on site and "anything that I had to add was going to be completely biodegradable" (L.S., 2023). This was due to the fact that L.S. viewed the land and its history as another collaborator in the project. The land itself became the major connective tissue between L.S. and her collaborator. The ideas grew from being in the space together.

Because the site was off grid the project took on other aspects of living. "A social environment, too, because a lot of the conversations were around food, over food, over meals,

<div align="right">120</div>

over a fire at the end of the day. So, we were each collaborating on meals and all of the other business of living on an off-grid site" (L.S., 2023). This aspect brought about a mutual need for aid from each of the collaborators in a very real sense. "It quickly became very difficult to separate, to tease out" (L.S., 2023) what was the collaboration and what was not. The land took on an important meaning as the collaborators had conversations about what it means "to really love a particular place to be emotionally invested in in the stewardship of land while simultaneously recognizing that as settlers. That's very complicated." (L.S., 2023).

The context of working in an off-grid area meant that L.S. and her collaborator were heavily reliant on each other. All the work of moving equipment, growing food and making meals "was engaging the space physically and part of our relationship to the space" (L.S., 2023) and depended on working together as a team.

> To the sharing of that experience on all kinds of levels. And I think there was a lot I
> know for me, certainly, and I think I think for my collaborator as well, there was a lot of
> satisfaction in knowing that. I was physically capable of contributing to their welfare and
> to acts of care.

<div align="right">L.S., 2023</div>

Embodiment was an important part of the process for L.S. "There was this very quickly, this very embodied way of understanding. Our relationship to each other and our relationship to the place and to all the different kinds of work that was happening there" (L.S., 2023). L.S. sees it as "part of contributing to the care of the place and the care of each other" (L.S., 2023). This sensitivity to the environment and each other was a key element of this collaboration for L.S..

During the beginning of the project L.S. felt "it was a period where we were very much getting it was a bit of a dance where we were getting to know each other and how we could potentially work together, what that meant, whether you know, without being very conscious of,

of thinking through. I wonder where this relationship is going to go" (L.S., 2023). This was a time of getting to know the other and feeling out the relationship and this period lasted several years. There were periods where other work and projects meant that they did not see each other for long periods of time and this "truncated the development of the relationship" (L.S., 2023), but also intensified the periods where they could work together. The lack of deadlines for the project allowed it to ebb and flow as necessary when other aspects of their lives came to the forefront.

Although they worked collaboratively "there was never a pressure either way to be doing one thing or another thing, and that has carried through and just gotten richer. So, there's a lot of freedom in that space" (L.S., 2023); at times they worked together and at others independently. They felt that their relationship and what they did together "didn't have to be rigid" (L.S., 2023). When possible, decisions could be made independently but if they needed to be discussed they would just "sit down and talk about it" (L.S., 2023), these decisions were ones that had to do with stewardship of the land, or how the land was being used. The land was an important aspect of this collaboration as a significant portion of it needed to be maintained but clearing deadfall from trails and other maintenance. Both collaborators were invested in creating a relationship so there were "very few conflicts"(L.S., 2023), and those that did occur were mostly around scheduling. Due to the off-grid nature of the site it was important to coordinate driving as well as moving equipment and people to and from the site, this was occasionally a source of miscommunication between the collaborators.

L.S. liked to collaborate "because that forces you to step back from ego and be conscious, more conscious of process" (2023). L.S. stated that "the messaging that still infuses itself in the art, in the art world, in the world of art making, where the focus is often still on the individual artists doing the thing" (2023). And in her opinion "it just needs to be thrown out the window

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once and for all" (L.S., 2023). She said in "having collaborators where you can come to the table as equals and work through the process of making and the process of researching, the process of thinking through and then and the dialog between. The collaborators and the work that is being made and the ideas, I think, makes the outcome richer than the sum of its parts" (2023). Overall, this collaboration was built on ideas of openness and a strong connection to the land that they were working on. There were moments of them working together, as well as separately within the space, and the shared goals of land stewardship connected them through their work on site.

5.4.4. Collaboration as an Artist

Much like the instructors there are commonalities between the artists' collaborations that might help us understand the experience of collaboration. Although they express themselves in different ways both artists prioritized openness, structure, and relationships as important to their collaborative practices.

5.4.4.1 Flexibility and Openness. There was a sense of openness within the collaborations of the artists, there was not a predefined objective starting out the project, rather a sense of wanting to create something together. The artists also both stated that they wanted to push back against the individualism often found in the artworld.

L.S. felt that the collaboration:

became a very free place for both of us. And where we each felt very, I think, very and still do, very open to taking risks and being vulnerable with each other and sort of going, what about this? What about this? Oh, that's a different way of you know, it's a very I think that that has been the strongest thing for sure is, is bringing that. Respecting that space between us, the mutual respect that allows. For risks to be taken and play and chance to have factors in the work.

Initially, there were no particular expectations for the collaboration and "no real sort of plan for it other than I was going to come out and see what I could do" (L.S., 2023). L.S. and her collaborator had a "very open approach" (L.S., 2023), which allowed for different projects to evolve through the years of collaboration. Both were open to the ideas that the other brought to the collaboration (L.S. 2023), which allowed the project to grow organically over many years. Sometimes ideas were unfeasible for practical reasons, and were abandoned, but there was also an open dialogue regarding this. "We had gotten to a place where that dialog could happen in a really great, open, vulnerable way." (L.S., 2023).

Likewise, there was "never a pressure either way to be doing one thing or another thing, and that has carried through and just gotten richer" (L.S., 2023) this allowed each collaborator to participate based on their ability at the time. This could be because of other projects, or things that needed to be tended to on the land. "I think and I think both of us feel that when we're out there, that our relationship and what we do together doesn't have to be rigid" (L.S., 2023). This was also possible because of the long-term view of the project, which has now spanned over 10 years. Due to this extended timeline, there was little pressure to be productive during any short span.

In C.J.'s first collaboration the group itself was also fluid "it wasn't really defined like who was who or is the collective or not" (C.J., 2023) this allowed people to come and go based on their interest and other activities. In a later group collaboration C.J. and his collaborators "wanted to make this place very dynamic, using also collaborating with people around in the street there with different commerce and business" (C.J., 2023). This involved not just collaborating with the organizers themselves, but with other artists, and the people who lived and worked on this street, this became an open process that involved many people both directly and indirectly involved. They were also open to others taking over the project "we open this space,

or we open our I mean, our space or the space of the street is already open mostly so anybody can do whatever with or without consent because we don't own the space, we are just visitors" (C.J. 2023). Much like in L.S. 's collaboration the space became a key element to the collaboration. There was also a long-term view of the project, which also spanned several years.

Even within the structures necessary for larger group collaborations there "was a process that allowed the whole process to always flow, but not keeping the same authority structure or decision structure" (C.J. 2023). This openness allowed for collaborations to make decisions effectively, as well as change as the situation required. This prevented the project from becoming stagnant, and allowed collaborators to have input into the project, both individually and collectively.

5.4.4.2. Process and Structure. The structure in C.J. and L.S.'s projects were very different, but both had an underlying approach that allowed the project to move forward through its different phases.

