Artist Practice in the Elementary Classroom: Redefining Art Teaching Through Artist-Teacher Philosophy

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Artist Practice in the Elementary Classroom: Redefining Art Teaching Through Artist-Teacher Philosophy

by

Ashley Lauren Smith

An Abstract of a Thesis
in
Art Education

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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Buffalo State
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Abstract of Thesis

Presently, there is confusion about the definition, role, and pedagogy of artist-teachers and how their practice influences the way art is taught in a K-8 public school setting. In this paper, I present my motivations for pursuing this topic of research, provide a brief history of Western conceptions of artist-teacher, and describe pedagogical characteristics of artist-teachers along with an examination of the teaching environments they create.

I used Arts-based research to conduct a multi-site case study in which I first investigated my artist practice and then studied how I translated what I learned into the elementary art classroom. I completed my study in two phases. In Phase 1, I studied the cognitive processes that emerged as an organizing structure for my artist practice. Then, I embedded these cognitive processes to structure a curriculum unit, which I taught to 5th and 6th grade students in Phase 2. In both sites, I collected data through observation, dialogue recordings, and document analysis to investigate what happens when an art teacher like me grounds their teaching practice with their artist practice.

My findings illustrate that approaching teaching with artist-teacher philosophy redefines art making as a cognitive process and expands conceptions of developing craft through postmodern art practice. Additionally, in this approach, artist-teachers translate artist practice through conversational pedagogy and teaching is a reflective approach. Recommendations for future research are provided, including recommendation for research about how artist teacher philosophy influences arts-based research and artist practice in teacher training programs, and recommendations for how artist teacher philosophy affects leadership in the broader school community.
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A Thesis in Art Education

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education

May 2014

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study and Research Questions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist-teacher Philosophy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Conceptions of Artist-teacher defined through history</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Characteristics and Artistic &quot;Habits of Mind&quot;</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Craft</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist-teacher Practitioners Engage and Persist</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way Artist-teacher Practitioners See</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Risks</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression: Creating from Lived Experience</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Practitioners and Dialogue</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding The World of Artists</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmodern Curriculum</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Classrooms Promote Studio Culture</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice-Based Studio Classroom for Elementary Students</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the study</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of Study</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issues</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist Practice</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1: Finding Ideas</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter and Form</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Environment</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Pages</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a Bank of Visual Ideas, Knowledge and Inspiration</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist Community Encounters</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2: Developing Concepts</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Environment Supports Conceptual Development</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial and Error: Persistence with Preliminary Sketches</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Support, Contemporary Drawing, and Ideas First</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES ................................................................................................. 136
Appendix A: Parent/ Guardian Permission Form................................................. 136
Appendix B: Permission Form School................................................................. 137
Appendix C: Building Studio Space................................................................. 138
Appendix D: Third Floor Studio Space............................................................... 139
Appendix E: Drawings Developed in Phase 1..................................................... 140
Appendix F: Glow Heart Magician................................................................. 141
Appendix G: Finding Ideas Phase 1................................................................. 142
Appendix H: Studio Environment (Developing Ideas)....................................... 143
Appendix H-I: Developing Concepts................................................................. 144
Appendix H-II: Interpreting Emerging Understanding....................................... 145
Appendix I: Studio Classroom Environment.................................................... 146
Appendix J: Curriculum Design........................................................................ 147
Appendix J-I: Visual Planning Space................................................................. 148
Appendix K: Visual Conceptual Parameter....................................................... 149
Appendix L: Resources for Small Group Dialogue........................................... 150
Appendix M: Group Brainstorm Chart.............................................................. 151
Appendix N: Animal/Human Characteristic Worksheet.................................... 152
Appendix N-I: Student Samples Animal/Human Characteristic Worksheet........ 153
Appendix O: Rose's Process Work..................................................................... 154
Appendix O-I: Katie's Process Work................................................................. 155
Appendix O-II: Jordan's process Work.............................................................. 156
Appendix O-III: Megan's Process Work............................................................ 157
Appendix O-III: Megan's Process Work Continued......................................... 158
Appendix O-IV: Logan's Process Work............................................................ 159
Appendix P: Students at Work......................................................................... 160
Appendix Q: Character Reflection Work Sheet............................................... 161
Appendix R: Interpreting Emerging Understanding in the Studio Classroom..... 162
Chapter 1: Introduction

The term artist-teacher has caught my attention because I am both an artist and a teacher. This term fascinates me. It suggests the possibility that there are individuals engaging in the difficult task of combining a hybrid form of art and teaching practice to create a paradigm for art education. Artist-teacher is a term that seems to embody the practices of skilled art educators who are leaders contributing to the realm of education, art, and research. Artist-teacher philosophy describes a way of teaching in which an artist-teacher's pedagogy is composed of strategies that artists use to find and develop concepts for creating artworks. Confusion about this philosophy is the result of misunderstanding how exactly artist-teachers ground their teaching with artist practice. My research will study, investigate, and clarify the definition and practical application of the artist-teacher philosophy within a public school.

Background of the Study

Before a more complete definition can be stated for the term and practice of artist-teacher, it is necessary to reflect upon events, which were the catalysts for this investigation. The root of my personal quest began at Alfred University when I heard a quote, initially by playwright George Bernard Shaw, on the first day of my attendance as an undergraduate student in the Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) program. Upon moving into my freshman dorm, I felt nervous with anticipation about my classes, meeting new people, and my growing independence on leaving home. With great excitement, I met my new freshman roommate. She was from Manhattan, and with her was her family helping her to move into and adjust to her new life in our dorm on the fourth floor of Openhym Hall.
Before even unpacking our luggage, my roommate and I began our introductions. I met her family and she met mine. It all seemed friendly enough. Her proud parents were standing on her side of the room as we began to talk about our chosen majors. On my side of the room, I introduced my major as fine art with a minor in education. My parents also stood proudly by my side, but were worried about my job prospects and “money making” ability. I am from a small conservative rural community and art was not exactly considered a practical career choice.

Soon after our introductions in the "safety" of our room, my new roommate’s father shot me a comment that penetrated my body like a shiny, silver bullet. It was a comment that I could not protect myself against because I had certainly not yet practiced such skills. He said matter-of-factly, “Good luck, you know what they say: he who can, does and he who can’t, teaches.” In an instant, I felt a rush of feelings that included doubts about my chosen profession, an increased sense of fear regarding money, confusion about the contribution that the inspiring art teachers from high school had made to my life, and anger that would motivate me to prove him and everyone else like “him” wrong. The pressure was on to prove my worth.

Throughout my undergraduate experience, I felt torn between my artistic practice and my plan to become an art teacher. I found peers who looked down upon going to art school only to become an art teacher. While not all people in art school held this belief, there were many who fiercely believed that somehow it was a waste to learn about contemporary art practice, philosophy, methods, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history for four years, if only to become a K-12 art teacher. There were professors, who supported my decision and interest in becoming an art teacher, but still I felt a hierarchal
relationship between art and teaching existed within the context of art school and the art world.

Jean Rush (1995), art educator, artist, and professor critically reflects upon this commonly held belief when she explains that the “myth of the eccentric genius” refers to the artist as an “eccentric, brooding individual driven to create at the expense of personal comfort and family security” (p.1). Rush highlights artist David Smith as an “American hallmark,” a representation of the American artist as misunderstood, tortured, yet larger than life, deserving of respect, and, above all, unique (1995, p.1). Those who participate in this hierarchal relationship between artist and art teacher believe that if an artist chooses to work as an art teacher, they are turning their back on the modernist ideal and are in some way, “selling out,” choosing comfort and security over art, and are discontinuing their creative work (Rush, 1995). Therefore, such a person cannot participate as both artist and art teacher, and the belief that art teachers choose their career because they are “not good enough” is perpetuated.

Rush confirms this negative attitude often held by artists when she writes, “to an artist, there is only one artistically correct reason for discontinuing one’s creative work: lack of ability to continue it” (p. 3). The only “justifiable” teaching position in art school is then that of the art professor because a teacher of art in higher education must maintain a professional body of work (Rush, 1995). The comment made by my roommate’s father confirmed for me that the negative attitude held toward art teachers was not a belief of only the art world, but was common in American society as well. During art school I kept quiet about my art teaching plans and worked hard at honing my craft and art practice, which I continue to work at today.
Despite such obstacles, I was determined to be a strong artist, as well as an art educator. My intention was to tackle this obstacle by taking the time to become trained as an artist first and focus on my craft as an art teacher in the future.

After I earned my B.F.A., I proceeded to enroll in an art education program to obtain the necessary training. During my training and student teaching experiences, I encountered many art educators who were unlike the traditional art teachers I learned about and somehow, their methods of teaching contradicted traditionally held beliefs about art teachers. They created educational experiences inspired by their own studio experience, which was equally strong. The excitement and passion for artistic work that these teachers experienced in their studio invigorated their classrooms and engaged students. I viewed their practice as progressive within the field of art education. The master teachers I write about exhibited a way of teaching that no longer fit into the term of “art teacher,” and I believe the hybrid term of artist-teacher is more appropriate for these teachers. As I began planning lessons and classroom experiences of my own, I worked on adopting the model of the master teachers whom I have observed as well as my own experiences as an artist in order to inform my practice as an art educator. As a novice teacher, I am still working at developing this today.

After ten years of trying to understand the comment made about my chosen profession, I realized that it continued to cloud the formation of my identity as both an artist and art educator. Further, Shaw’s epigram used in the context stated earlier made no sense to me, given the caliber of master teachers I have observed during my training and teaching experiences. The teachers I learned from regularly brought their artworks into class to model artistic behaviors and thinking such as finding inspiration and ideas that
were exciting to them, developing and reflecting upon questions they posed about
artmaking, and working along side their students to find meaningful forms for their
artworks. I felt confused about the different kinds of teachers I had encountered. Shaw’s
words angered me; in fact, it seemed to invalidate not only my work, but the work of
many great educators. This experience prompted me to investigate Shaw’s maxim further,
which resulted in learning a valuable lesson about how to reframe my understanding of
Shaw’s words.

The process began with a quote I remembered from Mark Twain. He stated that,
"Education consists mainly in what we have unlearned” (Twain & Paine, 1935, p.346).
Reframing my understanding of Shaw’s quote required that I spend time "unlearning" my
initial perception of its meaning through study. I define “unlearning” through the lens of
constructivist theory. Brooks and Brooks (1993), in their text on constructivist
classrooms, reference philosophers and theorists such as Dewey, Kant, Socrates, and
Piaget as informants of constructivist principles when they state that, “Constructivism, as
a way of coming to know one’s world” has to do with “the view that logical analysis of
actions and objects leads to the growth of knowledge and the view that one’s individual
experiences generate new knowledge” (p.23). Therefore, I define “unlearning” as the
practice of reconstructing and defining prior experience by reflecting upon it through the
lens of newly obtained knowledge. It was also Brooks and Brooks who stated that
“Changing the lens is an internal process initiated by the individual when current rules
and theories about the way one’s world works no longer account for the information
being perceived or provide for the job to be done” (p. 25). It became necessary to engage
in “unlearning” for several reasons. The first of many reasons was, as Brooks and Brooks
suggest, that my past experiences no longer made sense in relation to fresh experiences and newly gathered knowledge. Second, my new found captivation with the term artist-teacher required that I unravel and redefine my notions about the roles and functions of art teachers, teaching artists, artists, and art specialists in contemporary society. Lastly, I believe that by engaging in the process of “unlearning” the implications of Shaw’s epigram, I was actively healing a painful experience of the past and possibly transforming my conception of validation in relation to my chosen profession.

Shaw's epigram is usually taken out of context, as it was originally written in 1903 for revolutionaries and activists. The epigram is part of Shaw’s *Maxims for Revolutionists*. Upon reading further into Shaw’s Maxims, I found another quote that reads, “Activity is the only road to knowledge.” Reading these maxims in their entirety makes it clear that Shaw believed education should be a practice of freedom that inspires independent thought and inquiry that confronts and exposes the most serious of social issues. In the spirit of Shaw and Twain, I unravel the words of my roommate’s father to gain new understanding and ownership over Shaw’s words. I now have strength in the form of knowledge that pushes me to rephrase the misquoted words of Shaw to say: those who can, do not seek external validation because they actively lead the way by teaching through a critically reflective practice that they understand. Those who can’t, teach about what they think they know without questioning what they practice. Reflecting upon Shaw’s quote and the context in which it was written inspires me to believe that today, Shaw might describe an artist-teacher as someone who “can.” I think it is important to examine exactly how artist-teachers ground their teaching with artist practice because I believe artist-teachers may be leaders in the field that model an alternative practice that is
important for arts and art education in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Practicing as an artist-teacher may be just as Shaw intended, a form of political activism within the field of art education.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

Presently, there is confusion about the definition, role, and pedagogy of artist-teachers and how their practice influences the way art is taught in a K-8 public school setting. The research questions used to investigate this issue are:

- How might approaching the classroom as an artist-teacher practitioner affect its environment?
- How might I use my art practice to influence my pedagogy within a K-12 public school setting?
- How might the artist-teacher approach impact the way curriculum is written to meet the needs of contemporary learners?
- In what ways does implementing artist-teacher as a philosophy guide students in creating their own work as artists do?

The purpose of this research study was to gain insight and understanding about my artist practice as well as the ways I translated the key findings of my artist practice into a curriculum unit. For this study, I approached my classroom as an artist-teacher practitioner and implemented the theories, practices, and skill-set that is characteristic of artist-teacher practitioners within a public school setting. For example, practitioners of artist-teacher philosophy (Daichendt, 2010) focus on students’ engagement with artistic thinking and behaviors by embedding the cognitive processes used for artmaking into their pedagogy so that students will be able to experience thinking and creating as artists do. I engaged in arts-based research to study and document the experience of shifting my teaching practice through the framework of artist-teacher philosophy in order to bring further clarification to the definition, role, pedagogy, philosophy, and art practice of an
artist-teacher practitioner (Daichendt, 2010; D’Adamo & Marshall, 2011; Eisner, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Sullivan, 2004). The study revealed how artist-teacher philosophy may be implemented within the K-8 public school setting along with the ways it might support students in creating artworks as artists do and strategies to overcome challenges met.

Definitions

The following terminology will be used throughout the study:

**Artist-Teacher** - may be understood best as a philosophy used to describe a way of practicing teaching and not a term used to describe a person. Specifically, artist-teacher philosophy is implemented by a person who creates conditions for students to learn and practice artistic behaviors and grounds their educational philosophy in art practice and as such the practitioner implementing this philosophy has professional experience, especially in regard to artistic thinking and behavior used in contemporary artist studio practice. Parks (1992) supports this definition when he describes this particular kind of educator as someone who engages in “artistic teaching,” which emphasizes a teaching practice based upon artistic behaviors. James Daichendt, (2009) a scholar who has written extensively on the subject of artist-teacher philosophy, supports this argument when he defines the philosophical artist-teacher approach as being conducted by a skilled practitioner of art and teaching who constructs their "philosophy of teaching upon artistic practice” (p.33).

**Art Teacher** - is a commonly used term in the field of art and art education and can be defined as the role of a professional person based upon terms of employment and location of services rendered and not as a philosophy. Art teachers are primarily employed by
public institutions such as public schools that must teach within a set curriculum often led by assessments. The practices of art teachers are as varied as their experiences with art, and their philosophy of education. Since art teachers are defined by their role particularly in relation to employment for this study, art teachers may choose to implement artist-teacher philosophy if they like.

**Teaching Artist** - is also a commonly used term in the field of art and art education and can also be defined as the role of a professional person based upon terms of employment and location of services rendered and not as a philosophy. Teaching artist is defined in *A Report on the Teaching Artist Research Project: Teaching Artists and the Future of Education*, (Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg & Shelby 2001) as “an artist for whom teaching is a part of professional practice” (p. 7). A teaching artist is not “someone who teaches an art form but has no professional practice (nor is) an artist who does not teach” (Rabkin et al., 2001, p.8). Teaching artists do work in public school education but most work within the community art or non-profit sector and are usually working within a contract rather than hired on as a permanent employee (Rabkin et al., 2011). Teaching artists’ studio practices also vary depending on what kind of artist they are and what their life and educational experiences are. Since teaching artists are defined by their role particularly in relation to employment for this study, teaching artists may also choose to implement artist-teacher philosophy if they like.

**Arts-Based Research** - is the "systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies"(McNiff, 2008, p. 29). Those who engage in arts-based research
approach art making as a primary form of inquiry in which imaginative image making is used to construct new knowledge. Arts-based research is a qualitative approach that expands art making through rigorous critique, documentation, reflection, analysis and theorization of artwork(s) within a process used to develop and transform our perception thus generating new understanding and perspectives about human experience (D’Adamo & Marshall, 2011; Eisner, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Sullivan, 2004).

**Rationale**

Artist-teacher philosophy is important to study because it may be a leading model of teaching that, as Freedman (2007) suggests, “troubles” (p. 205) current education policy as well as the structures within formalized education. If so, then what exactly is leadership in this context and how might the artist-teacher philosophy disrupt the current landscape within the field to create a shift in art education practice? Kerry Freedman (2011) defines leadership within contemporary art education as action that “enables change, improvement, and the cultivation of new ideas” (p.41). To make her point more clear, Freedman (2011) differentiates leadership from advocacy and suggests that advocacy is an approach that art education can no longer rely on because “advocacy focuses on supporting and maintaining art education programs,” but advocacy does not do the work of developing and improving programs. Freedman, like Shaw, proposes that art educators “must become activists who work together to trouble policy and lead creatively” (Freedman, 2007, p. 216). Troubling or making trouble is defined as “referring to a challenge, as in the practice of troubling an idea or troubling that which is taken-for granted” (Freedman, 2007, p. 205). The artist-teacher philosophy implemented
within public education might enable programmatic, curricular, and environmental change as well as become a model that troubles policy and enables art teachers and teaching artists to creatively lead. One question remains. What situation might the artist-teacher philosophy need to “trouble?”

I have been troubled while teaching in a variety of settings. As a certified art educator practicing in New York State, I have experienced the ways that many art classes in public school and in private settings are often referred to as "the specials," along with music, dance, theater, and physical education. The Arts are marginalized when relegated to “the specials” and arts classes become transformed into a forty minute period of time managed by art teachers and teaching artists who are hired to be the owners-of-fun once a week so that students can learn a little bit about art and experience different kinds of art while they have a good time too. The marginalization negates the arts as a transdisciplinary practice and process that spans all subjects. Further, for some students, the scenario locates the arts as something special that people do only in the confines of the school art room for fun or maybe for a simple act of expression rather than as an approach to thinking, understanding, or meaning making. Wanda May (1989) refers to this scenario and confirms the marginality of the arts in schools when she writes that “art teachers are constantly doing battle with the ghost of fun” (p. 148). I am not against fun, but I believe the responsibility and balance of work and fun should be shared by all teachers.

The “ghost of fun” and the increased marginality of the arts have been reinforced time and time again in my teaching experience, when field trips, school assemblies, and special school events are planned specifically during art classes. Students are pulled from
art class constantly for remediation and testing of math and English language arts, or visits to the guidance office, so that the students do not miss their “regular” classes. Too often are teaching artists and art teachers viewed as people who provide an art experience that is entertaining and usually in collaboration with “regular” teachers as a form of arts enrichment or a way to enhance the core curriculum.

Additionally, art teachers are often restricted by standardized art curricula. I have observed some art teachers respond to standardized curriculum by planning rigid lessons that emphasize materials and techniques with fixed results that can be easily managed and measured. The result is a scenario of teaching in which teachers struggle to facilitate activities that engage students with the creation of artwork that is the students' and is motivated by their own interests. If students cannot make work that is meaningful to them, the struggle with this programmatic cycle will continue.

These experiences have made clear the idea that, in many places where I have taught, art is viewed as an impractical process for important life-long learning and that art teachers are viewed at best as facilitators of self-expression and "school art" that teach about color, shading, and line and at worst are a break for the "regular" teacher (Efland,1976). Also, the language describing the arts as "the specials," mandated time constraints for arts learning, and the absence of pedagogy and curriculum grounded by art practice may be a formula that is damaging to art education. Exploring the artist-teacher philosophy may be the political push art teachers, teaching artists, and their students need to free themselves from such limiting categories. As Freedman suggests,

If we want students to develop a deep knowledge of the power of art, we must see our professional practice as problematic, dangerous, showing concern, disconcerting, and in short, challenging to the minds, hands and eyes of students. We must help students understand that creative work can be troubling (some of
the best art is) and that art troubles previous ideas and images. (Freedman, 2007, p. 205)

If making art means making trouble for previous ideas and images, then teaching using a philosophy grounded in artistic practice may have the best chance at leading the transformation of traditional teaching practices within a public school setting. Clarifying, understanding, and studying the practices surrounding this philosophy may open up possibilities of leadership for the future.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study was conducted in two phases. Phase One of the study began in my art studio, where I studied my artist practice during the summer months prior to the 2012-13 school year. After translating my artist practice into a curriculum unit, I implemented the unit in Phase Two, and studied my art classroom over the course of 15 weeks within the structure of a K-8 public charter school. While the room was set up as a stimulating environment, some students came each day with the mindset that they were in school. Classes were limited to 40-minute sessions occurring once per week. This is not a typical time allotment or structure for art making, especially in comparison to art classes in community settings, my personal home studio, or after school programs. Class is state mandated, therefore all students in the study had to come and participate in class. Art class in this study was not a choice and students were not allowed to drop in as they felt motivated to work. The space and materials were also shared and as such some limitations on the uses of space and material were made in consideration of others. This structure may have impacted the experience of autonomy associated with being an artist as well as some practices associated with artistic behaviors and thinking. At the site of
this study, there was no school imposed art curriculum, but there was a school-wide effort to implement Responsive Classroom and Cooperative Discipline models (Albert, 1996; Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). Responsive Classroom and Cooperative Discipline models influenced the way I approached setting up the classroom.

**Conclusion**

Artist-teacher as a philosophy and its accompanying history must be explored to define further the intricacies of artist-teacher practice and may be the key to understanding the importance of drawing upon artistic practice as a relevant form of teaching. Specifically, the artist-teacher philosophy requires deeper investigation to understand how artist practice works as the underpinning of the artist-teacher philosophy. How might a practitioner of artist-teacher philosophy employ artistic thinking as part of their pedagogy? Additionally, it is important to understand how a practitioner of artist-teacher philosophy creates environments that also embody this philosophy. Finally, artistic experiences may have an effect on the way teachers write and teach curriculum. Exactly how artist-teacher practitioners enact curriculum within their environments will be analyzed further in the following literature review to understand how their artistic philosophy influences their practice in regard to curriculum and pedagogy.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Artist-teacher, teaching artist, art specialist, and artist-educator are terms used interchangeably and frequently in the field of art and art education. What is the difference between these terms? Do they merely describe a person who engages in a double-life, much like Wonder Woman and Spiderman, or is there more? These terms seem to emphasize the importance of art production and art practice and imply the balancing act a person must engage in to be both artist and educator. While there may be many titles used to describe the practice and role of a person who both produces art and teaches art, it is the hybrid role and dynamic practice of teachers who employ artist-teacher philosophy (Daichendt, 2010) that will undergo a thorough investigation. To begin, the definition of artist-teacher philosophy and the history contributing to the development of this term must be clarified.

**Artist-teacher Philosophy**

There is no one conclusive or commonly accepted definition to refer to the very special composition of the term, artist-teacher. It is much like trying to define creativity. Both are inclusive of many unique ideas and there is no single authority to create such a definition. A major national study revealed that the practice of the artist-teacher is considered a fresh model within the field of art education and that the artist-teacher model was one of the most prevalent and emergent paradigms in art education and the theoretical base for graduate study in many art education programs in America and Canada (Anderson, Eisner, and McRorie, 1998). James Daichendt (2009), a scholar and researcher in the field, has written extensively on the topic of artist-teacher, and he notes that alongside the artist-teacher practice is the growing profession of the teaching artist.
Both the *Teaching Artist Journal* and *The Association of Teaching Artists*, advocate for progressive growth in regard to teaching and art making practices in the field for arts professionals. In addition to the terms artist-teacher and teaching artist are others with which most art educators are familiar, such as arts specialist and art teacher. The differing terminology can be confusing, especially because each term implies a professional engagement in teaching and art making. Though slightly different, it is best to conceive of artist-teacher as a philosophy and not a term, therefore artist-teacher is a way of thinking, not a person (Daichendt, 2009). A practitioner of artist-teacher philosophy is oriented toward a particular way of teaching that is grounded in art practice, behaviors, and thinking (Daichendt, 2009). Daichendt (2010) refers to artist-teachers as a very particular group of people; however, if artist-teacher is viewed as a philosophy, then it could be clarified further by the argument that teaching artists, art teachers and arts specialists might adopt the artist-teacher philosophy so long as they engage in artistic practices and thinking. This is a more inclusive conception of artist-teacher.

Artist-teacher philosophy places the concept of artist and studio production in the center of the teacher profession. Emphasis on the word artist assumes that artistic production is important in relation to artist-teacher philosophy. Artist-teacher philosophy is implemented by skilled practitioners who engage in the practice of art as it applies to both making and teaching so that their students, “artist-learners” (Adams, 2005), experience artistic thinking and behaviors within a studio culture. Daichendt (2009), suggests that teachers who implement artist-teacher philosophy apply aesthetic processes to their teaching when he writes that the term artist-teacher is an “approach to art education that celebrates artistic practices and artistic ways of thinking in the classroom”
George Szekely (1978), an artist-teacher practitioner, agrees with both Adams and Daichendt when he states, “The artist-teacher does not begin with a project or exercise but, with a vision and inspiration which may stem from his [sic] own work or from visions of other artists” (p.18). Further, just like a maker, an artist-teacher practitioner

understand[s] that there are no uniform solutions or single answers, and that the role of the art teacher is to help students discover individual tasks and their own unique ways of working to recognize the existence of problems and alternate paths in solving them (Szekely, 1978, p.18).

The art of artist-teacher practitioners extends beyond the creation of new and important knowledge through their art making into the creation and craft of methods that artist-learners can use to make discoveries that construct significant knowledge on their own. The question remains, does an artist-teacher practitioner need to engage in consistent art practice and maintain an exhibition schedule to consider working with artist-teacher philosophy? This can be answered best by reflecting upon the history of artist-teachers.

**Western Conceptions of Artist-Teacher Defined Through History**

While artist-teacher philosophy has been documented as an emergent paradigm in art education, the concept is not new. As Daichendt (2010) explains, artist-teacher is a concept and a model for teaching that dates back to the middle ages and as a term to the nineteenth century. Before the term art, artist, or artist-teacher was born, apprentices acquired skills in family workshops from artisans. By the middle ages, apprentices worked in guilds under a skilled master craftsman where eventually the apprentice would become a master craftsman of a trade and leader of a guild (Efland, 1990 as cited in
Daichendt, 2009, p.34; Staniszewski, 1995). The guilds eventually dissolved and were replaced over time with a similar mentorship model of teaching and learning such as the French academy in which students studied with a professional academician (Daichendt, 2009). This model predates the artist-teacher model, but is nonetheless similar in its composition of artist-learners working with artist-teacher practitioners to hone their practice. It was the standard way to learn in Europe that eventually expanded throughout the world and for centuries artisans and crafts people have been learning from master craftspeople who pass their trade on from generation to generation. According to Daichendt (2009), it was not until the nineteenth century that the first school opened a new course designed to prepare art teachers rather than artists for teaching in schools of design. The result is a system similar to art education and training programs we know today.

As a result of this changing history, defining the difference between art teacher and artist-teacher has been problematic for the field. Unfortunately, current uses of the title art teacher imply that art teachers do not engage seriously in an artistic practice and therefore cannot do what they teach (Zwirn, 2011). Reinforcing this perception is the stereotype that artists and art teachers are professionally incompatible due to the opposing nature or lifestyles of the artist and the teacher. Stereotypes such as the artist as carefree, spontaneous, free spirited, and unattached so they may engage selfishly in their studio work vs. the teacher who is highly structured, regimented, accountable, and inferior in regard to artistic training (Rush, 1995) has made defining the term artist-teacher confusing and generally problematic for art teachers, especially in regard to developing a philosophy and identity (Daichendt, 2010; Lanier, 1959; Zwirn, 2011). As a result,
opposing views in regard to the term artist-teacher have been greatly debated by professionals in the field (Anderson, 1981; Daichendt, 2010; Day, 1986; Lanier, 1959; McCracken, 1959; Szekely, 1978).