L.S. developed a loose plan for what would take place at the beginning. "These are the parameters, you know, particularly ecological parameters and that kind of thing. So, we already had that in place. But sometimes it comes down to practical things." (L.S., 2023) at this point they would sit down and talk through the ideas and what was going to take place. Decisions were based on conversation, but also an agreed upon commitment to the stewardship of the land and the collaborators' relationship. These commitments helped to direct the projects over multiple years of collaboration.

The structure of C.J.'s projects was more fluid in the collaboration with only two people, whereas in larger collaborations there was a more defined structure. "It was very, very dynamic and there were certain rules that we put together" (C.J., 2023). In one of the projects the group

created a manifesto that helped guide the project; this manifesto was revised and changed throughout the project as they saw fit. C.J. states:

> I remember at probably at the middle of the project, we re-edited, edited the statement
> and we crossed over many of the things that we didn't want to do anymore. We were
> thinking there were absolute contradictions. So, we crossed them over and we wrote on
> top of them with the new ideas that we could follow because we always wanted to tell
> the people that we were trying to follow a system in a way, you know, it was not just
> whatever kind of thing.

These rules helped to clarify the direction of the project, especially when it was hectic, "everything was really turning and turning and turning all the time. So, we also had to turn to rules constantly" (C.J., 2023).

Within smaller collaborations both artists used "talking and negotiating" (C.J., 2023) as the main structure for making decisions. In C.J.'s case the labour was divided by the "capabilities of each of us" (C.J., 2023). This allowed the work to unfold in a natural way based on discussion rather than merely equally splitting the work.

Even though there were rules and structures, "it was a process of finding out all the rules that we put were about to be broken" (C.J., 2023). There is a dynamic in these works between the structure and openness that changed over the relationship between the artists, but also having a structure helps to build both the relationship and artistic project within the collaboration.

5.4.4.3. Community and Relationships. In both cases they created relationships that helped them to "negotiate with the spaces and interests and time and effort and all these things" (C.J., 2023). C.J. further stated:

> Would you see people letting themselves go not because of them, but because of
> something else that drives you to do something and give something to the project? So

that's what I mean with a great generosity and a gratitude is super important because otherwise, the energy doesn't flow anywhere and there's nothing coming back and there's nothing going nowhere. But these are very basic.

"This was a great experience because we also, during this time, get to know each other's work better because we visit each other's studios. We were kind of creating together and we consider this project as part of our artwork" (C.J., 2023). As the project developed the collaborators' relationships deepened. "That's what I call this, this project, a very, very important moment of collaboration because it was always about, yeah, it was a constant, it was a long-time relationship" (C.J., 2023). In the collaborative project with one other artist C.J. felt that "we had a lot of trust and I think it was awesome" (C.J., 2023). This project stemmed from a pre-existing friendship and the collaboration built on that. The relationship of trust, whether existing prior to or built during the project is very important to collaboration. During longer collaborative periods or when friendship already existed this seems to build naturally, whereas in shorter projects, artists are taking more risks in trusting the other.

Likewise, L.S. spent the first years of the collaboration "getting to know them better and the family, because it's sort of a haven for this extended clan and getting to know the site and what the limits were and what I could do" (L.S., 2023). This relationship allowed for the openness that became an important feature of the collaboration. There was a period of building the relationship between collaborators through "unofficial communication that drew us together in two social contexts, also laid the groundwork for a very rich collaboration over time and allowed us each to understand each other better the way we each worked, how we thought our basic philosophies in terms of the materials for the initial part of the collaboration" (L.S. 2023). The mix of social and work permeated the project, particularly because of the off-grid nature of the location of the work, which required significant amounts of work to prepare the basic

necessities, such as cooking food and chopping firewood. "So, we were each collaborating on meals and all of the other business of living on an off-grid site" (L.S., 2023). The relationship grew through "contributing to the care of the place and the care of each other" (L.S., 2023).

Much like other interpersonal relationships C.J. believes that artists build skills in collaboration. "If I could choose, I would love to collaborate with people who already collaborated with some other people, because I've found that it's for me, it's a growth process" (C.J., 2023). "Is it through generosity, generosity and gratitude all the time. Otherwise, you cannot collaborate" (C.J., 2023). C.J. believes that collaboration should not be transactional, but rather in this spirit of reciprocity and dialogue (2023). It becomes "an emotional relationship" (C.J., 2023) where communication becomes a key aspect. "A dance of egos as well. I suppose for me it's not just something that happens in a romantic way. It's [collaboration] a relationship" (C.J., 2023).

> Having a love affair through artwork is kind of lovely, you know, because it is about because this is all about care. It's all about acts of care. It's not literally a love affair, but it's all about acts of care. So that's nice.
>
> L.S., 2023

The relationships between the collaborators were an integral part of the artist's work. Rather than being a tool to create artwork the artwork grew from these relationships. Over time these relationships changed and deepened, as did the outcomes that they created. This focus on care between the collaborators was paramount for both C.J. and L.S. and it de-instrumentalized the other within the collaboration. This was mentioned and seemed key for both artists.

5.5 Conclusion

Throughout the interviews there were several key aspects that appeared in the

collaborations. An openness or flexibility that allowed the collaborators to be available to the other and was a key aspect in both teaching and making with collaboration. This openness was both to process as well as ideas, which stem from difference life experiences and knowledge about art making.

A focus on process over product with a structure to help direct it was also a key feature of the collaborative process. It is important, especially for students, to have some guidance or structure to an otherwise very open activity. For some projects, this could be as simple as agreeing on how decisions will be made, or it could be more complex such as what deliverables will be due when. This will highly depend on the individuals within the collaboration, their pre-existing relationship and their comfort collaborating.

Finally, a strong importance is put on relationships and community. This is related to the process and is a strong theme throughout the interviews with instructors and artists. The students spoke about relationships as well, but with more anxiety regarding the relationships, and how they would build a working relationship with each other.

These commonalities will be addressed further in the conclusion and orientations for teaching collaboration.

6. Findings

The data analysis explored how each individual experienced collaboration and how this compared to others in their group of students, artists, or instructors. In this chapter I will discuss the major findings within the data analysis and how they shape the experience of collaboration in the university classroom. This chapter will look at similarities and differences between the experiences, the essence of collaboration between each group and across them.

Although each person's experience of collaboration was different, each experience was directed by the following aspects to a greater or lesser amount: Flexibility and openness, structure and process and community and relationships. These categories were based on interviewee's comments, as well as my own experiences with collaboration. These themes came up multiple times during the interviews, and they were key aspects to their collaborative relationships. In this chapter, I will discuss how these categories were perceived differently through the experience of being a student, instructor, researcher, or artist, and what other factors within the experience may have affected their collaborations. These discussions will explore how each group of participants experienced collaboration, pulling examples from individual experiences to highlight the essence of the experience from each group. These experiences align with the literature on collaboration, in particular those that discuss the importance of openness to others' ideas, and of maintaining, rather than flattening differences. Then the findings will then be applied to guidelines in the conclusion, that will help studio instructors develop collaborative projects, and support students during the projects. The descriptions gained from phenomenology and ANT will help us understand the experiences of teaching and participating in collaborative projects.