The real problem for art teachers occurs when artist-teacher is viewed as an identity and not a philosophy (Daichendt, 2010). Vincent Lanier and Willard McCracken, both scholars in the field of art education, debated the term when it emerged as a discussion point in the 1950s. Lanier (1959) reviewed the term and referred to it as redundant, superficial art education jargon that places education as secondary to art making and would ultimately set art education back, as it was an inadequate term for art education. Further, Lanier (1959) stated that art teachers would be offended by the term, and would feel inferior to the person who identified as artist-teacher, especially if the art teacher was not involved actively in both (artist and art teacher) professions. If the term artist-teacher is viewed only as an identity and not a philosophy then it becomes exclusive and confusing. McCracken (1959) wrote Lanier a rebuttal in a subsequent article in the journal *Art Education* and referred to the term as a “concept rather than a simple descriptive term” that creates an opportunity for enrichment and a significant education experience through the arts because “high level artistic activity is essential to an understanding and appreciation of the full dimensions of aesthetic experience” (p. 5). McCracken’s conceptualization of artist-teacher is similar to how Daichendt (2010) describes George Wallis, a self-proclaimed artist-teacher practitioner in the nineteenth century. Documentation of Wallis's existence and practice as a model of the artist-teacher philosophy simply proves the importance of the artist-teacher point of view as it has continually surfaced within the field throughout history.
The debate is relevant today as is the concern of art teachers who do not practice a consistent making-based studio practice. Some art teachers feel they may be excluded from participating as artist-teachers or are at least confused as to what constitutes a practitioner of artist-teacher philosophy. Mark Graham and Susan Zwirn (2010) address this concern in a research project designed to study teachers who are artists in order to understand how a teachers' art practice influences pedagogy when they write,

This is not to suggest that there are not excellent art teachers who are not active as artists, or that being an artist always translates into effective pedagogy. Nevertheless, how a teacher's artistic practice contributes to teaching remains an important question (p. 220).

Artist-teacher simply suggests that an artist's studio experience, thinking, and practice can significantly affect the kinds of experience and thinking an artist-learner will engage in. Daichendt (2010) supports this idea when he writes that “artist-teachers are not just artists who teach; their artistic thinking process is embedded within various elements of the teaching process” (p. 10) As long as a teacher has engaged seriously with their own artist practice and with the practice of other artists, the teacher will be able to draw upon that experience when formulating an education practice and philosophy.

The artist-teacher philosophy possibly forges a new formula for art teachers to create a rich interdisciplinary experience that will shift both the process and product of the artist-learner in a new direction that meets the needs of contemporary society. Constance Huddelston Anderson (1981), a scholar in art education, writes about the identity crisis often suffered by art teachers, and suggests that the roles of artist and teacher are “not a separate entity, but that there is a great deal of interdisciplinary fusion” (p. 45) possible once the two are combined. While artists and teachers may have some slightly different priorities, they share a variety of characteristics. Specifically, Anderson
(1981) points out that, “the primary concern of the teacher is learning and cognitive processing” and that “the artist considers the end product, whether object or experience, to be of primary importance” (p. 45). It is the artist-teacher practitioner who blends the craft of the two in order to place importance on both learning processes and product for the benefit of the student. It was McCracken (1959) who first suggested that the artist-teacher philosophy may offer resolution to the issue of “process vs. product” when he wrote,

The relative functions of "product" and "process" in a fully developed art education philosophy has [sic] never been completely re-solved at the theoretical level. I should like to submit the possibility that the artist-teacher concept is some-how related to an effort to effect a new attitude toward this question from the practical rather than the theoretical level. It appears that the strong "process" orientation which is fundamental to our approach to education is actually undergoing important modification as a result of growing attention to the artist-teacher point of view. (p. 5)

The orientation of the artist-teacher practitioner may shift the process which an art teacher engages in to teach, and therefore might change the meanings and qualities in product by uniting studio practice, contemporary issues, traditional teaching methods concerned with cognitive process, and real art world connections to provide a meaningful learning experience.

Those who embrace artist-teacher philosophy might be defined as creative leaders who embody a vision with the power to inspire “evolutionary change” (McCracken, 1959, p. 4) within the field of art education. In a more recent discussion, Kerry Freedman (2011) characterizes a vision of leadership in art education when she writes that

It must characterize knowledge of the visual arts as essential to human life. It must take into account the cultural and personal impact of the range of popular and fine art. It must connect the visual arts to a variety of societal aims as well as educational goals. It must renew an emphasis on creative thinking and behaviors
in the face of increased standardization. And, it must guarantee learning, using appropriate student assessment as proof of achievement. (p. 41)

This idea is supported by a study published in *Teaching Artist Journal* (Booth, 2011), which surveyed 19 informed individuals about the profession of art teachers and teaching artists who are oriented toward the artist-teacher philosophy. The study concluded with the following list of defining limits used to describe artist-teachers as having,

- a fluid combination of skills of art and teaching; the capacity to actively engage the widest array of people in creative inquiry processes that open up relevant discoveries (often powerful insights) in each individual; the reach for a wide range of connections between art and anything else that is important to a wide range of participants; the ability to authentically model the power of artistic thinking, creating, perceiving, reflecting, and attending. (Booth, 2011, p.11)

Defining artist-teacher as a teaching philosophy, and vision of leadership throughout history provides a lens for artists and art teachers to reflect upon their practice. Through this lens, art teachers, teaching artists, and art specialists may become leading artist-teacher practitioners in their field who inspire new thinking from an artist-teacher point of view.

**Pedagogical Characteristics and Artistic “Habits of Mind”**

Artist-teacher practitioners, like other professionals, have a special skill-set that defines their role within their profession. Defining and understanding the artist-teacher philosophy and skill-set requires understanding pedagogical characteristics shared by successful artist-teacher practitioners. In his book *Artist-Teacher: A philosophy for creating and teaching*, James Daichendt (2010) was able to isolate six pedagogical characteristics that were shared by the artist-teacher practitioners in his study. The six characteristics are:
• Artist-teachers [practitioners of artist-teacher philosophy] are artists first. This refers to their educational and life pursuits; all the art teachers came into the teaching field through an interest in art or art production.

• Teaching should be a direct extension of studio life.

• The production of art works is central to understanding the profession of teaching art.

• Classrooms should be modeled on the practices of artists and designers.

• Teaching is an aesthetic process: artist-teachers [practitioners of artist-teacher philosophy] manipulate classroom techniques, materials, and characteristics similar to the artist’s manipulation of the elements and principles of design.

• Artist-teachers apply artistic aptitudes- drawing, painting, performance in educational contexts- classrooms, boardrooms, planning sessions, mentorship opportunities, teaching processes, research practices- to enrich the learning experience, for example, exploring lessons in a sketchbook. (Daichendt, 2010, p. 147)

These characteristics describe concepts that create a dynamic foundational structure for describing those who practice artist-teacher philosophy and will be used as a framework to develop further understanding about this approach to education. Since Daichendt found that art production is the preoccupation of most artist-teacher practitioners, it is necessary to investigate artistic process and determine exactly what artists' do and how artists think in order to understand more deeply the skill-set of an artist-teacher practitioner.

Daichendt (2010) also writes,

    If one idea ties all artists of all periods together, it is that artists produce objects/concepts and in doing so use a particular way of thinking that aided their production process. This production and thinking process is a central tenet to being an artist, and this aspect (artistic thinking) is what many art teachers hope their students experience. (p.64)

For example, George Wallis was an artist-teacher practitioner in the nineteenth century whom Daichendt (2009) described as a liberal art teacher, a rebel in his time, and a model teacher who embodied such artistic dispositions. Wallis used his “artistic aptitude” to ground his teaching practice and solve “practical issues in the classroom” (Daichendt,
Wallis constructed the artist-teacher philosophy to help students practice artistic thinking by providing his students with a principle to guide the invention of an original design, rather than having students copy perfect renditions of a teacher product (Daichendt, 2010). Understanding the specific kinds of artistic thinking and behaviors that Wallis and his students engaged in will provide important insight into the skill-set of both the artist and the artist-teacher practitioner.

Art teachers working in visual art high schools who also engage in professional art practice were studied by Lois Hetland, Ellen Winner, Shirley Veenema and Kimberly Sheridan (2007) and described in their text Studio Thinking (2007). The study included observations and interviews with five teachers who were practicing artists working in schools that explicitly defined themselves as “dedicated to the arts,” offered intensive arts instruction, and admission to students based on a selective portfolio review process. Studio Thinking was created as a framework for teaching and learning that clarifies specific kinds of dispositions and thinking that artists engage in. In terms of their study, Hetland and colleagues define a disposition as a trio of qualities- skills, alertness to opportunities to use these skills, and the inclination to use them- that comprise high-quality thinking” (p. 1) in the art studio. Central to artistic thinking and behavior are “dispositions referred to as “Studio Habits of Mind” that the authors of Studio Thinking observed in the “studio classrooms” of art teachers who participated in their study (Hetland et al., 2007). Hetland et al. (2007) observed eight “Studio Habits of Mind” that art teachers participating in the study fostered within their “studio classrooms.” The habits of mind include Developing Craft, Engaging and persisting, Observing, Envisioning, Stretching and Exploring, Reflecting, Expressing, and Understanding the
Art World. It is important to note that while Hetland et al. (2007) were able to distill eight distinct studio habits of mind, most were never taught in isolation but rather in complex combinations referred to as “clusters” within the context of dynamic studio work and life. These eight habits of mind clarify the skill-set associated with artist-teacher philosophy.

**Developing craft**

It is no secret that artists engage in work with materials and techniques. Making is central to an artist’s process; therefore, the most obvious place to begin in defining artistic behavior is with the studio habit of mind that Hetland et al. (2007) refer to as *developing craft* (p. 33). Developing craft is a studio habit that the authors observed any time students in the studio classroom learned to “work with purposeful attention in various media, care for materials and tools” or “work[ed] with elements of artworks, such as form, line, surface, value, and how to employ artistic conventions such as perspective or color mixing” (2007, p. 33).

Ownership of artistic craft is important if artists are to gain confidence and strength in their practice and yet is just one small aspect of an artist’s process that holds the key to a maker’s artistic freedom. Hetland et al. support this idea when they write that “while developing technique involves becoming familiar with artistic conventions, it does not require rigid adherence to them” and that *developing craft* “allows students to make informed decisions about if and when to depart from conventions or use tools and materials in new ways” (p. 33). Learning technique is central to studio work, but *developing craft* is not meant to package artists into neatly wrapped conventions. Rather, as the authors suggest, it is meant to “give students control over their works” and help them to “begin to think with technique” just as artists do (p. 41).
Art teacher and practicing artist Jason Green, a participant in the study, “sees technical knowledge as liberating: without technical knowledge, ‘there’s not really a chance for discussion about choices’” (Hetland et al., 2007, p.11). Beth Balliro, another art teacher and practicing artist participating in the study, supports and confirms Green’s point when she states that she “believe[s] in the standard ‘you have to know the rules to break them’” (2007, p. 36). If children do not interact with some of the technical foundational structures, which are akin to grammar and vocabulary, then, as Green and Balliro suggest, choice becomes a moot point and development of children's understanding of how to continue interacting with such skills becomes stunted. Honing skills and developing craft is a habit that most artists work hard to master and is a fluid part of their studio practice.

However, artist-teachers working in public schools also face a very real dilemma. There is very little time for artist-teachers to teach all of the rules so that their students can break them. Also, art is a requirement in public school and many artist-teachers encounter students who lack interest in art making. For students who lack interest, it is difficult for them to understand the value and purpose of art, including the habit, developing craft. The artist-teachers described in Studio Thinking work with students who have self-selected an arts school, and the teachers may work with students for longer periods of time to develop craft. So, the question then remains, if an artist-teacher cannot spend hours teaching craft, especially if students are reluctant to develop craft, then what will artist-teachers teach?

Graham and Zwirn (2010), in their study on teachers who use their artist practice to influence their pedagogy, interviewed an elementary teacher-participant, Monique,
who demonstrated that some artist-teachers attend to the importance of meaning, content, and message above craft. Monique reported in an interview "I am a conceptual artist. I don't paint things just because they are beautiful. I paint to tell stories. I try to have my students do the same in their work" (Graham & Zwirn, 2010 p. 223). Monique's statement suggests that not all artist-teachers prioritize the habit of developing craft over meaning or that development of craft has to result in more meaningful artwork. The scenario might also imply that for some artist-teachers, the development of craft may refer to the ways artist-teachers and their students craft meaning rather than the ways they develop sophistication with material.

**Artist-Teacher practitioners Engage and Persist**

Most successful artists engage in a disciplined and consistent studio practice over extended periods of time in order to develop the kinds of mental states that are conducive to persisting with projects. Hetland et al. (2007) say that this mental state occurs when artists “lose themselves in concentration, forget about time, and fully focus on the moment” (p.42). This mental state has been described as “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and happens anytime someone fully engages in work that involves a personal connection. This means that the work is intrinsically motivating in some way. It makes sense then that Hetland et al. (2007) suggest that “the primary means of teaching students to engage and persist is to present them with projects that are deeply engaging” (p. 42), but what is it exactly that makes a project engaging? What causes intrinsic motivation? What kinds of projects do artist-teacher practitioners need to invent to help students develop the artistic studio habit of mind, engage and persist, and what kinds of projects do artists engage in?
Research has been conducted that shows us the kinds of projects that do not encourage students to engage and persist. Douglas and Jaquith (2009), authors of *Engaging Learners Through Art Making: Choice Based Art Education in the Classroom*, suggest that “teacher-assigned art projects may result in an attractive solution, but as an external motivation, explicit assignments are unlikely to bring about the best from all students” (p. 42). Here Douglas and Jaquith are referring to the “school art style” (Efland, 1976). Efland suggests that “school art style” happens when

Teachers know in advance the look of the products they want and what they don’t want. The art that is produced is suggested by the teacher who commissions it and motivates the students to accept the commission. The teacher is also the client-patron for the products produced and is the dispenser of rewards for commissions completed within specification. (1976, p. 41)

Here, Efland is describing projects in which the teacher has full control over the product; therefore the student might as well be on an assembly line in a factory. The kinds of projects that inspire artists and students to engage and persist involve belief in the work. Emery (1989) studied the concept of belief in the context of children’s studio work and explained, “belief is not simply divine inspiration, but belief is described as “intensity of involvement” and “the catalyst which drives the individual to want to engage in complex cognitive and sensate processes” (Emery, 1989, p. 241). Emery’s study of children engaged in serious art making showed that

When belief (was) present the child showed such qualities as curiosity, interest, and a commitment to search for forms and to arouse associations which could be used expressively. When the child showed belief in the artistic process, she also focused on the task and attended closely to the work at hand. When a child’s total attention is engaged in this working process, the child believes in the process and thus the product has personal value. (1989, p. 247-48)
Artists must believe in their work in order to develop the habits of mind that motivate persistence and a strong work ethic. Belief is encouraged by both artist and student when a “broad parameter” is established in which the maker has room to “consider possibilities” (Emery, 1989, p. 242) and find where belief for the artist-teacher and the student lies within such a parameter. Artists learn over time how to create such parameters within their own studio life. Artists also go through ruts when belief in their work is absent. If belief is absent, the work becomes like the “school art style;” it is sterile, mechanical, and potentially routine (Efland, 1976; Emery, 1989). Artist-teacher practitioners teach students how to engage and persist by modeling ways to engage deeply in work as well as how to push through or break out of ruts when belief in ones work is absent.

**The Way Artist-Teacher Practitioners See**

Artists have an affinity for observation and an uncanny ability to see beyond their initial observations in order to envision new possibilities. This is not a skill that artists are born with in the modernist sense, but something that requires a great deal of training and practice. Training for the artistic dispositions *observing* and *envisioning* were developed in the studio classrooms described in the text *Studio Thinking*. Hetland et al. (2007) recorded that, like artists, students in the art studio develop the studio habit of mindful, careful observation when they “are taught to look more closely than people ordinarily do” because they are “helped to move beyond their habitual ways of seeing, to notice things that might otherwise be invisible and therefore not available as something to think about” (p. 58). Thus students and artists are able to observe with “new eyes” (p. 58).

“Observation is the springboard to envisioning” (Hetland et al., 2007, p. 48) and it is with
new eyes that artists are able to imagine extraordinary ideas that others do not know are possible.

Seeing with new eyes is not a value-neutral experience. All observations and understandings are made by seeing through experience (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

Training the eye to see new possibilities has to do with shaping perception and critically thinking about the information gathered during observation. Critically reflecting upon observations of the world is a way to see with new eyes. Observing this way helps artists and students to see many objects and ideas in the world differently, therefore new possibilities are envisioned. Olivia Gude (2007), artist-teacher practitioner and creator of the Spiral Art Education Workshop, expounds upon this idea in an article about foundational guiding principles of curriculum in the 21st Century. She puts forth that “Not Knowing” and “Play” are guiding principles that refer to active observation and critical, playful envisioning as a method for imagining new ideas. Gude explains that in studio classrooms learning “Not Knowing” refers to the idea that students "do not know many things they once thought were certain” and that through "Play", students " will learn new strategies of making meaning through which they can interrogate perceived notions of “the real” (2007, p.14). Gude (2007) suggests the necessity of bridging the guiding principle “not knowing” with “play” so that students will learn through creative observation that the “notion of reality is constructed through representations in language and image, students will not mistake representations for reality as such” (p.14).

Observation and envisioning are dispositions that those who practice artist-teacher philosophy must cultivate in order to facilitate students’ abilities to envision their lives
and all manner of possibilities that exist within it, especially so that artist-learners can open their eyes to possibilities they may not yet know exist.

**Taking Risks**

Discovery often occurs when one playfully pushes past what may already be known with the purpose of looking for “a mistake” or a potential “failure” as a teachable moment in which learning and growth ensue. Discovery requires a high level of trust and willingness to take risks. Hetland et al. (2007) categorize this studio habit of mind as *stretching* and *exploring*. In the studio classroom, *stretch* and *explore* means that the students must take risks, play around, explore, and experiment when working on a particular challenge. Often the language used to encourage this behavior while students work includes refrains such as, “be creative…”, “try this out…”, “Don’t worry about mistakes, just be brave…”, “trust the process…”, “see what happens if…”, “How else could you have done this…?” (Hetland et al., 2007, p.74). A very particular kind of challenge must be arranged to elicit discovery as well as the development of this studio habit of mind. Hetland et al. (2007) noticed in the art teachers studied that during a challenge “teachers do not tell students exactly what to do” and through training “students learned that mistakes are opportunities” (p.74) that lead artists down new avenues that become sources for learning.

An element of surprise and spontaneity is involved in the kind of play and exploration that stretches thinking and opens minds up to emerging possibilities. Emery (1989) describes play as a “dynamic term which suggests that individuals have the capacity to manipulate phenomena and change realities” (p. 244). Gude (2007) supports this idea when she suggests that “students of all ages need the opportunity to creatively
mess around” and that, “as peers and teachers model an experimental attitude, soon the classroom is filled with exclamation as new images and combinations are spontaneously discovered” (p. 8). Artist-teacher practitioners embrace the studio habit of mind "stretch and explore" when they are immersed in making alongside their students in order to show students that artists do not know the outcomes of their works before they begin (Hetland et al., 2007; Walker, 2004). Through the process of working, constructing, sensitively interacting, adapting, changing images, materials and ideas along the way, an artistic product emerges (Emery, 1989; Gude, 2007; Hetland et al, 2007; Walker, 2004, 2005).

Graham and Zwirn (2010) in their study about how a teacher's personal artistry and artistic activities beyond school contributed to their teaching in school demonstrates the importance of taking risks and modeling how to do so. Graham and Zwirn (2010) reported that the relationship between artistic process and teaching involved a great deal of risk taking, experimentation, and play in order to stretch the learning in the classroom. These teachers also reported that it was,

their experiences as artists [that] led them to create occasions for exploration and experimentation for their students. Consequently, they did not define curriculum in terms of predetermined outcomes and their planning was open-ended, emergent, and fluid. (Graham & Zwirn, 2010, p. 223)

Modeling this kind of artistic thinking alongside students helps students to understand artistic thinking, provides encouragement to take risks, and encourages acceptance of the often unpredictable nature of the art making and teaching process.

**Expression: Creating from Lived Experience**

Found in many contemporary artworks is the idea that the maker creates the work with the intention to make meaning that goes beyond exploring materials, techniques, and skills. Hetland et al. (2007) refer to intention as the studio habit of mind they call
expression. Artist-teacher practitioners teach students “to go beyond technical skill to convey a personal intention in their work” and that “learning to express includes making works that exemplify properties that are not literally present, such as moods, sounds, and atmosphere” (Hetland et. al, 2007, p. 53). Just as artists do, art teachers who practice artist-teacher philosophy teach students to develop their craft so that it is through material that students learn to connect personally, locate their artistic voice, and create a form of expression. Jim Woodside, another teacher-participant in the Studio Thinking study, describes expression when he says, “It is about connecting the art to your life and to the world, and your place in the world” (p. 56). In order to accomplish this goal, art making cannot only be “about the skill of drawing. It is very much the making of a mark in the world as expression; and, to me, that might be something that is more interesting and more exciting for them” (Hetland et al.’ 2007, p.56). How does one find an inner artistic voice or go about doing the work of connecting art to the world?

Learning to create work with intention requires safe parameters that provide students with opportunities to explore ways to express their personal history and experience. Gude (2007) creatively appropriates urban street slang to define expression with the term “representin’,” which is the process of proclaiming one’s identity and affiliations (p.11). According to Gude, the term describes the strategy of locating one’s artistic voice within one’s own personal history and culture of origin. She goes on to write that, “It is important that art classes provide students with opportunities for meaningful self-expression in which they become representin’, self-creating beings” (pp.11-12). Self-expression is a practice artist-teachers are comfortable with and those practicing artist-teacher philosophy seem to believe that people are “self creating beings”
that can learn to become confident at distilling their own intentions and therefore are skillful at guiding students toward their own intentions and expression.

**Reflective Practitioners and Dialogue**

Most artists practice reflection as a method of artistic thinking that helps in a variety of situations in the studio. Reflecting is required when critiquing and evaluating the success of artwork. At times reflection upon artworks is necessary when formulating intention and explanation or when one needs to communicate particular decisions made about an artwork. Reflection also occurs when one views contemporary art and may need to do the work of extracting ideas for inspiration. As well, artists use reflective thought to build a knowledge base and parameters for art making, to find personal connections to understand the art work further, as well as make revision to in process art works (Walker, 2003, 2004). Hetland et al. (2007) support this when they report that the studio habit of mind known as *reflection* takes two forms. The first form refers to processes involving questioning and explaining and the second refer to the process of evaluation wherein students are asked to judge their own work or the work of others. Hetland et al. (2007) suggest both of these dispositions involve the construction of meaning; students think about their own artistic goals and those of others (p. 65). Through reflection students are able to improve other habits of mind such as developing craft, observation, expressing, envisioning, stretching, and exploring with increased opportunities to develop into a mindful and self-aware art maker. Artist-teacher practitioners are practiced at using skills and techniques for reflection and can model reflective behaviors and attitudes regularly, but how does an artist-teacher practitioner push students consistently toward this habit of mind?
Conversation and dialogue were found consistently in this study as a method artist-teacher practitioners use to help students develop their expressive work and reflective attitudes. Constant back and forth discourse between the artist-teacher practitioner and artist-learner allows for a fluid stream of ideas, reflection upon those ideas, and emergent possibilities (Graham & Zwirn, 2010). This important idea is supported and elaborated upon by David Bohm (1996) in his text, *On Dialogue*, when he describes that

A dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself [sic], if the spirit of the dialogue is present. The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group, out of which may emerge some new understanding. It’s something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It’s something creative. And this shared meaning is the ‘glue’ or ‘cement’ that holds people and societies together (p.6).

Within the structure of dialogue it was specifically open-ended questions that developed the studio habit of reflection most readily (Hetland et al., 2007). Hetland et al. also confirmed that open ended questions help students attend to the studio habit of mind of expressing and the development of artistic voice when they wrote that “These kinds of questions help foster an inner voice of reflection in the language of words, in contrast to the visual symbols that students think with when they work with art tools and materials” (p. 65). Further, the idea that artist-teachers help students develop expressive capabilities through questioning and dialogue is described by Olga Hubard (2010) when she writes that art teachers “have increasingly embraced dialogue to help students make meaning from works of art” by skillfully using several "modes" of dialogue (p.41). This kind of artistic behavior can be seen readily within collaborative studio environments or privately within the pages of an artist sketchbook.
Understanding the World of Artists and Artist-Teachers in a Postmodern Era

What is the world of the artist really like? Relevant learning comes from understanding the way professionals work (Hetland et al., 2007). Making art in the studio classroom is made relevant when students are able to connect what is being learned in school to the work people are doing in the real world. This connection is made by studying contemporary art and art history as well as finding creative ways to engage with both. Hetland et al. (2007) refer to this “habit of mind” as “learning to understand the artist’s worlds” and it is separated into two components, domain and communities (or field). The domain of art includes understanding works of art, both contemporary and historical. The field of art includes understanding the institutions run by “gatekeepers,” which include the museum curators, gallery owners, art critics, art historians, artists and teachers and how they shape the art world and communities associated with them (Hetland et al., 2007). Understanding communities is an aspect of artist behavior and thinking that will be defined in greater detail later on in the chapter.

Understanding the worlds of artists extends beyond the artwork of contemporary artists and into the contexts from which they are oriented. This notion is especially important in understanding behaviors and thinking of artists as well as the pedagogy of artist-teacher practitioners. Graham and Zwirn (2010) determined that a teacher’s artistic practice has the ability to shape pedagogy and determine the ways that artist-learners interact and interpret art as a body of knowledge. Modernism and postmodernism are two influential perspectives in both the fields of art and art education that have had a great deal of influence on the vast philosophical practices of artist-teacher practitioners. While Daichendt (2010) suggests there are at least six distinct characteristics that all
practitioners of artist-teacher philosophy share, he supports the idea that the shared characteristics are “independent of a particular philosophy of art” (p.147). There are as many different kinds of teachers practicing artist-teacher philosophy as there are different philosophies of art and studio practice and as such different kinds of artists.

Considering the artist-teacher philosophy in the postmodern era is especially beneficial when reflecting upon the diverse strategies and practices of artists and artist-teacher practitioners. Olivia Gude (2007) is an example of an artist-teacher practitioner, who focuses on postmodern art making, teaching, and thinking and has concluded that,

postmodern thought embraces the heterogeneous, the local and the specific. It affirms the choice-making capacity of individuals who select from the past those things that will best serve them as starting points for today. These choices will be different in different places depending on the history and present issues of each school community.(p.14)

This statement suggests that postmodern thought empowers artist-teacher practitioners to weave ideas from the past into their contemporary art making and teaching practice. It also emphasizes the importance of context in regard to content choice. Daichendt (2010) refers specifically to modernist philosophies and practices when he states that

The postmodern artist-teacher [practitioner] does not necessarily disregard modernist theories or practices” of the past. Instead the postmodern artist-teacher practitioner “decides appropriate content, understand[s] that classroom context influences curriculum, includes multiple voices, and interprets instructional information through his [sic] own artistic thinking process” (p. 145).

Numerous possibilities for teaching and learning about the world of artists occur because of postmodernism.

Classroom practice should also be rigorous and include critical reflection upon teaching practice in light of artist practice in the postmodern art world. Desai (2002)
writes about the importance of taking a critical stance toward teaching practice when she argues for the implementation of ethnography as an art making process in art education. Desai (2002), also argues that the view of artist as only an “object maker,” is a myth especially “given the current shift in the role of the artist from solely object maker to curator, facilitator, consultant, and ethnographer” (p.319). Artist-teachers are aware of the changing roles and functions of contemporary artists and teachers highlighted by Desai (2002) and as such artist-teachers use their understanding of contemporary artist practices and approaches to art making to shift the framework they teach from. As a result, artist-teachers are able to consider aesthetic pluralism when they change not only what they make with students, but also when they enact curriculum that shifts the kinds of activities and learning processes used to make art with students. How teachers structure art teaching is now as important as the content that teacher choose to teach, especially in the postmodern era.