6.1 Flexibility and Openness

All the instructors considered flexibility in designing their collaborative projects, this

allowed students to collaborate to a greater or lesser amount based on their comfort with collaboration as

well as their collaborator. H.A. and S.L. discussed what collaboration could be and what it might look like with their students, identifying different ways that they might work together. Students were able to and did choose to create projects with more or less active collaboration, for example some students worked together on all aspects of the project making a single work, whereas others decided on a theme and created individual works based on a shared idea or concept. An example of this is that students created a group exhibition on a theme. S.V. worked with one of her students to understand her concerns regarding collaboration stemming from past experiences, although not necessary in the end, S.V. was willing to have the student do an individual project if she did not want to collaborate. This shows S.V.'s receptiveness and openness to the concerns of her students regarding collaboration, and her flexibility in responding to these concerns. The instructors were aware that different students would have different comfort levels in collaboration and built their lesson plans and rubrics to accommodate these differences. This included my class, which also showed a several different levels of collaboration within the projects. This difference ways of collaborating together require difference levels of interaction and therefore cause different types of relationships between the collaborators. This also complicates evaluation, both in process based and product-based criteria.

As an instructor I also wanted to accommodate these differences in my students, however, as a researcher, I had certain ideas regarding collaboration, and what entailed collaboration. These did not necessary include some of the more individualistic collaborative structures that ended up occurring in my class. Through interviewing the instructors prior to my class, I was able to see how their students collaborated, and was able to adjust my syllabus to allow for more flexibility with the level of collaboration. Originally, all groups were going to be

required to make one artwork together. This flexibility was a benefit to my students, however it challenged my notions of collaboration, as well as my desire to create community for my students (this is discussed further below). As I grew as an instructor over years prior, I slowly allowed more flexibility in my classroom, moving from rigid processes to more open assignments, this was accelerated during classes that I taught during Covid-19, as students access to resources was extremely variable and needed to be accommodated. At the time I was teaching a very technology heavy class, where some students did not have access to hardware and software to do the projects I would have otherwise assigned. Giving up this sense of control as an instructor was not always easy for me, as it questioned my perception of work, quality, and ability. However, over time, I was able to see the benefits of allowing students to bring forth their own experiences in the classroom, and to have more control over the outcome of their assignments. Despite my hesitation of opening up the collaborative project even further, my own experiences as a student allowed me to be more open to this idea. While I was in art school the final year was self-directed, and this allowed me to develop my ideas and identity as an artist. When I think back to my experience as a student this more open period of work allowed me to develop my own methods of making and ways of thinking, which was very beneficial to my development as an artist and person.

Students were also able to choose their materials for each project, S.V. framed her project as an exchange, and allowed students to work digitally or with physical materials. H.A. and S.L. also let their students pick their materials, H.A. spoke of an occasion where she thought the group was too restrictive with their material choice, however, she did not interfere with their process. This allowed the group to make their own decisions, even if one member disagreed, and H.A. thought that it was not a necessary restriction. Giving students autonomy to make their own decisions, and learning from them, was important for H.A.. I also allowed my students to use any

materials they wanted, however, because they also created a lesson plan based on the artistic work, they had to choose materials that were appropriate to the demographic they chose to teach.

The demographics ranged from early childhood to seniors and since the students were able to pick their own demographic (they were not assigned) this gave them a lot of flexibility in regard to materials. Students chose a range of materials from recycled books, fabric, and used CDs, to more traditional materials such as acrylic paint on canvas. These materials affected how they were able to work together, for example a work on a medium sized canvas meant that they collaborators were only able to work on it one at a time. They were not able, in this project, to use materials that needed significant equipment, such as a wood or metal shop, or that were prohibitively expensive due to the nature of teaching within the community. This also limited the ways that the student collaborators could work together.

Two factors that the students who were interviewed identified which helped to guide the decision of how deep the collaboration would be was the amount of time that they had to dedicate to the project, as well as their familiarity with their collaborator. B.P. talked about the difficulty of finding time to work together outside of class time, due to different schedules. Collaborators used technology to help bridge these issues, some technology mentioned by students were a messenger application, Zoom (video conferencing), email, and text message. This allowed students to work together while maintaining different schedules by allowing them to communicate asynchronously through messaging. These tools allowed students to be more flexible with their time together, and the ways that they communicated as they were not required to meet in person. Given the relatively short period of time the students worked together (four weeks), these shifts in relationships and developing a shared artistic language did not seem to occur in the same way it did in the artist's collaboration, which spanned multiple years. However, B.P. and his collaborator both shifted their ways of working to create a combined

collaborative process. Likewise, J.G. and her collaborator developed ways of making shared decisions through discussion. None of the instructors talked to students about different ways of group decision making prior to the collaboration, so students used their own experiences to decision make. One group made all decisions together, others worked mostly independently, and another was in between, where some decisions were made together and others independently. When teaching collaborative projects in the future, I would discuss different ways of decision making with students prior to the beginning of the project, this may help them think beyond consensus as a way of working. This could include decision making techniques such as consensus, taking turn making decisions, and allowing both ideas to proceed and looking at the end result.

The artists worked over multiple years in most of their collaborations, when this occurred it allowed them to develop a deeper relationship and ways of working together with their collaborators. C.J.'s collective in particular experimented with different ways of decision making over the time that they worked together and shifted the goals and mission of the collective based on their needs at the time. By shifting the goals of the project when needed, C.J. and his collaborators were able to continue the project longer than if they had been rigid. L.S.'s relationship with her collaborator also changed over time, as they developed ways of working together over ten years. This collaboration started with an openness to explore the land together, rather than a concrete plan of action. Decision making was flexible, with some decisions being made independently by one of the collaborators while others were discussed together. As they worked together, they were able to create a shared understanding of their relationship with the land as settlers in Canada, this developed through discussion and as part of their process of working. Ways of working together and mutual support emerged as they worked not only on artwork together, but also daily activities such as gardening, cooking and maintaining the land. These non-making or informal parts of the collaborations, such as eating together, or

having coffee, help to build the relationship between collaborators, and were mentioned in both the artists interviews. J.G. a student, also mentioned mutual support within her collaboration as her and her collaborator navigated personal and school obligations. This was perhaps aided by the fact that they were friends prior to the collaboration and therefore had an understanding of each other's needs.

This openness to the collaborator(s) ideas and processes was also balanced by a structure to help guide the artwork. These structures allowed for guidelines on how to proceed, and how

decisions would be made as a group. On some occasions these structures remained relatively stable while in others they were more flexible. Without a structure to guide these decisions it would be time consuming to make decisions as a group, whether the structure was formally talked about, or intuitively put it place, it allowed some stability within the group.

6.2 Structure and Process

Based on this research to be able to create in a flexible and open way, there needs to be a structure or process that is agreed upon by the collaborators. The instructors of the courses put some of this structure in place through their project descriptions and rubrics, whereas the artists created their own structures based on the individual projects and their complexity. The more people involved in the collaboration, the more they relied on structure to be able to make decisions. This makes sense as it is easier to incorporate two people's perspectives without a formal structure, whereas as the group became larger the number of perspectives made decision making more complex. As the more actants become involved with the collaboration the more obligatory passages are necessary to structure their interactions.