**Postmodern Curriculum**

The vantage point of the postmodern artist-teacher practitioner can be better understood by investigating what troubles artist-teacher practitioners as well as questioning what they hope or dream for. Kerry Freedman (2003) writes in her book on contemporary art curriculum, that curriculum is a form of social action. Freedman (2003) goes on to write that “curriculum reflects people’s hopes and dreams. It represents expectation, mediates cultural knowledge, and is intended to communicate our best thinking to our fellow human beings” (p. 106) just as good artworks do. This is consistent with Daichendt’s (2010) idea that artworks are central to understanding the teaching of
art. Focusing on contemporary curriculum, the ways it is created, and the meaning it generates will provide insight into those who practice artist-teacher philosophy.

Evidence of the teaching of contemporary curriculum was found in Graham and Zwirn’s (2010) study on teachers who are also artists. Consistently, teachers in this study sought inspiration from popular visual culture and contemporary artworks. Graham and Zwirn (2010) found that teachers who also practiced art making “expected their students to become critical interpreters of art” (p. 222). Teacher-participant, Amanda, stated in an interview that,

The only thing that can save the world is for students to learn to think broadly. It isn’t going to be about shading... Not monkey handed richness, but content richness. That is why I like contemporary art so much. It is not so much drawing, but telling stories and thinking about relationships. (Graham and Zwirn, 2010, p. 223)

Graham and Zwirn (2010) found that the teachers in their study viewed critical engagement with contemporary artworks as a form of social action and a strategy for meaning making that engages the students’ interests. This behavior, modeled for students, teaches them how to approach artworks with a critical mind. Terry Barrett (2003), an authority on teaching art criticism, created a framework for art criticism that includes “principles of interpretation” to support this idea. Barrett writes that “artworks are always about something” and that viewing art from a postmodern perspective means that artworks “attract multiple interpretations” (p. 198). Further, Stewart and Walker (2005) offer ideas consistent with the theories in this paper. For example, Artist-teacher practitioners working with contemporary curricula teach that art is a subject that is like a living body of knowledge funded by enduring understandings based on artist practice (Daichendt, 2010; Stewart & Walker, 2005). Through a variety of learning strategies such
as reflective critiques, dialogue, and critical inquiry students actively contribute their knowledge to the subject of art, thus developing the subject and their understanding further (Stewart & Walker, 2005; Walker, 2003, 2004). Development occurs because artist-teachers don't approach artworks as if their meaning is fixed, but rather the artwork's meaning evolves as each student approaches art with their experience and through interpretation.

**Studio Classrooms Promote Studio Culture**

Those who practice artist-teacher philosophy transform art classrooms into spaces called “studio classrooms” that as Hetland et al., (2007) write "have a different feel" that is described as "studio culture" created by artist-teachers (p.15). Artist-teachers manipulate all manner of factors contributing to the culture of a studio classroom as if it was a work of art in order to communicate lessons and to create an effective learning environment. For example, Graham and Zwirn(2010) describe a space created by high school teacher-participant Keith Williams as being "layered from ceiling to floor with student work, teacher work, models of installations, color and text" and that "every inch of wall space was covered with layers of work"(p.225). In another study of artist teacher Julia Dugan, Pennisi (2002) described Julia's room as a study in "organized messiness" where "everything always had a place, but it was more a labeled general area than a clean, precise system (p.27). Other factors that contribute to the studio culture include atmospheric devices like music, smell, and voice, spatial organization of work and demonstration spaces, furniture, materials, art visuals, lighting, contemporary art concepts, student's personal interests, and the structure of time within every class meeting (Daichendt, 2010; Hetland et al., 2007; Szekely, 2006). Again, the pedagogical
characteristics that Daichendt (2010) found in his research also support this notion about studio culture and the classrooms that support it.

These kinds of environments are open for all manner of possibilities connected to arts learning, artistic behavior, and a slew of integrative possibilities. As Graham and Zwirn (2011) observed during their study,

The classroom as an art studio provided an unstructured physical site for informal contacts and collaboration between children and adults where student expertise was valued alongside the teacher’s experience. Some teachers created openings to the unpredictable world of art and visual culture by what they brought into the classroom and by what they allowed students to bring.” (Graham and Zwirn, 2010, p.227)

According to Graham (2012) artist teachers' studio classrooms are hospitable spaces that are open and supportive of conversational pedagogy. Graham (2012) describes the culture of studio classrooms further when he states, "Encouraging individual interpretation and being patient with individual struggles were essential ingredients to a hospitable practice (p.8). Environments like this are also referred to as communities. Hetland et al., (2007) refer to “communities” as an aspect of understanding the world of artists as a contributing factor to how artists learn, work, and think. Artist-teachers create environments that support communities like this so that students learn to work with their peers in a collaborative culture. Working within this collaborative culture, students have increased opportunities to explore the worlds of artists through contemporary and historical works. Hetland et al. (2007) suggest that in a community “students come to see art-making as an activity that is not carried out in isolation, but rather one that is carried out in the company, and with the help of, one’s peers (p. 85). The stereotype of the “brooding individual, working in isolation” that Rush (1995) described when she examined the
“myth of the eccentric genius” is no longer realistic for many contemporary artists.

Studio classrooms are places that hold the collective interests of the teacher, the students, and the surrounding community.

Keith Williams is a high school teacher-participant observed by Graham and Zwirn (2010) whose space not only has the "feel" of a studio classroom, but also supports communities of students who are practicing to work like artists. In an interview (Graham & Zwirn, 2010), Williams stated that he wanted, “his students to get involved as real artists, to know what is required in showing work, framing work, and working in the community” (p. 87). Williams models the habit of mind, understanding artists’ worlds” by working along-side students, and preparing for shows, community events, and experiences outside of school in galleries and museums (Graham & Zwirn, 2010) with the goal of teaching the inner workings of the “field of art.” Williams says, “I show my work with my students, not by myself anymore. I show them how it works, getting out to community meetings, working with city officials” (Graham & Zwirn, p. 222). Keith’s ability to model involvement in community creates a bridge between his high school students and the contemporary art world, thus contributing to studio culture that supports artistic practice for the teacher and student.

Within a communal environment that supports collaboration, the artist-teacher practitioner uses dialogue to guide explorations, allowing students to build knowledge while working together to understand concepts, connections, basic artistic logistics and ultimately, how “things” work in the art world. Graham and Zwirn (2010) also reported that artist-teachers used conversation to become like a “knowledgeable friend” in the studio classroom and that “personal conversations were a vital part of their pedagogy and
were greatly influenced by their artistic identities” (p. 224). Art teachers practicing artist-teacher philosophy are sophisticated with engaging in this kind of discourse of critique in the studio while students are working. Often conversations that spontaneously arise due to the cooperative nature of studio classroom culture establish contexts and understanding around the work (Graham & Zwirn, 2010). This experience also contributes to the development of “mutual humanization” a term that Paulo Freire (1970), grandfather of critical pedagogy, refers to as a process in which the student-teacher relationship transforms into a partnership in learning wherein both are simultaneously student and teacher. In this scenario the artist-teacher practitioner is not only modeling how to engage in artistic thinking, but the teacher here is also exploring ways to stretch the boundaries of the traditional student-teacher relationship. By building relationships of trust within the classroom artist-teachers are able to reach the goal of engaging students in deeper understanding of the intended skill or content.

**Choice Based Studio Classrooms for Elementary Students**

Katherine Douglas and Diane Jaquith, founders of *Teaching for Artistic Behaviors* (TAB) are familiar with studio culture; the teaching and practice of artistic behaviors within a studio classroom have been built into the foundation of their teaching practice. Douglas and Jaquith are the creators of a nationally recognized choice-based art education approach to teaching art at the elementary level. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) believe that artists are like “architects of space” and, by “setting up proper circumstances,” a variety of artistic behaviors will begin to emerge and flourish (p.2). A founding principle created and followed by Douglas and Jaquith (2009) is that choice-based art teachers regard students as artists and give them full ownership of their artwork.
Douglas and Jaquith believe that teachers must have trust that their students will make good choices. Freire (1970) also wrote about this principle when he described that, “from the outset, [the teacher’s] efforts must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking” and that the teacher must also “be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power (p.75). Learning environments created by those who practice artist-teacher philosophy may function as evidence to students that their teachers have a profound trust in their creativity and ability to make good choices. This environment simultaneously engages students in their creativity, thus enabling students to make good choices.

A concern some teachers may have with the approach artist-teacher practitioners take is a fear over loss of control and power due to a perceived lack of rules and structure. Some teachers, especially in the k-12 public school setting, may fear that a different approach that expands student choice will result in “chaotic” classroom where students are unable to make good choices. May (1995) refers to this fear of chaos and loss of control when she writes that, “maintaining classroom control is extremely important to art teachers and some art teachers plan rigid art lessons and routinized tasks in fear of losing control” (p. 148). Artist-teachers Douglas and Jaquith address this issue by creating what Brent Davis and Dennis Sumara (2008), authors of Complexity and Education refer to as “enabling constraints” (p.147). Enabling constraints (Davis and Sumara, 2008) refers to the creation of rules that are proscriptive and not prescriptive. Prescriptive rules are “imposed rules that one must obey in order to survive” and proscriptive rules or constraints are conditions that facilitate viability (2008, p.147). Proscription sets up conditions for group identification and also provides opened and
unexplored spaces of possibility. Proscriptive conditions can be found in choice-based classrooms set up by Douglas and Jaquith. For example, Douglas and Jaquith (2009) set the simple rule that all people in the studio classroom will “behave like artists” (p.29). Douglas and Jaquith suggest that while not all young students are familiar with how artists behave, the statement sets up conditions for the creation of new knowledge about artistic behavior and a space of possibility for teachers to engage in dialogue with students about the ways that artists might behave. This is the kind of conversation that contributes to the culture of the studio and is foundational for setting up rules based on artistic behavior. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) suggest four simple agreements that might be used in the beginning of the year to begin to understand artistic behaviors. The four simple agreements created by Douglas and Jaquith (2009) to help students begin to behave like artists are,

1) Artists take care of people
2) Artists take care of stuff
3) Artists play and experiment with art materials
4) Artists talk about art ideas with classmates

The rules are foundational yet not prescriptive and will deepen in meaning as students practice artistic behaviors throughout the year. However, two of these rules encourage thinking and behavior that coincide with the kinds of artistic thinking and behavior observed by Hetland et al. (2007) in *Studio Thinking*, The rules that artists take care of people and stuff is not supported by the framework found in *Studio Thinking* because it was not observed as a way that all artists behave. While the first two may be helpful for art teachers to use to teach students how to treat people and take care of art materials,
they do not expand upon or teach students about artistic behaviors that relate to how artists engage in the practice of art making.

Within Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB), a choice-based environment is organized around carefully planned studio centers, which create multiple choices for elementary students to work with. Each studio center is created to showcase a material like clay or an art form like printmaking. Centers such as these are like learning centers in the early childhood classroom (Stuber, 2007). Douglas and Jaquith (2009) use the studio center with the intention of teaching students how to “discover what it means to be an artist through the authentic creation of artwork” (p.4). The authors go on to write that “it is the ability to make one’s own choices [that] contributes to the development of artistic behavior” and that the “choice based learning environment provides space, time, varied materials, instruction, and a climate that is conducive for independent work” (p.5). On the TAB website, Douglas and Jaquith describe a studio center as “a three dimensional lesson plan that fosters autonomy by offering:

...menus with set-up procedures, directions and lists of materials and tools. Resources include images by student and adult artists, books, charts and other related references. Materials and tools are organized for easy return. Centers can be as large as half the room or as small as a shoe box. Some basic centers will remain in the classroom all year, while others make brief, limited appearances. Centers are opened one at a time, as students show their teacher that they are ready to handle more choices.
(http://teachingforartisticbehavior.org/choicestudiocenters.html)

It is with careful, sensitive observation and reflection upon the room, traffic patterns, and work patterns that effects the placement and planning of centers and their availability (Douglas and Jaquith, 2009). The approach described by TAB requires that artist-teachers sensitively respond to the needs of students through the environment.
TAB’s ideas about teaching artistic behavior and promises for choice are not as theoretically sound or as realistic for teaching artistic behavior as the ideas found in *Studio Thinking*. The approach offered by TAB particularly does not hold up when contrasted with the studio habits of mind that have been directly observed as dispositions found in practicing artists. Further, the centers seem as if they are more like kits for art making that lack questioning and dialogue strategies used to guide students' development of ideas used by artist-teachers. Olivia Gude (2013) also critiques TAB’s approach when she suggests that TAB's idea about choice is idealistic for many classrooms given their "logistical constraints, availability of materials, space, and time" (p. 6). While the amount of freedom provided by the absence of projects in an approach like TAB is a goal of high quality art education, Gude (2013) writes that "most students today could not initially make good use of this sort of freedom without a great deal of individual support" and that within an approach like TAB, students are more likely to "fall back on hackneyed, kitschy image-making techniques" (p. 6). This critique suggests that refined quality art projects that mirror artist practice and are implemented within studio classrooms by artist-teacher practitioners rather than the use of centers is a more theoretically sound option for teaching artistic behaviors and thinking.

**Conclusion**

Artist-teacher philosophy is a particular orientation for those teaching art and is considered to be an emergent paradigm (Anderson, Eisner, & McRorie, 1998) in art education today. Artist-teacher is not a dual role (Daichendt, 2010) for professionals to fill; rather it is a philosophical approach to art education that revels in the way of artists, their thinking, and the studio culture. This philosophy (Daichendt, 2010) is a way of
teaching art that focuses on students’ engagement in artistic thinking and behaviors through the creation of artworks in a complex and open studio environment. Teachers oriented to this philosophy base their teaching practice upon their artist practice with the hope that their students will be able to experience thinking and creating as artists do. In the following chapter, I have written about the design of my study so that I may understand how artist-teacher practitioners use their art practice to influence the pedagogy they teach in a K-8 public school setting.
Chapter 3: Design of Study

Overview

Currently, there is still some confusion about the definition, role, pedagogy, practice, and philosophy of artist-teachers and how they influence the way art is taught in a k-8 public school setting. In this qualitative research study, I documented the experience of implementing pedagogy grounded by cognitive processes that I use for artmaking in my artist practice in a K-8 public school setting to provide a portrait of a classroom designed with artist-teacher philosophy as a framework for teaching and learning. The data I collected from my experience addresses the following research questions about artist-teacher philosophy and practice.

• How might approaching the classroom as an artist-teacher practitioner affect its environment?

• How might I use my art practice to influence my pedagogy within a K-8 public school setting?

• How might the artist-teacher approach impact the way curriculum is written to meet the needs of contemporary learners?

• In what ways does implementing artist-teacher as a philosophy guide students in creating their own work as artists do?

The goal I kept in mind as I conducted the study was that I wanted to develop and practice a way of teaching that facilitated students' engagement with artistic practice as well as to understand how artist practice influenced pedagogy in a k-8 public school setting, particularly with students in fifth and sixth grade. As Merriam (2009) suggested, preparation for this study began by “conducting an overview of the topic” (p.74) and writing a literature review in order to locate a theoretical framework and sufficient background information to focus my research questions and guide my study. Also during
my exploration of the literature, I gathered information that not only expanded my knowledge base, but helped to push the limits of my study to contribute to the development of my topic and ultimately the field of art education. Merriam (2009) refers to this by stating that “besides providing a foundation…the literature review can demonstrate how the present study advances, refines, or revises what is already known” (p.72) so that the study was sure to make a significant contribution to the field.

The study was designed in two parts. In part, one I engaged in arts-based research (D’Adamo & Marshall, 2011; Eisner, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Sullivan, 2004). I used arts-based research to complete a self-study in which I observed and reflected upon my own artistic practice. The purpose of this was to study the unique composition of my artist practice, and the environment in which I make art so that I could understand the different ways I might use my artist practice to influence my teaching practice. In particular, I studied the studio environment where I worked, including the physical organization, structures and feeling of the environment, as well as my social or psychological experience of being in the space. I gathered observations about the kinds of artistic thinking, and behaviors I engaged in as a result of my artistic practice. Part one generated findings about my artist process, art content, environment and artist community that were translated to create a curriculum unit of study for fifth and sixth graders.

After I completed a self-study of my artist practice, I began phase two. Phase two of the study was designed by translating aspects of my art practice into pedagogy in a public school setting. In phase two, I gathered data about the studio classroom and its organizing structures as well as data about my teaching practice including pedagogy, curriculum
planning, and implementation of activities, lessons, language, and visuals associated with such. Additionally, I collected data of student process as well as how the students interacted in the studio classroom environment, with each other, with me, and with the curriculum. Specifically, I looked for evidence about how students engaged in artistic practice as well as how my approaching the studio classroom with the same cognitive structure that emerged from my artist practice facilitated students in making art as I did. After studying, documenting, and analyzing data I was able to draw conclusions about the ways that artist-teacher philosophy was successful within the structure of the K-8 public charter school setting as well as the problems that occurred. Conclusions and recommendations will be accounted for in the following chapters.

Methodology

In this study, arts-based research is the qualitative method used to conduct a multi-site case study. Arts-based research is the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies (McNiff, 2008, p. 29).

For this study arts-based research in visual art was used to understand the composition of my artist practice and how it influences my teaching practice. Arts-based research is an approach characterized by rigorous critique, extensive documentation and analysis of imagery and process, reflection, and the theorization of artwork(s) that are used to develop and transform our perception, thus generating new understanding and perspectives about human experience through image making and art process (D'Adamo & Marshall, 2011; Eisner, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Sullivan, 2004). In arts-based research, the researcher primarily focuses on the images created
during the research study to construct new perspectives about phenomena. However, the way the images were created is as important as the artworks for understanding human experience (D’Adamo & Marshall, 2011; Eisner, 2008; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2007; McNiff, 2008; Sullivan, 2004.).

A case study (Merriam, 2009) is defined as an “intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit” (p.40). Merriam states that a case, "could be a single person who is a case example of some phenomenon"(2009, p.40); my case study is my own artistic practice and how it influences my teaching practice. Merriam suggests that “by concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (case) the researcher aims to uncover the interactions of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon” (pp. 42-43). In this study the phenomenon I wanted to investigate was my art practice so that I could ultimately understand how my art practice might influence pedagogy as a practitioner of artist-teacher philosophy.

Conducting a multi-site qualitative case study using studio-based research is the most appropriate method for this study because artist-teacher philosophy is grounded by the activities of artists, art process, and artwork and as such, I needed to conduct a deep investigation of my artist practice to determine its composition. Additionally, case studies are particularistic, descriptive and heuristic and as such are a favorable design because the specific focus of phenomenon in a case will illuminate the kinds of practical problems, questions, and puzzling occurrences that arise in the daily practice of an artist or artist-teacher practitioner (Merriam, 2009, p.43). Merriam also states that a case study is “valued for its ability to capture complex action, perception, and interpretation” (2009, p. 44) especially if the interpretation is illustrated with rich thick description.
Site of Study

I conducted my case study at two primary sites. The first site is the studio setting where I currently work and the second site was in the school where I chose to implement the artist-teacher philosophy. Daichendt (2010) suggests that artist-teachers’ art practice is the central guiding force within their pedagogy. It is this foundational idea that guided my decision to study my art practice first and then where I taught. This seems especially important since one of my research goals included understanding how I might use my art practice to influence my pedagogy within a k-12 public school setting. Stake (2006, as cited in Merriam, 2009) explains that multi-site qualitative research case studies “share a common characteristic or condition” (p.49). Merriam (2009) also suggests that while multiple sites are difficult to manage, their inclusion strengthens precision, validity, and stability of the findings. In this case, the common characteristic in both the studio site and school site was artistic practice. Studying this link in both sites strengthened my findings by clarifying the different ways this link manifested between pedagogy and artistic practice by using arts-based research used as a grounding force.

I will begin by describing the studio setting. I currently work within my home, a three story house, and the studio space is in the third floor living space. This is a hybrid space serving different purposes that include working, talking, meeting, reading and thinking. It is also my dining space and the only space in the house where I reunite with friends and family for meals. It is the heart of my home and is a comfortable sunlit space where I spent the majority of my time studying the different ways I developed ideas, gathered inspiration, and made two-dimensional visual plans for three-dimensional studio work. This is a domestic space, complete with large Victorian style bay windows,
handmade cushions and pillows for added comfort and color. This is the site where ideas gestate for all of my creative endeavors.

The second space studio setting in which I currently work is in the basement of my home. Between both studio spaces is the first and second floor of the home and currently a local business occupies that space. It was designed to be similar to the studios where I practiced art during my undergraduate studies (where I obtained my B.F.A.) at Alfred University. The studios at Alfred University were simple industrial work spaces in which adaptations, changes, and messes in the studios were allowed and expected. The single room where I work shares that flexibility’ and I am the only person who uses the studio space.

The site I studied during phase two is a small public charter school in Western New York. The pseudonym used to refer to this school in the study is Hudson Charter School. Approximately 300 students are accommodated at the Hudson Charter School, and it currently includes grades kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is in the urban environment described above; many galleries, museums, and local businesses currently surround the school. The school serves a fairly diverse population with respect to race and religious observance and includes a range of families that have lower-incomes, and are middle class. Approximately 40% of the students are eligible for a discounted or free lunch program.

Hudson Charter School focuses on community building, social responsibility, multiculturalism, and arts integration. Additionally, the whole school focuses on the importance of teaching a social curriculum along with the academic curriculum. The community members who founded the school, backed by the current administration,
believe that students are able to learn academic skills best when they begin to develop important skills such as cooperation, responsibility, empathy, and self-control that a social curriculum emphasizes. The models implemented to support the mission include the Responsive Classroom Model, which was developed by the Northeast Foundation for Children (Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). In addition to the Responsive Classroom Model the school uses Cooperative Discipline Classroom and School Reform Model derived from the philosophy of psychologist Rudolph Dreikurs (Albert, Roy, & LePage, 1989). Both approaches used together focus on social responsibility as well as the idea that students are active participants rather than passive recipients within the daily learning process and classroom life. This creates a particular school culture in which students are responsible for helping one another thrive in the communities in which they belong. This is a particularly important mission within the school and greatly impacts the curriculum and management style of all who work at this school.

The school day in this charter school is extended by 45 minutes to provide students with additional class time and academic support. The staff also meets for two weeks prior to the first day of school to engage in professional development, community building, and planning. Other schools in the surrounding area typically meet for professional development and planning one week prior to the start of classes. Class sizes are on average 25 students and lead by two adults, one lead teacher and one teacher assistant. As well, each grade level has one special education teacher to work with students who have special needs. Overall, the student to adult ratio in the entire school is seven children to one adult. Though the school is a public charter school, students are subject to the same kinds of testing situations and accountability measures as all other
public schools in the surrounding areas, and this affects the structure and schedule of the school day. According to state school report cards, the school has been classified as a high performing school within the area due to the consistency of high test scores over the years.

The school has one classroom for each class of 25 students, one library, a resource room, a main office, a cafeteria, a faculty room, an art room, a music room and a gym. In addition to core subject classes such as ELA, Math, and Social Studies, the school offers special subject area classes such as art, physical education, health, library study, music, dance and Spanish. The special subject areas dance, music, Spanish, health, and art are all part-time positions within the school and are often referred to as “specials.” Arts classes meet once per week for forty minutes in every grade level all year. A unique feature at this school is that the dance and visual art classes are smaller than usual because the dance teacher and visual art teacher teach the same class at the same time and split the class in half. As a result, my classes for visual art are usually made up of 12 to 13 students. The school collaborates with a contracted after-school program and the art room is used after school for a variety of programs. Thus the art room is a shared space after school as well.

This school's site has been specifically chosen for researching the implementation of artist-teacher philosophy because it is my belief that this public charter school site may provide the most fertile ground in the area for testing a new teaching practice. This belief stems from my knowledge of the school’s history of arts integration, its highly supportive administration in regard to progressive education, the school's strong start-up mentality, and its lower student to teacher ratio. It is these factors that make this site the most open
and appropriate site for testing and experimenting with newer educational practices and philosophies.

**Participants**

**Phase 1**

I was as a participant observer during my research in Phase one. During the time of study, I was 29 years old working as an artist and art teacher. I had been practicing art making for 10 years. I had begun my second year of art teaching at Hudson Charter School, and was in my third year of teaching art overall. My researcher observer activity during phase one was subordinate to my role as the participating artist. I chose to study the way I made art and translated my artist practice into teaching practice rather than study the way another artist translates his or her artist practice for several reasons. The first of which is that, I wanted to understand the reasons for why I make art to better communicate this to my artist and school community. Next, I hoped to gain awareness for how I think when I create artwork so that I could share my process with my students, thus connecting my artist practice to my teaching practice in ways that are more meaningful. Finally, I wanted to study the way I made art to understand how my artist practice might become a resource for creating pedagogy and curriculum in my classroom and as such, my artist practice would become the source of my professional development as a teacher. By becoming a participant in my own study, I was motivated to model to other teachers that through self-study, you can take control of your own teacher education.

**Phase 2**

The participants in the study included a total of 25 fifth and sixth grade students and me. As per the organization of students in the arts program, the 25 students were split into
two classes, one with 13 fifth grade students and the other with 12 sixth grade students. My researcher observer activity, was subordinate to my role as participant, their teacher.

The ages within the group of fifth graders range from 10 to 11 and for the sixth graders from 11-12 and included both male and female students. This was the best target group because I have had the opportunity to work with and develop healthy relationships with both groups. I was comfortable with both groups and, in general, I have found they are excited about experiments and unknown outcomes in the art room. Both groups were well acclimated to the school environment and organization and the fifth graders are still considered young enough to be elementary students at this point while the sixth graders are middle school aged.

According to Chip Wood (2007), author of *Yardsticks*, a book about student development, fifth and sixth grade is a time when students are developing a sense of their individuality. Students at this age begin the transition from concrete to abstract thinking, and in general are more flexible and content with exploring new ideas, metaphorical thinking, and symbol making. Students at this age also enjoy working collaboratively on group projects. This seems like the most appropriate age group with which to test an open studio setting that develops intellectual habits associated with artistic thinking due to their flexibility, cognitive abilities, social nature, and my overall comfort level and trust with this group of students in particular.

**Data Collection**

**Observation**

The data collection methods that I utilized were observations, dialogue recordings, as well as written and visual document analysis. During phase One of the study, I gathered data about studio habits of mind, particular behaviors, emotional
responses to content, the environment, and the process and methods I used while in the studio. I used a research journal to collect field notes while I worked. Almy and Genishi (1979) confirm that “no more should be recorded than the (researcher) needs to bring it back to memory in its most significant detail” (p.40). I reflected and elaborated upon the notes I gathered immediately after each session of study in the art studio and the classroom. Documenting the experience while it was still fresh in my mind provides assurance that I recorded the experience in its fullest significance. Lastly, I became acutely aware that the observations I made reflected emotional responses, which colored each experience with my own personal reaction and perspective. Almy and Genishi (1979) refer to this idea when they write, “This aspect of observation- our own feelings and emotions- is one that we often try to ignore” (p.37). The authors suggest that rather than rule such observations out due to their subjective nature, we should understand that “our emotional responses color what we see and hear, and we cannot eliminate their effect” (Almy & Genishi, 1979, p.37). With awareness and honesty in regard to such observations I was able to consider both intellectual and emotional observations to reflect upon my research questions to develop understanding. I also considered this factor as I moved into phase two of observations, which included observing students in the studio classroom environment.

Accurate observations over an extended period of time were paramount within this study, especially since I worked with such young children. Merriam (2009) suggests that observation is the best technique to use “when participants are not able or willing to discuss the topic under study” (119). While some of my students might have been willing to talk about artist-teacher philosophy and how the new approach was affecting their
experience of art making during class with clarity and total understanding, I did not think that most participants would feel comfortable with formal or informal interviews and that would have affected the way they answer questions and engage in discussion. Not to discredit the intelligence and maturity of my students, but their young age may have inhibited their ability to discuss their experience with clarity and complete understanding. I felt that spending more time focusing on observing students’ experience in their natural environment among their classmates would limit confusion and increase clarity and credibility among data, especially since I am also a novice researcher. For my study I also used knowledge of child development in order to make keen observations of students.