S.V. set up her students' project as an exchange as a starting point, this structure allowed the students a method for thinking about the way that they would work together, how they would

exchange their work with each other. Students were able to exchange works via the mail, email or other means as a way to begin communication, they could return a new work, or add to each other as they decided. Having a starting point, even if it was fairly open, gave a structure to the work and gave students a starting point for discussion. Similarly, H.A. and S.L. had students start with group brainstorming, these groups were open, and not necessarily the same groups as the collaboration. Students were able to see what ideas were being generated, and chose what project they would like to participate in. This allowed for free idea generation, without students being required to stay in the same groups for the making process. The brainstorming structure allowed students to help develop ideas that they might not participate in, and gave a low stakes way of

beginning collective conversations. H.A. and S.L. also had scheduled check-ins with each group, and sections of the projects were due at different periods, rather than the final project being the only deadline. This gave students a predetermined timeline of the work that they would undertake, and forced them to work continuously, rather than do everything at the end. This gave each section of the process a predetermined end date and built in a structure to the making process. Likewise, I had a scheduled meeting with each group 2 weeks into the 4-week project, this allowed them to discuss their ideas and timelines with me prior to getting too far along with the project. They were also required to create a lesson plan together based on their project, this meant that they had to create an artwork that could be translated to their teaching demographic, this limited some of the things that they were able to do. This gave them some parameters that they needed to work within and structured their projects. G.J. spoke about wanting to use found materials from the street but revised this idea to use recycled materials found other ways due to potential dangers of collecting materials in this way (students collecting materials from trash etc.). Although they needed to make a lesson plan based on the project, it

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did not need to translate directly (i.e., it did not need to be an exemplar) they could use the concept or material as inspiration for the project, without copying it exactly. This allowed them to incorporate what they learned through the making process into the lesson plan.

Students also created their own processes and structures that helped them be successful. J.G. and her collaborator decided to make all decisions together, this allowed them to discuss each decision and make sure that they agreed. J.G. knew her collaborator well, and they were able to move forward through consensus. B.P. and his collaborator also made many decisions together but also allowed for some of their individual preferences to remain intact. They mostly communicated through technology, email and Zoom, and had fewer in person work sessions (due to schedules). Although he found the collaboration fruitful, B.P. would take the project in a different direction if he continued to create sound walks in the future, as he believes would his collaborator. This structure allowed for more differences to be retained than that of J.G. Finally, T.D. and her collaborator came up with an idea and material and concept and made separate works on this theme. This structure maintained the most amount of individualism of all the student collaborations. They could each make their own decisions within their own project, as long as it fit the theme and materials that they had decided on together. This is not meant to place a value on each type of collaboration, rather to point out how the structure and process that students decide on shapes the collaboration as a whole. If students decide that all decisions must be made through consensus, they will be required to work more closely together, whereas if individuals can make decisions independently, there does not have to be as close working relationship throughout the project. However, these structures do not have to remain fixed throughout the collaboration and can shift over time.

The artists were able to create structures and processes that changed over time, this is due to the much longer timeline of their collaborations. L.S. 's process remained open throughout the

collaboration however, she and her collaborator developed ways of working together over time. At first, they were getting to know each other and their ways of working, but over time this became more intuitive as they came to understand each other's ways of working. Likewise, C.J.'s collaboration created a manifesto that they periodically altered, crossing things out and adding as the manifesto no longer suited the needs of the collaboration. The collaborators also shifted ways of making decisions over time, trying different ways, and seeing what worked best for them.

Although the structures of the artists shifted over time they never dissolved, allowing for guidance when it came to the goals of the project, and what processes would take place, for example how decisions were made, or who would be included in the project.

Based on this research without structure and processes there cannot be flexibility and openness necessary for collaboration, as there is no way to enter into an understanding with the other, this requires a balance. Within these collaborations there was always a balance between the structure and predetermined processes and flexibility and openness within each of the collaborative projects. This balance is determined by the relationship between the collaborators and can change over time as their relationship grows. As the relationship deepens this balance may shift. Collaboration is not only about making an artwork but also developing this relationship and sense of community with other artists, this can be seen in Friendship as Method by Lisa Tillman- Healy (2003) and Karen Burke LaFevre Invention as a Social Act (1987).

6.3 Community and Relationships

All the instructors interviewed were teaching their classes just before or during the transition to in person classes during 2021/2022 (due to different locations of the classes they had different protocols at different times). This significantly changed the relationship of their students to each other, after 2 years of remote learning, some of the students had never met in

person. This was also the case in my course, even though it occurred in winter 2023, as some students were returning after taking a year off during remote learning or taking a reduced course load because of the pandemic (therefore not being in the class at the same time as most of their cohort). This created both advantages and disadvantages, H.A. and S.L. noted that their students had not developed peer groups, or cliques, the way that they had during in person learning, this meant that they were more open to working with other students than they typically would be, but also that they had not established as deep a relationship with their peers. The collaborative project gave them the chance to work with students they otherwise would not have built a relationship with, as well as build connections with their peers.

The lack of strong peer connection was a motivating factor for a collaborative project from all the instructors, including myself. Creating a professional support network is an important part of university, and due to remote learning for some if not the majority of students' university experience, this network was not as strong as it may have been in prior years. This support network is especially important in the arts, where students are often working alone in their studios after graduation. The artists, L.S. in particular, talked about sharing meals, and daily non-art tasks as being important to building her relationship with her collaborator; students working remotely lacked this sort of informal interaction with their peers. Simple things like going for coffee between classes or even just talking informally during break were not possible through online learning, and the instructors felt a need to bring the students together more regularly during class, whether online or in person, as a counterbalance. H.A. and S.L. especially felt that a peer network was an important part of working as a professional artist, and that it was a key part of the education experience.

Students, on the other hand, were more reticent about working with each other, they had concerns about the equity of the workload between collaborators, as well as having to change

their normal work processes. Although B.P. was originally concerned about having to alter his way of working, he found that in the end working with his collaborator allowed him to expand his practice in ways that he appreciated. J.G. worked with someone that she knew well, and therefore knew that she could count on them to do their share of the work, something she said she would otherwise be concerned about. D.T. and her collaborator each did individual projects on the same theme, and therefore avoided issues with splitting the work of one project, and of adopting each other's style of working. Although I initially wanted to discourage this type of collaboration, the interviews with other instructors changed my mind, pushing students too far outside of their comfort zones would have the opposite effect than I was looking for, having the students build an artistic support network.

Both artists felt a sense of solidarity with their collaborators, that they were creating something together. C.J. felt that his collaborations while in school allowed him to enter a professional sphere of artistic practice that otherwise would not have been available to him at that point in his career. This echoes H.A. and S.L. 's feelings regarding collaboration during an undergraduate degree or early stages of post-secondary education (their university also offers a two-year certificate program) and their ability to open professional opportunities for students. The collaboration during his undergraduate degree allowed C.J. to develop professional competencies that were useful to him such as being a part of art exhibitions outside of the university.

The differences between the experience of collaboration between students and artists can be understood by taking in a couple of considerations: grading, but also the amount of time that students have to collaborate. We can look at artists understanding of success to help us reconsider grading. To consider how students worked and were accountable to each other, rather than to the instructor. Focusing more on process and less on the end result might allow students

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to have a more open orientation towards collaboration. Given that at maximum students could be given 13 weeks, or 26 weeks in the case of a full year course to collaborate (which was not the case in any of the classes described), the time they have to establish relationships with each other is significantly different than the 2–10-year projects that they artists were undertaking. This does not mean that students did not build or strengthen their relationship throughout the project, as clearly demonstrated by B.P. who gained an appreciation of his collaborator and his methods of working through the project.

Creating a community of support and relationships between students is an important aspect of being successful post-graduation. Like many other industries, artists rely on networks of professionals to support them through their early career. This is true despite the ongoing mythos in the visual arts of the lone genius as described by Martha Woodmansee (1994), Karen Burke LaFevre (1987) and K.E. Grover (2016). Artists have relied on each other as sounding boards, collaborators, and teachers since authorship as an idea began. This has been obfuscated through media narratives and market pressures.

6.4 Conclusion

Although each group's involvement in each category is different, they are all important parts of the experience of collaboration for each group. Whereas ambiguity can be a feature for artists working professionally, it might be stressful for students who are collaborating in a limited time frame with a grade attached. Non-human factors such as time, and grading, play an important part in the way that students experience collaboration in comparison to artists in the cases in this study. These non-human entities play an important role in the experience of collaboration, and as per Actor-Network Theory, are important actants that make a difference within the collaboration. The longer time frames of the collaborations of artists, allow for more flexibility in the ways that they work, and allows them to make changes in their processes and

structures over time. Whereas students used the structure to be able to make decisions effectively in a shorter period of time, and once agreed upon they did not change their ways of working.

Instructors also built some of the structure and process into their syllabus, giving students a framework to begin their collaboration. This allows them to start their collaborations more quickly, given the limited time they have during the semester, it also gives them a point of communication and communality, which might not exist otherwise if students do not know each other well. The artists worked with collaborators that they had a prior connection to, even if they did not know each other well, this gave them places of communality to start working together.

The instructors in this study were also flexible and open regarding the level of collaboration each group engaged in, some students creating highly collaborative projects where all decisions were made through consensus, others making individual works on a shared theme. This flexibility allows students to engage in collaboration in a way that they feel comfortable and maintain control over important aspects of the process. There is an important balance between the categories of flexibility and openness and structure and process, in the case of both artists and students there are moments in the collaboration that are more towards one end or the other. The ability to work at different moments with more or less structure is an important part of building the relationship between collaborators. As the relationships between collaborators grew, they tended towards being more open and flexible. Creating these relationships and building community was a motivating factor for instructors in including collaborative projects within their courses.

This was especially important to the instructors given the perceived isolation of students during the Covid-19 pandemic university closures (2020-2022) and the lack of community building that happens with in person courses through the informal interactions of students. Students also experienced these projects differently because of Covid-19, in the case of S.V. 's

students, they were not able to meet in person, and therefore used electronic communication and the mail to communicate. S.L. and H.A.'s students also had a different experience due to Covid-19, although during the time of the class some courses had returned to in person, they had not interacted with their classmates in person over the previously years, this allowed for different group interactions since prior relationships were not as strong. H.A. and S.L. used tools such as breakout rooms in Zoom to help students get together and speak in a way that was more intimate while not being present in person. Students in this class were able to meet in person on their own time, but the class occurred online.

Although each individual's experience with collaboration will be unique, there are commonalities within collaboration that can guide students, artists and instructors through decision making while engaging in collaboration. Considering flexibility and openness, structure and process, and community and relationships while creating the syllabus for collaborative projects will help instructors make decisions regarding how to form and organize these projects for their students. By discussing these aspects with students, it will also help them organize their ways of working within the collaboration. Although present in a less prearranged way within the collaborations of artists these elements help shape their process as well. They may not have been as formal in discussing these elements, particularly in collaborations where there was already a relationship between the collaborators. This is not because they were not factors but rather, they were established already as ways of working. Students in the studio arts program are learning how to work as artists or are becoming artists. Collaboration allows them not only to explore their ways of working, but also to compare it to the way that their collaborator(s) work in the studio. This can be used to spark reflection and conversations about ways of working, and how these artistic decisions are made.

In the next chapter, I will discuss how we can use these findings to create a curriculum

that supports students in their experiences of collaboration and develops the skills that they need

to be successful in collaboration as well as become artists after they graduate.

7. Conclusions, Implications & Recommendations

In previous chapters I have considered how artists, and students experienced working in collaboration and how instructors have planned, executed, and experienced collaborative projects in their classrooms. In this conclusion, I will examine the findings from the interviews and consider how they might apply to teaching and learning in the studio arts classroom. What kind of orientations do students and instructors need to be able to fully undertake collaboration? What are the challenges to creating successful collaborative projects within the academy?

Alongside that, we will look at how these orientations might be applied to collaboration within the professional world of visual arts, and how these collaborations affected the thinking and professional trajectories of the artists interviewed. How did artists learn from each other through their experience of their collaboration? How did they perceive this experience in relation to the artworld? Does their experience reflect that of or contradict the literature surrounding collaborative practices? Importantly, how does the student experience and artist experience intersect, and what aspects of classroom collaboration can students bring into their professional lives as artists? Given that the goal of many students in studio arts is to have a professional practice, we can look at the skills and actions of professional artists as a guide for designing curricula and thinking about pedagogy.

The combination of these experiences of collaboration will give us a picture of how collaboration orients us in new ways, and how it might create support structures for students as they become emerging artists. The experience of collaboration has both positives and negatives for the students interviewed and these will also be considered in relation to teaching in the classroom, and how, if possible, some of the negative experiences might be mitigated. Rather than giving rigid recommendations this research suggests a paradigm shift that favours the

disposition of collaboration over the individualist, lone genius paradigm that modernism

champions. To be certain, it is not individual work itself that is the issue here, there is a place for

that within the artworld, it is rather the valorization of individual work over that of a collective

that I wish to question.

7.1 Summary

The interviews led to three main categories that describe the orientations of

collaboration: flexibility and openness, process and structure and community and relationships.

Each category of participant (artist, student, and instructor) had different experiences within

these categories, however, there was overlap in their experiences of collaboration. These

categories were drawn out of reading and re-reading the interviews with participants, looking for

overlaps and divergence. The categories span from individual orientations such as openness, to

community wide ones such as relationships, the importance of each of these categories depended

greatly on the role of the participant, and their internal motivations.

All participants showed levels of flexibility and openness within the projects, for example

S.V. was willing to let a student with anxiety around collaboration work alone, even though in

the end she chose not to; S.L. and H.A. allowed students to determine the amount of

collaboration they would engage in; L.S. worked around her collaborator's schedule and needs,

as did B.P.. Although they were flexible it is important to note that none of the participants

expressed that they felt that their voice or ideas were overtaken by their collaborators, and they

described a melding of ideas rather than one person's ideas overtaking the other. This is an

important part of a collaborative ethos, rather than one of an apprentice or studio assistant, who

also works closely with a mentor to create one project, in this type of collaboration both

collaborators had significant input into the direction of the overall project while taking turns

being the leader and following.

Although the end result was important, the participants noted that the process was underscored rather than the end result. S.L. and H.A. evaluated their students at different points throughout the process to make sure that they were progressing through the process. L.S. did not have a particular goal or project in mind when starting her collaboration, rather she engaged with her collaborator and the materials (in this case the land) to create goals and projects together. B.P. and his collaborator also focused on the process of creating together, each getting different benefits and outcomes as well as ideas for future projects. S.V. also focused on her students' process of collaboration, rather than the finished project, she was not concerned with her students producing a fully completed polished product. This was particularly important because her students had to create new ways of working due to Covid regulations, particularly since they were unable to meet in person. J.G. and her collaborator also set up goals based on their process and worked towards them. This allowed them to progress through their project despite certain challenges, such as weather (some of their project occurred outdoors), as well as other school and personal obligations. Students mentioned in their self-evaluations that they were concerned about their grades, and the fairness of having the same grades as their peers if they felt the work was not evenly distributed. Focusing on the process allowed students to have flexibility as things came up, and they were able to shift their direction as ideas and circumstances changed.