Keen observation is defined as the ability to notice that,

> The children’s movements, their gestures, their changing facial expressions, their comments—all their responses offer some clues about what they are learning, what they have learned, what they feel, and what they think. (Almy & Genishi, 1979, p. 21)

The authors (1979) develop this idea further when they state that skilled observers pay attention to kinesics. In particular, details such as “shifting looks, tightly or loosely held jaw and lips, grimaces and the smiles” (p. 39) are noticed. In addition to facial expressions, good observers “hear not only words, but tones, pitch, strain, hesitation and pauses” (p. 39). While observing children, it was particularly important to notice “body posture, slumping shoulders, and puppet-on-a-string gestures, as contrasted with flowing, graceful movements, and accurate, efficient coordination” (p. 40). It was necessary in my research practice and document collection to include this kind of observation so that I could gather information about how students interacted in the studio classroom environment, with each other, with me, and the curriculum. This kind of observation was
also necessary to recognize and interpret whether or not students were engaged in artistic thinking and behaviors. Children communicate their thinking and behavior in unique ways. It was my job as the participant observer to become adept at noticing such ways of communicating.

**Transcribed dialogue recordings**

Dialogue recordings of class sessions became a great tool for reflection upon class meetings, conversations, and interactions while also helping me to retrieve important information and ideas from my students’ perspective. It is not always recommended for novice researchers to interview young participants in a study because it is often difficult to interpret young participants’ meanings and true feelings on a subject. The recordings, in addition to observation, illuminated their points of view in real classroom time. Merriam (2009) supports the importance of illuminating participants’ perspective when she writes, “The key concern is [to understand] the phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspectives, not the researcher’s (p.14). Transcribed recordings of conversations I had with students about student work and process helped me represent as truthfully and honestly as possible the participants’ voices in regard to their art making experience and practice without the use of interviews. The recordings of class sessions created a way to obtain a clearer understanding of the group’s overall experience at any given time, and, especially when an individual absorbed my attention during observation, the recordings created a kind of sound picture of the work and social interaction in the environment.
**Document analysis (visual and written)**

A variety of documents were collected throughout phase one and phase two in order to retrieve evidence of artistic behaviors and thinking. Interpreting documents such as photographs, process work, and artworks helped to understand the meaning and experience that came from daily studio and classroom life. Merriam (2009) suggests that “documents can tell the researcher about the inner meaning of everyday events, or they may yield descriptions of highly unusual or idiosyncratic human experiences” (p. 142). Documents cross-checked with observations and dialogue recordings aided in meaningful interpretation and were reflective of the participants’ perspective. I collected two types of documents, written and visual. I analyzed my sketchbooks and those of my students for both written and visual documentation. I collected my written curriculum, along with worksheets or visuals that I developed for teaching purposes. All process works and artworks were collected as documents. Lastly, photographs were collected as visual documents. Specifically, I photographed the studio and classroom environment to document the activities occurring in them as well as organizing systems and structures that defined them.

While it will never be possible in qualitative research to capture objective truth or exact reality there are several strategies that can be used to reveal multiple realities constructed within a qualitative research study while also increasing credibility (Merriam, 2009). Data analysis was enhanced by the use of triangulation. Triangulation is a data analysis method that utilizes multiple methods of data collection and sources of data that were cross-checked in reference to the phenomenon of interest to reveal the most reliable findings. Merriam (2009) recommends that triangulation is the primary strategy
researchers can use to ensure validity and reliability. Therefore, all data within the three data collection methods were triangulated to determine data of high quality that was used to answer my research questions.

The data I collected in part one were organized by the patterns, categories, and themes that naturally arose as I began the data collection process. Merriam (2009) suggests that the true nature of qualitative research is inductive rather than deductive. While the researcher may have a hunch, hope, or perhaps even a hypothesis, qualitative research is exploratory in nature and as a result, it is only once the researcher gathers data that she can begin to build concepts, find themes, hypotheses, or theories. After the data in part one were collected, I read and reread my research journal and reflected in it constantly to familiarize myself with the data as well as to begin cooking my notes (Hubbard & Power, 2003) to find emergent patterns that became the large categories and sub-themes within the data. As I engaged in this process, I color coded pieces of data into categories and found three main categories that emerged as an organizing structure for my artist practice. The three main categories were finding ideas, developing concepts, and interpreting emerging understandings and each stage of thought shaped the composition of my artist practice as well as the ways I approached subject matter, art making methods and processes, the studio environment, and my artist community. Each category also included smaller sub-themes, which conceptualized each area further.

After the data from the research journal was organized, I began to visually organize the photographs and documents by similar themes into files created on Microsoft word. I began using the organization of the physical documents to cross-check the research journal for validity. Next, I developed a curriculum unit based on the
findings in phase one that addressed a translation for the studio classroom that came from each of the categories found during phase one.

During phase two of the study, I used a similar process for analysis and organization especially because the predetermined categories that I was working from in phase one influenced how I collected data in phase two. As a result I physically organized the documents and photographs in phase two similarly. However, in phase two, I used the research questions as a guiding structure to reflect back on all of the data holistically to be able to find themes that provide understanding about the research questions.

Ethical Issues
Due to the vulnerable position research puts very young students and their families in, a permission form for participants was sent home to be signed by the parent or guardian who cares for the child as well as a community newsletter about the purpose and nature of my research so that the entire community was informed of my work. In their text that addresses observational research of children and ethics, authors Almy and Genishi (1979) suggest that it is the teachers’ responsibility to be sure that the observation they make, and the records they keep are used only to further children’s development and learning. In general, the rights of the child to privacy are encompassed in the right of the family to privacy. (p. 48)

As Almy and Genishi suggest, the permission form and community newsletter also clearly stated my intentions to engage in research that aims to help develop best practices in the field of art education. Also communicated was the idea that all observations and data collected during the study was protected and used with a high level of discretion and care. Additionally, to protect students and their families, pseudonyms were used for the name of the school and all of the participants in the study and photographs of children
were not be included in the study. Reciprocity for the participants within this study occurred by utilizing recorded dialogue, I was able to place the exact words that students used to include their voices and ideas within the work. I worked diligently and carefully to interpret their words so that their ideas were articulated as clearly as possible. Upon completion of the entire project, I gave a summarized report of my finished work to the school for their records.
Chapter 4: Artist Practice

I designed my study about artist-teacher philosophy to understand how I might use my art practice to influence my pedagogy. This decision was inspired by Szekely (1978), who wrote that an "artist-teacher does not begin with a project or exercise, but with a vision and inspiration which may stem from his own work or from visions of other artists” (p.18). As such, I completed my study in two phases. In Phase 1, I studied the process of how I created my artwork in my art studio. In Phase 2, I studied how I incorporated aspects of my artist practice into the planning and implementing of a curriculum unit in my elementary studio classroom. For clarity, this chapter focuses on Phase 1 of the study, while the following chapter primarily focuses on Phase 2.

Artist practice includes all aspects that contribute to the way an artist makes art. Particular to my artist practice is the studio environment in which I make art, encounters with people in my artist community, and my art process. My process includes the way I think when I make art, the methods and techniques I use to create visual images and objects, and the way I manipulate materials and references physically and conceptually to create meaning. After studying my art practice in Phase 1, cognitive processes that structure my artist practice emerged in three stages. The three stages of cognitive process that I used to make art include:

• Finding Ideas

• Developing Concepts

• Interpreting Emerging Understanding
### Phase 1: Study of Artist Practice (Artist Studio) vs. Phase 2: Artist-Teacher Pedagogy (Studio Classroom)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding Ideas</th>
<th>Observing artworks</th>
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<td>Dialoguing about artworks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Building a knowledge base</td>
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<td>Brainstorming ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Concepts</td>
<td>Envisioning forms that embody concepts</td>
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<td>Translating concepts into images</td>
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<td>Reformulating problems</td>
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<td>Developing conceptual solutions</td>
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<td>Interpreting Emerging Understanding</td>
<td>Synthesizing the meaning in references</td>
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<td>Reflecting on artworks through writing</td>
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<td>Interpreting emerging meaning</td>
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<td>Envisioning next steps</td>
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As Daichendt (2010) suggests, I embedded the three stages of cognitive processing used in my artist practice into my teaching practice. As such, **finding ideas**, **developing concepts**, and **interpreting emerging understanding** became the organizational structure used to create a unit of study for fifth and sixth grade students and ultimately my artist-teacher pedagogy. I have organized the following chapter sequentially, using the three stages and have created a written portrait of each stage as it occurred as part of my art practice in my art studio. In chapter 5, I have written a description of how I translated the three stages into my teaching practice using artist teacher philosophy as the framework.

**Stage 1: Finding Ideas**

Finding ideas is a process in artmaking in which I spent time intentionally looking for ideas that peaked my interest. I gathered inspirational visuals and reference materials using methods including journaling, researching literature, and artists, and encounters with artworks and people from my artist community. Ideas for creating images in this study were gathered from the artworks I created prior to the study. In the passages that
follow, I first describe the context surrounding finding ideas. This includes the thematic subject area that inspires my artwork. Next, I include a description of the environment that I created to find ideas, with an overview of the artworks created during the study. Finally, I write about the methods I used to find ideas as well as the encounters I shared with people from my artist community, and how they contributed to finding ideas.

**Subject Matter and Form**

I am a sculptor and for years prior to this study, abstract sculptural landscapes were my area of concentration. In recent years, I have developed an attraction to artists and designers such as Nick Cave, Alexander McQueen, and Madame Peripetie because they create outlandish costumes and wearable sculptures that blend fashion and sculpture embodying unique characters. I imagined such characters taking residence in the landscapes that I had created and this idea inspired me to explore making characters of my own to interact with unusual environments and landscapes. Further, the artists and designers who inspired me reference archetypes and mythology and, as a result, myths and archetypal imagery are of significant interest in my artist practice and the context for finding ideas during the time of this study. Steward and Walker (2005) point out that artists use "enduring ideas" to create art and as such exploring how archetypes influence identity formation and character development is the conceptual centerpiece for making meaning in my artist practice during this study.

My growing interest in the broader areas of Jungian psychology, archetypal symbolism, and mythology influenced the artworks made during the study. Archetype is a Greek word meaning "original pattern" and archetypal patterns such as characters, symbols, and stories are represented in literature, art, and mythology from around the
world. Pearson (1991) defines twelve classic archetypes: the innocent, orphan, warrior, seeker, lover, caregiver, destroyer, creator, ruler, magician, sage, and fool and accompanying each archetype is a shadow archetype that represents humanity’s dark side. Pearson (1991) expounds upon this definition when she writes about archetypes as patterns that are like "inner guides" that "live in us, but even more importantly, we live in them" (pp.5-6). Campbell (1988) expands the definition of archetype by explaining that,

> All over the world and at different times of human history, these archetypes, or elementary ideas, have appeared in different costumes. The differences in the costumes are the results of environment and historical conditions. It is these differences that the anthropologist is most concerned to identify and compare. (p.61)

As Campbell (1988) suggests, I compared archetypes from art, literature, and mythology to new characters I created that are reflective of my personal experience. As a result, I may be able to gain insight into questions such as what defines human experience, what connects human experience throughout time and within the world, and in what ways might archetypes help me explore the way my identity is formed? This subject matter and my interests have had a large impact on my art process, my artwork, and the way I teach. In addition, I have a very strong drive to develop a sense of inner knowing through art. I believe art, among its many purposes, is a way of making meaning about lived and felt experience and that art is a way to communicate and engage in dialogue about that experience with an audience.

**Studio Environment**

I began studying my art practice in late June 2012. Within my home, I have two workspaces that I use for my studio. The first is a building space in the basement (Appendix C) that I use to make larger sculptures. The second studio is an idea finding
and development space (Appendix D) in a domed bay window nook, attached to the open living area in the third story of my house. The nook is where I researched and developed ideas for artmaking. My studio on the third floor is a multipurpose space used for writing, reading, drawing, and creating. During the study, the light-filled space was seasonably warm and a gentle breeze moved through the room from corner to corner. The sun swelled in the nook and swept across vibrant green walls. As the whole room seemed to settle and creak, music usually hummed quietly in the background. Sitting at the worktable, by the window is where I most comfortably found, developed, and interpreted ideas, which then became drawings (Appendix E). It is important to point out that the drawings I created during the study were plans for sculptural costumes that I envisioned building and developing later. Though I drew many plans for sculptural costumes during this research, for this paper, I focus on the experience of making one image (Appendix F) that I have titled *Glow Heart Magician*.

**Morning Pages**

I did not begin by making art images, rather, I engaged in activities that helped me to find ideas. Writing morning pages is an artist tool that I used daily. Creativity expert Julia Cameron and author of the book, *The Artist's Way* (1992) developed the idea of writing morning pages. I wrote three pages of thoughts during the early morning hours of my workday. "The[se] daily meanderings are strictly stream of conscious and not meant to be art, about writing well, or about sounding smart, though sometimes they are" (Cameron, p.10). Morning pages helped me clear my mind of complaints, negative judgments, and worries that fog my path to clear and creative ideas. Further, the practice of morning pages is a method that helps me develop the habit of documenting my inner
thoughts, defining experience, and finding ideas of interest that are worthy of further expression. Cameron (1992) describes the purpose of the process best when she writes, "In order to retrieve your creativity, you need to find it" (p.10). Morning pages worked like a mirror that reflected back to me my interests, ideas, imagination, and intentions. As I mapped my personal history throughout the pages and over time, the words were the whisper of my artistic voice.

For example, an idea unfolded and stretched out its legs in my morning pages when I wrote, "I want to make body extensions." Finding patterns that were prominent in my writing is how I selected ideas to develop into concepts. Next, I gained clarity about what the body extensions might be when I wrote,

Maybe each archetype is wearing a kind of magical life costume. We all wear different life costumes that hold feelings. Each costume might visually express specific kinds of behavior used to handle different kinds of life situations.

In this passage, I found the concept and envisioned (Hetland et al., 2007) the form that was consistent with Campbell's (1988) ideas about archetype and costume.

Writing morning pages is a method that develops cognitive processes for finding ideas such as reflection and observation (Hetland et al., 2007). This method cultivates artists' awareness of how to notice what ideas are worth attention because they hold possibilities for expression. Though I had not specifically described or formulated exactly what each suit would look like, I did find an idea worthy of development. Identifying fashion, myth, and archetype expanded my reach for finding ideas into areas that sit outside of fine art for art making. With an entry point in place, I was prepared to search for a variety of visual forms that would expand my knowledge base to develop the idea further.
Creating a Bank of Visual Ideas, Knowledge, and Inspiration

In addition to morning pages, researching visual references and collecting literature are idea finding activities that I engaged in to build a knowledge base (Stewart & Walker, 2005; Walker, 2003). A knowledge base is a broad conceptual parameter (Emery, 1989) used to guide art making. The process is similar to how a researcher writes a review of literature to support and inform their research (Merriam, 2009). The idea is to collect information that surrounds all aspects of the subject that may be useful in making a particular point. Walker (2003) describes building a knowledge base as an inquiry process used to "fund one's thinking for art making" (p.9). I employed a simple yet specific process to collect imagery to "fund" (Walker, 2003, p. 9) my visual work.