Based on this study, I would argue that community and relationships were particularly important to instructors who choose to do collaborative projects with their students. Participant instructors felt that students benefited from engaging in collaborative projects, and they highlighted artists who worked collaboratively as examples in their classes, H.A. and S.L. brought in a local collective to talk to their students about their work. Students, particularly B.P. felt that they benefited from the different perspectives and ways of working of their collaborator. Collaboration required them to work with materials that they had not used before, such was the

case with C.D., who used oven dried modeling clay for the first time, or materials that they were less familiar with, such as J.G., who worked with sculptural rather than two dimensional forms which were more typical of her practice. This change in ways of working showed that students were able to communicate their processes and merge them to work collaboratively, exposing them to new ways of thinking and working. Collaborators were able to appreciate their counterpart's competencies and techniques and learn from them. ANT was able to take into account the role of these materials in the assemblage of collaboration.

Although some students were unsure about working with their collaborative partners at first, they found fruitful ways of working with each other. S.V. found that discussing the anxiety of collaboration with a concerned student and checking in with her periodically helped alleviate some of her unease. Faulkner et al (2013) suggest that collaboration can cause anxiety in students that is different than individual work, this includes power differences, higher time commitments and group regulation rather than individual regulation. They suggest that clear metacognitive learning outcomes rather than task oriented one might help students engage in collaboration with less anxiety (p. 228). They also suggest that guiding students through process-oriented activities, for example decision making and team management, may alleviate stress (p.231). This apprehension was particularly true of students who had not worked with each other prior to this class. Some groups were less successful in the collaboration process, and had more difficulty bringing their ideas together, this was particularly true of larger groups, who had more difficulty finding times where they could all work together and had more ideas to manage.

Using these three categories I will outline an orientation towards collaboration that will guide instructors in developing collaborative projects with their students in higher education visual arts contexts. As students and contexts for teaching differ these should be adjusted to fit the specific needs of students, rather than being seen as a prescriptive model for collaboration.

This is especially true given the non-human factors which affect the way that we collaborate, this may affect how students communicate, what materials they use, as well as what processes they choose to work with.

7.2 Implications

This study points to three considerations needed for successful collaboration through the experiences of artists and students. Instructors who teach collaborative projects within their classrooms were interviewed to understand the motivations and processes they have in assigning collaborative work. These instructors were also practicing artists and therefore had multiple forms of insight on the potential for collaboration within the classroom. These motivations align with the orientations that students and artists were using to create collaborative artwork. This suggests that there are modes of working that better support collaborative processes, and that there are material and immaterial factors that can facilitate and hinder the process. This can include materials such as worksheets, art materials, self-

evaluations, technology such as text messaging and video conferencing, immaterial factors such as time, and students' past experiences, their relationship with the land. The interaction of these non-human actants with students can greatly affect the outcome of their collaboration. Time and scheduling were important factors for all collaborators and should be considered carefully by instructors when assigning collaborative projects, this could be a matter of having the project span a longer time or giving time in class for collaborators to meet and work together. It is important that students have the time to work together, understand each other's ideas and ways of working as well as creating the project. This may take more time than a similar individual project, and instructors should consider the length of the assignment carefully to ensure that enough time is given.

Collaborative work allowed students to experience different perspectives and work with

media that they otherwise would not. All the students interviewed worked with different materials or in different ways than they normally do, and this allowed them to build new skills and new viewpoints in art making. T.D. for example used oven dried clay for the first time due to her collaborator's interest in it. She was able to use this new material to express themes that were personally relevant to her. Students may incorporate aspects of this new way of working into their own practice, even if they do not choose to work collaboratively in the future. The exposure to new ways of working was also expressed by the professional artists who were interviewed, collaboration allowed them to have new experiences outside of their normal ways of working and gave them new perspectives regarding art. L.S. also spoke of differences of perspective with her collaborator regarding colonialism in Canada, this came up due to the land art nature of their work, and despite this not being resolved, it exposed L.S. to a different point of view. L.S.'s collaborator immigrated to Canada while L.S. herself was born here. These experiences changed their relationship to the land, but because of the context of collaboration, rather than an adversarial critique, they were able to hear each other's opinions, and despite disagreeing take each other's perspectives into account.

The literature suggested that although Modernism (reinforced to this day by the art market) perpetuates the myth of the lone genius artist, throughout history, and even during modernism, artists worked together to create artwork

as apprentices, or collaborators. Often, collaboration within modernism existed, but was minimized or ignored by art critics and historians. This was particularly true of women collaborators, who already had diminished status in the artworld. C.J. talked about the diminished status of collaboration in the artworld, and the literature suggested this may be due to the lone genius myth as well as the way that artists are marketed by galleries. However, many important biennials and art markets have taken on the collaborative approach recently, showing

work from artist collectives and collaborations (see documenta 15, 2018 Biennial of Sydney, 5th Havana Art Biennial as examples). This is a shift in approach that may encourage emerging artists to work together more frequently, as both a form of social and artistic solidarity. This allows for students and artists to reconsider the product focused artistic practices that are common in Western countries. Regardless of whether students continue to collaborate after graduation, collaboration has pedagogical implications that are different from those of working alone. Students working collaboratively need to communicate their ideas, negotiate with others, take on new perspectives, and often work with new materials, or those that are not their specialization. Although not the main goal described by the instructors, collaboration also involves other project management skills that are useful to students, such as creating project timelines and objectives, and time management. These are skills that are useful to artists regardless of whether they work collaboratively or individually and are also applicable to a wide range of other work and life situations.

As philosophical attitudes towards art making change, and we become more open to pluralism, collaboration can help students understand the perspectives of others, and allow them to be exposed not only to the ideas of the instructor, but also their peers. This moves towards a model of learning that prioritizes the knowledge of both students and instructors. In collaboration, students must communicate and use their past experiences and knowledge to be successful. This peer learning is useful to artists throughout their careers, and is cited by both L.S. and J.C. as a

benefit of collaboration. Peer learning may be especially useful in senior levels of studio art courses, when students have already acquired the foundational skills necessary to make artwork. However, this doesn't mean that junior students cannot also benefit from collaboration, especially in artforms that are not highly technical (for example collaboration would not be as

beneficial while learning how to weld or use a pottery wheel until the basic skills are developed). Given that the Western art world has been fairly homogenous, with a focus on the artwork of white men, it is important to expose students to a diversity of voices and emphasize the importance of difference within the student body. B.P. in particular mentioned the benefits of working with a student who used different processes than himself, and their finding middle ground through the project.

7.3 Recommendations

This study suggests that an openness to different perspectives is necessary for a meaningful collaborative experience. This relationship takes time to develop, and students need space to explore the possibilities of collaboration. This may be facilitated through an open process by the instructor, for example H.A. and S.L. allowed students to change groups throughout the beginning of the process. This allows students to engage with different experiences and ideas of their peers, rather than having to choose who to collaborate with from the beginning. Having students brainstorm in groups that may or may not be their final collaborative partners shows flexibility and allows students to have more control. This may mean reconsidering how and when students are giving peer feedback, and the role of the critique in this process, especially those that are adversarial. This may also alleviate some of the stress students feel while engaged in collaborative projects, namely, concerns regarding interpersonal conflicts, or distribution of tasks (one person feeling as though they are doing the majority of the work or are not being heard) since they are able to switch groups. Artists who engage in collaboration are generally free to end the collaboration as they wish, in some ways this facilitates collaboration, as they generally have chosen to work with their collaborator.

7.3.1 Conflict

Flexibility does not however mean that there are never disagreements on the path of the

project, or its timeline. It is a commitment to process and listening and learning from the other that allows for these issues to be resolved, or in some cases worked through without resolution. Conflict is not necessarily a negative aspect of collaboration, rather the natural outcome of those with different perspectives coming together, however, communication skills are needed to be able to deal with these conflicts in an appropriate manner. Instructors may choose to give examples of different strategies for conflict resolution, such as consensus, or taking turns making decisions after discussion. This may be beneficial to students who do not have much experience working with others, or who are naturally less vocal. H.A. and S.L. were careful not to intervene on behalf of one student or another in any group, even if they did not agree with the direction the group had taken, but rather mediated the discussion between group members and respected their final decision. It is important for instructors to help students develop communication and decision-making skills, rather than weighing in on or overriding the group's decisions.

7.3.2. Control and Flexibility

Allowing students to engage with the collaboration at different levels, through parts or the entirety of the process allows students who are less comfortable with collaboration to retain control and their voice within the process. This involves having flexibility as an instructor as the students will be engaging in different types of projects based on their needs. Instructors should dedicate time to meeting with students during the project to ensure that they are able to work together and to resolve issues as they come up. This also involves an orientation towards process rather than product as students will create a variety of work that may not be comparable based only on the end result, this involves alternative ways of assessment. The materials and skills necessary to create the project may also be

outside of the scope of knowledge of the instructor, and students may have to find autodidactic

resources to build their skills. This may involve non-human actants, such as in the case of C.D. who used YouTube tutorials to help her build her skills using modeling clay, it may also mean that the group relies on the experience of one of its members more than others. S.L. and H.A. had predetermined check-ins throughout the project with process goals for each, S.V. and I had meetings with each student, either individually or as the collaborative team at least once during the project. This allowed us to guide students through the process of collaboration. The frequency of meetings can be determined based on the length of the project within the class, as well as the size of the class and groups. I also had students fill in a self-evaluation, which helped them to reflect on the role within the collaborative team. Although I did this only at the end of the project, this could have been utilized as an individual check in during the process as well, and I may integrate it mid-way through the project in the future. This self-evaluation also helped me to understand the dynamics and workflow within the group from each group member's perspective. Generally, each member gave similar information, which confirmed what I had already observed in class, however, it did give students a chance to reflect on their contributions to the project.

7.3.3 Structure and Time

Having structured elements, such as check-ins, or process critiques (feedback from peers prior to the end of the project), can help students with time management within the project. The larger the group of collaborators the more difficult it becomes to manage the schedules to find time to work together. It was also more difficult to incorporate the ideas generated by each group member. Limiting the size of the groups may ease some of the administrative aspects of the project, such as schedule management. It is also beneficial to give time in class for this purpose

as all students are available. B.P. described finding a time where he and his collaborator were

both available outside of class time as a challenge during their collaboration. It is important to keep in mind students may have different class schedules and have work and family obligations. Using technology, such as messenger, email, and video conferencing software (such as Zoom or Google Meet) helped to bridge some of the issues regarding times to meet. Students' familiarity and comfort with these non-human actants has increased due to online learning during the Covid 19 pandemic, however, in the future they may have to be introduced to students more deliberately. We cannot assume that students are familiar with online platforms merely due to their access to technology (Castro, 2012). Texting and email were described by all student participants as ways that they used to communicate with each other asynchronously. It is important to note that in my class, the bigger the group the more they struggled with time management and finding time where all the members could meet. For this reason, it may be beneficial to cap the number of members in each group to three, or to caution students that larger groups are more difficult to manage. The materials that students are using may also affect how much time they need to spend together in person, for example, if the project is primarily digital, they may be able to work primarily online.

Instructors must also consider how to include collaborative projects within the class. Due to the fact that engaging with others takes more time than working alone, it is important to dedicate a significant time period to working on the collaboration. Instructors need to consider if there is time within their curriculum to have a collaborative project, as giving too little time does not lead to students having enough time to engage with each other's ideas and to experiment with them. If there is not time to do a larger scale project, collaborative warm up exercises, which have small goals, might be more appropriate. An example of this might be to give groups of

students recycled materials and a period of time to work together to make a sculpture. Due to

the low-pressure nature of this sort of activity students may be more open to working together. Instructors may also encourage collaboration in other projects. In my syllabus for example, it stated that students are able to collaborate on any project, after consultation with me. This allows students the chance to collaborate more frequently if they wish. The scope of the project may be modified slightly if students collaborate, or additional outcomes may be included.

Artist participants shed light on the benefits of collaboration in their careers as artists. C.J. describes opportunities to learn professional skills during his undergraduate degree that he would not otherwise have, such as exhibition opportunities. He also described collaborative projects that gave him the opportunity to work with materials that were not generally part of his practice. Both C.J. and L.S. describe managing the relationships with collaborators as an important part of this practice, such as how the workload gets distributed, and how to create a timeline that is practical for the collaborators. This generally involves both project management and communication skills. These are skills that can be actively developed within collaborative projects in the classroom, not only are they useful skills in collaboration but also in artistic practice more generally as well as many other situations. They both also described how the relationships with their collaborators were a very important aspect of the collaborative work, L.S. described eating meals, and maintaining the land as an important part of their work, and C.J. also considered the relationship between himself and his collaborators though multi-year projects. L.S.'s collaboration is still ongoing, but the collaborations that C.J. described are completed. In each case the projects finished naturally, either with the work being completed and exhibited, or the artists involved no longer being interested in managing the project. This is very different to the experiences of the students, who have a very definite timeline for their collaboration project (although it could extend beyond the parameters of the class). Due to the necessary timeline of the semester, and grading, students should consult with the instructor regarding the scale of the

project that they undertake. If students want to undertake a large-scale project, one part or section may be completed during the course. S.V. discusses her deemphasis of product in her class, and this may be one way of dealing with this. By creating evaluation criteria that focus on process rather than product it allows students to undertake large scale projects that cannot be completed during one semester and be evaluated in the same way as peers that took on a smaller completed project. This could be done by breaking the project up into steps with their own deliverables. This flexibility may be particularly useful for senior students who may want to undertake larger projects that they will later propose for exhibition.

7.4 Conclusions

Collaboration can be a useful tool for expanding learning in visual art by allowing students to access their peers' knowledge, as well as build interpersonal skills. It may also help students create relationships that help them build resiliency during their early career. Collaboration requires orientations towards learning that are different from those of individual learning. This is true of both the students and the instructors. It is important for instructors and students to communicate with each other throughout the process and have process driven goals and timelines. This also requires more flexibility and discipline than an independent project, as there are more factors involved, such as multiple schedules, different and sometimes opposing ideas and ways of creating work. Rather than trying to eliminate all conflict that may arise, students should be encouraged to allow for productive conflict and teach strategies for dealing with it and discuss how they each reached their opinion. Although these conflicts may not ever be fully resolved, decisions can be made, and the project can continue with a stronger understanding of the other's perspective. Instructors should avoid becoming involved in productive conflicts, but rather help students navigate the discussion surrounding them. Allowing for space for the disagreement to persist.

This moves away from the individualist paradigm allows students to learn from each other's experiences and benefit from perspectives beyond those of the instructor. This allows students to benefit from the diverse student population and consider art in ways and contexts that are outside of their own experiences. This includes both differences in making art, as well as different cultural perspectives about the use of art. It also allows practices that were marginalized within the Modernist tradition to become visible, such as collaborative work that is often credited only to one party, in particular the contributions of female partners of male artists (see Christo and Jeanne-Claude for example). The opening of the artworld to collaboration also allows us to rethink the individualist nature of the academy and its emphasis on individual achievement, as well as how we make artwork within the postsecondary classroom. Collaboration allows students to learn in meaningful ways from their peers, and better understand how others' experiences may affect their decisions and the way that they see and make artwork. This exposes them to new ways of working that they might abandon or incorporate into their practices.

Regardless of whether they embrace these new ways of working after the collaboration, collaboration allows students to question why and how they create art, and how they might do so differently in the future. These challenges to their normal ways of doing allow them to consider their processes, and how other artists may take on the same challenges that they are facing.

7.5 Future Directions

This research explores the specific experiences of a small group of students, artists and instructors. Although the impact of technology is felt within all of these collaborations, I did not interview any artists who worked predominantly with technology as a medium, such as artists working with VR. How does the interface of working within a digital space affects the collaboration is an area that could be explored further. For example, does working with code

rather than physical objects change the way that artists explore together? Another area of interest is how student led collaborations occur, and how they affect the student-artist. When students choose to work together on longer term projects, in or outside of the classroom, how does it affect how they relate to their coursework, and artmaking practices more generally?

This research sketches out the broad orientations needed for collaboration to contextualize the practice of collaboration in the classroom, but details specific to media, artists background, and desires to collaborate could be further explored. Further exploring how collaborative teams make decisions and resolve conflict would benefit students and instructors incorporating collaboration into the classroom.

Appendix A- Collaborative Project Outline

Collaborative Project

Overview

With one or two peers you will develop an art project as well as a lesson plan based on the project. This will include a budget and funding plan for the project, as well as identifying the population you would be working with. You will create an exemplar together, as well as the lesson plan.

Learning Objectives

To establish perimeters of art education project, including budget, timeline and population
To learn technical and conceptual skills necessary to create a collaborative artwork
To create a lesson plan that is appropriate to the target population
To reflect on the learning outcomes of the population and feasibility of the project

Procedure

1. In your group decide on the parameters and target population for your project
2. Identify the skills needed to complete the project (this can be done which creating the example, or prior to)
3. Identify the resources necessary to develop these skills (this can be your peers, tutorials, books, etc.)
4. Create a sample project together (each group much work together to make one project)
5. Create a lesson plan, including a budget for the project
6. Find appropriate funding source for the project (you do not need to create an application just locate the information for the funding)
7. Through self-evaluation reflect on the collaborative project, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the project

Rubric

Criteria	A	B	C	D
Scope and Timeline	The project could be completed in the timeline described	The project could be completed in the timeline described with modifications	Aspects of the project could be completed in the timeline described with modifications	The scope and timeline were not realistic
Funding	The chosen funding stream is appropriate for the project			The chosen funding stream is not appropriate for the project
Lesson Plan	The lesson plan clearly identified the objectives, steps, and	The lesson plan mostly identified the objectives, steps, and materials	The lesson plan partially identified the objectives, steps, and materials	The lesson plan did not identify the objectives, steps, and

	materials necessary for the project	necessary for the project	necessary for the project	materials necessary for the project
Population	A population was defined and the artwork and lesson plan were appropriate for the population	A population was defined and the artwork and lesson plan were mostly appropriate for the population	A population was defined but the artwork and lesson plan were only partially appropriate for the population	A population was not defined or the artwork/ lesson plan was not appropriate for the population
Example Artwork	The artwork was well constructed, both technically and conceptually and related to the lesson plan	The artwork was well constructed, both technically and conceptually with minor issue and related to the lesson plan	The artwork was had major issues with construction, either technically and conceptually or did not relate to the lesson plan	The artwork was not well constructed and did not relate to the lesson plan
Self-Evaluation	Reflection was well considered and could be applied to future projects	Reflection was considered and may be relevant to future projects	Reflection was considered but did not consider how it would be applied in the future	Reflection was not considered and could not be applied to future projects

Appendix B- Ethics Certificate

CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant: Stacey Cann

Department: Faculty of Fine Arts\Art Education

Agency: N/A

Title of Project: Working Together: Experiences of Collaboration in
the Fine Arts Classroom

Certification Number: 30017338

Valid From: December 14, 2023   To: December 13, 2024

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have
examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and
consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be
acceptable on ethica I grounds for research involving human subjects.

Richard DeMont

Dr. Richard DeMont, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

Annex C- Sample Interview Questions

Artists

What experiences do you have with artistic collaboration?

> -Describe what happened?
> > Who did you collaborate with?
> > How did you decide to do a collaborative project?
> > What were the first steps of the collaboration?

> -What materials did you use?
> > What items were used initially?
> > > -this can be to communicate or make
> > Did you use other materials throughout the process?
> > How did you interact with these objects?

> -What was your process for collaboration?
> > What happened during each phase? (planning/ making/ exhibiting/ evaluating)
> > Who made decisions regarding the process and how were they made?
> > Were their conflicts? If so, what were they and how were they resolved?

> -How did you feel about the process?
> > What did you feel went well?
> > What do you feel could have been improved?

Sample Interview Questions- Professors

What experiences do you have with student collaboration in the classroom?

> -Describe what happened?
> > How did you introduce the lesson?
> > How did students react initially?
> > How did they interact with each other and you?

> -What materials did you use?
> > What items were used to introduce the project?
> > Did you use other materials throughout the process?
> > How did students interact with these objects?

> -What did you see during class time?

How did students create groups/ did you assign them?
How did they interact with each other during the class?
Were there materials that they used (both art or
otherwise)?
How did they move throughout the class? Did they rearrange the
furniture?

-How did students interact with you throughout the process?
What kind of questions did they ask you?
How did they communicate with you (email, in person etc.)?

-Did you get any feedback regarding the collaborative assignment?
What kind of feedback?
How was it delivered?
Did you find it helpful?

Sample Interview Questions- Students

What experiences do you have with artistic collaboration?

-Describe what happened.
Who did you collaborate with?
What were the first steps of the collaboration?

-What materials did you use?
What items were used initially?
-this can be to communicate or make
Did you use other materials throughout the process?
How did you interact with these objects?

-What was your process for collaboration?
What happened during each phase? (planning/ making/ exhibiting/
evaluating)
Who made decisions regarding the process and how were they made?
Were their conflicts? If so, what were they and how were they resolved?

-How did you feel about the process?
What did you feel went well?
What do you feel could have been improved?

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