I began building my knowledge base by looking at artists' websites such as Nick Cave, Madame Peripetie, Rebecca Horn, and Alexander McQueen. I also spent time conducting Google searches using key words and phrases such as "mythical archetypes," "body extensions," "haute couture," "psychology of archetypes," "superheroes," and "wearable sculpture" with the intention of finding a breadth of new images that would expand my visual vocabulary. Searching for images this way also developed my disposition toward mindful observation so that I could "move beyond [my] habitual ways of seeing, to notice things that might otherwise be invisible and therefore not available as something to think about" (Hetland, et al., 2007, p.58). As I searched, I electronically saved images that interested and attracted me. I looked for images that explored character development and reflected archetypes described by Pearson (1991). Additionally, I looked for images that physically and metaphorically expanded or inhibited the limits of what the human body was capable of through the addition of sculptural body extensions.
**Artist Community Encounters**

To gather and discuss ideas about art, I attended art club meetings. Art club was organized by a group of art makers who shared an interest in connecting to engage in dialogue about art. Encounters with people from my artist community "funded" (Walker, 2003) my knowledge base because of the way they shared their art with me, introduced me to other inspirational materials, and exchanged feedback through dialogue. For example, during an encounter with Lena, an art club member, we discussed a character she created and developed for a series of illustrations and stories. As Lena explained, her character possessed heart lights that are symbolic of having faith, especially during dark times. The encounter with Lena's artwork contributed to the creation of *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F) because I imagined a new character in which I could sculpt an apparatus growing from the character's heart that is similar to the glowing orb found in Iron Man's suit (Appendix G). Lena suggested that I look at images and read literature connected to biology, senses, and chakras as well as the work of psychologist, C.G. Jung and Joseph Campbell, an expert in comparative mythology. Encounters with other artists and their artwork are important because, as Hetland et al., (2007) suggests, creating a "community" and collaborating with other artists is important because sharing and engaging in dialogue (Bohm, 1996; Hetland et al., 2007) about my ideas with my artist community served as a catalyst for creating new understandings and expanding my knowledge base. With a collection of images, ideas, and literature, as well as support and inspiration provided by my artist community, I was ready to translate the ideas I had envisioned into a developed visual plan for building sculptures.
Stage 2: Developing Concepts

To clarify the transition between the stages finding ideas and developing concepts, I have provided my understanding about the differences between ideas, concepts, and problems. An idea is an instant thought on a particular problem while a concept is an idea, developed through a process of problem reformulation and planning to achieve a desired result. Problems are difficulties people have with understanding something and usually result in posing a question for inquiry in order to understand or clarify the problem. In my artist practice, a problem that challenged me was identity formation. As such, I engaged in arts-based inquiry to investigate how character development and archetypal symbolism influence identity formation. As such, I have structured the developing concepts stage by engaging in "cycles of problem reformulation" (Walker, 2004, p.10) in which ideas I have found are processed and developed into concepts to understand the problem I have posed. As I engaged in cycles of problem reformulation, the concepts I developed are solutions to understand the problem and as such, problems and concepts develop in cycles, simultaneously. Concepts are then expressed through images, which convey understanding with respect to the problem posed.

Artists use a variety of conceptual strategies to support and enhance problem reformulation. Walker (2004) suggests, artists are able to enhance problem reformulation by "delaying closure" (p.10), a process in which final solutions are forestalled to deepen inquiry. It is also important to note that some artists are more practiced than others are at engaging in "cycles of problem reformulation" and "delaying closure" because as Walker (2004) states they have "a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity and innate
curiosity"(p.10). In addition, since all artists are different, varieties of strategies have been used to reformulate problems and develop concepts. In the sections that follow, I have described the strategies I used to engage in "cycles of problem reformulation" to develop concepts. The strategies include, creating conceptual parameters, developing my knowledge base, image flooding, sketching, and dialogue with members of my artist community, and contemporary drawing process.

I began working in the developing concepts stage without knowing what my drawings would look like. I felt challenged at first by not knowing the look of my artwork in advance and though I had an idea established and some research begun, I initially spent time sitting, stirring, and transitioning from idea to image. As such, flexible action, reflective thought, and a willingness to take risks by stretching and exploring ideas (Hetland et al., 2007; Graham & Zwirn, 2010) were characteristics of the conceptual development as well.

**Studio Environment Supports Conceptual Development**

I transitioned the studio environment physically from a clean space for idea finding and writing into a space used to support developing ideas into images. Just as Douglas and Jaquith (2009) pointed out in *Engaging Learners through Artmaking*, I became an "architect of space" who "set up proper circumstances"(p. 2) for developing concepts. After a few sessions at work (Appendix H), I consistently utilized every surface of my studio space. The window ledge held semi-organized piles of tools, supplies, books, images, and papers that were ready for transformation. The table was crowded with materials and my drawings. I kept everything out, opened, and at an arms reach.
The studio environment changed because I arranged images on the walls to communicate inspiration as much as possible. I designed my space to facilitate the cognitive process involved in developing concepts. I call this strategy image flooding (Appendix H). Flooding the walls with references from my knowledge base was pivotal for extracting, connecting, and developing ideas from the visuals for my artwork. I sorted the images I collected during the finding ideas stage into groupings that formed the conceptual parameter that I used to guide the development of specific characters. I created groupings of images, as Walker (2004) suggests, engaging in a "cycle of problem reformulation" to further shape the conceptual parameter that informed the development of *Glow Heart Magician*. Images such as the Egyptian Goddess Isis, Iron Man, a Nick Cave sound suit, a haute couture fashion image of a woman wearing a twisted rope body covering, and images of fiber art body coverings (Appendix G) formed the grouping used to inform *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F). Before each work session, I hung such conceptual groupings of images (Appendix G) to represent my visual lexicon for art making. As Bohm (1996) suggests, I engaged in an internal dialogue as I looked, thought, wrote, and created visual interpretations influenced by the images that flooded my walls. As Hetland et al. (2007) suggested, my artist studio mirrored my reflective thinking and thus the environment reflected my work habits and thought process.

**Trial and Error: Persistence with Preliminary Sketches**

My sketchbook was a tool I used to develop preliminary sketches and practice envisioning (Hetland et al., 2007). Just as a writer creates drafts and revisions, an artist creates sketches. Using the sketchbook to develop concepts was a way to playfully stretch and explore (Hetland et al., 2007) by experimenting with different forms that
embodied the concepts I envisioned. Illustrated in the sketchbook is a trial and error process in which several revisions of concepts are practiced (Appendix H-I), leading to the image the *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F) would eventually develop into. Additionally, I wrote character descriptions and small stories to help define the visual interpretations (Appendix H-I). Walker (2004) points out that for many artists tolerance for risks and ambiguity are artistic dispositions. However, at times I struggled with judgment and momentum because of the ambiguous nature of developing concepts. Often I judged the drawings as "messy" and that "my skills should be better" or that "I should be able to whip the drawings out faster." Regardless of judgments, I practiced the habit Hetland et al. (2007) define as *engage* and *persist* and as I continued to sketch, I clarified and developed concepts.

**Community Support, Contemporary Drawing, and Ideas First**

Another strategy I used to *engage* and *persist* (Hetland et al., 2007) was to reach out to my artist community. I contacted my art club friend, Lena. We discussed the struggle I experienced with momentum and judgment with the drawing process and Lena offered several fresh solutions about ways to continue. The suggestion I chose to use was to alter my references in Photoshop and then transform the references through drawing and collage. My interaction with Lena lasted just minutes, but the encounter transformed my studio session and triggered a burst of creativity and excitement that inspired me to go back to work immediately. Using Photoshop is also a strategy that helped me *engage* and *persist* by embracing nontraditional drawing techniques, I created a higher yield of drawings in a shorter amount of time, and ultimately, I expressed my idea faster. The result was five new drawings begun in one session (Appendix H-I). This instance
reinforces the idea that artists do not work in isolation, but rather that contemporary artists thrive in community with the help of peers (Graham and Zwirn, 2010; Hetland et al. 2007; Rush, 1995). In addition, Graham (2012) points out that conversations within a collaborative and hospitable climate encourages individual interpretation and patience with struggles.

**Drawing Process: Layering ideas, Risk Taking and Not Knowing**

I began drawing and layering concepts for *Glow Heart Magician* (figure 7, Appendix H-I) by selecting a couture fashion image (figure 1, Appendix H-I) and then altered the picture in Photoshop by removing color and increasing contrast (figure 2, Appendix H-I). I continued by printing the image, gluing the image to drawing paper, and preparing the surface with clear gesso. As evident in the series of photographs shown in figures 1-7 (Appendix H-I) where I documented each step of making *Glow Heart Magician*, I completed the image by layering materials including stamps, magazine clippings, glitter, pen, and paint on top of the altered image.

Regarding material application, the layers in *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix H-II) appear linear. However, the process of layering ideas through material is not linear; rather, layering is a process I used to develop concepts by manipulating imagery. Gude (2004) explains that layering is a conceptual contemporary art process in which a hybrid of forms and concepts are combined physically and metaphorically to create images. Gude, goes on to state that "as images become cheap and plentiful, they are no longer treated as precious, but instead are often literally piled on top of each other" (p.10). While working, I posed questions and documented them in my sketchbook and research journal. The questions guided decisions about the concepts I chose to weave together as I layered
materials to create *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F). For example I asked questions such as,

Who is the *Glow Heart Magician*, what costume will she wear, what is the glow heart lamp for, why does the lamp need to grow from her heart, what kind of magician is she, is she seeking power, how is she like the Goddess Isis and Iron Man, what is the rope wrap for, and what parts of *Glow Heart Magician* are like me already, and what parts do I seek?

Guided by questions and the conceptual parameter (Appendix G) for creating the *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F), I envisioned (Hetland et al., 2007) several threads of thought as I worked. For instance, I selected the couture fashion image in figure 1 (figure1, Appendix H-I) because I was attracted to the rope wrap. Since I developed this drawing as a plan for sculpture, I could imagine sculpting with rope-like material later on, and I wondered as I worked what material I might use to create the rope. I chose Icons such as the Goddess Isis and Iron Man (Appendix G) to layer with because each symbolized power and magic, and I wanted to empower the fashion figure metaphorically. Both Iron Man and Isis are heroes and are conceptually similar to Pearson’s (1991) magician archetype as they are all skilled in the art of transformation as such, I imagined that the *Glow Heart Magician* was also heroic. Through layering, I transformed the rope cloak into a magical protective cloak similar to Iron Man's suit in which the glowing orb on the chest provided power, strength, and life.

In the beginning, I did not know exactly how *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F) would transform, but as I finished the work by layering symbolic meaning and formal qualities from references, I trusted that I would learn more about its meaning. Not knowing emerged as a theme while developing concepts. The act of processing the image through layering is partly how I discovered the meaning of the work and engaged in
another "cycle of problem reformulation" just as Walker (2004) refers. Not knowing the outcome of an artwork in the beginning is a form of risk taking and play that creatively stretches and expands learning (Hetland et al., 2007; Szekely, 1978). I noted in my research journal that

Once, I stopped worrying about why certain images and ideas were showing up and I practiced accepting them, I could really work and I had faith that the answers would come as I worked. The answers for why are sometimes available, but not always. I surrendered to a vision that was not yet fully known to me. I trusted I would learn what was needed when I needed it.

I learned trusting my attraction to something is meaningful and that not knowing exactly why I make every decision is an ambiguous aspect of developing concepts. Trusting my inclination to make choices about the development of images without knowing the outcome is something I have had to cultivate, and the more comfortable I become with not knowing the look of an image in advance, the more excited I am about the process of watching the meaning unfold through the artworks I create.

**Stage 3: Interpreting Emerging Understanding**

The *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F) drawing is complete as a plan for sculpture; however, more work is necessary to gain understanding about the meaning and purpose of the artwork. Extending the artmaking practice to include the stage, interpreting emerging understanding is similar to the strategy Walker (2004) describes as "delaying closure" (p. 10). An example of this is how *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F) is a tool for learning and a visual representation of the deepest "cycle of problem reformulation" (Walker, 2004) prior to transforming the concepts the image embodies into sculpture. Interpreting emerging understanding is a stage of art process characterized by reflective thinking. To illustrate this point, I wrote imaginative short stories, met with members from my art community for critique, clarified research about references that
deepened my knowledge base, and interpreted meaning that emerges from the reference images and the artwork, *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix F). Additionally, by interpreting the meaning that emerges from the artwork, lessons surface for me to use in my life for intellectual and emotional growth for forming identity (Gude, 2007). In the following sections I have describe the strategies I used to engage in interpreting emerging understanding in the artwork I created.

**Reflective writing and questioning**

After completing the physical manipulation of materials to create *Glow Heart Magician* (Appendix H-II, figure 7), I asked myself more questions to uncover the meaning of the form I created. As Walker (2003) suggests, pursuing inquiry of artwork after it is completed generates new understandings, and key questions actively encourage deliberate thoughtfulness that moves the artwork beyond its incipient stages (p. 9). In reflection I asked,

What parts of the magician archetype are like me and what parts do I seek? Now that all of the layering is done what can I learn from this, and now that the work is created, what is the meaning overall? If this archetype is part of me, how do I use the heart lamp as a metaphor? Why would I need the cloak and the light? What else does the cloak do?

Next, I generated written response that revealed more about *Glow Heart Magician's* (Appendix F) purpose and magic. In my sketchbook (Appendix H-III) I wrote,

Glow Heart Magician uses the glowing heart lamp to sense her environment so that she can make decisions based on what she feels. Her glow heart lamp warms her heart and lights up positive aspects in her path. Her intention and energy follow the direction of light and the lamp lights the path to walk through. The cloak is a curious item that this magician wears and it is made of twisted rope that protects her from that which the glow heart light cannot see hiding in the dark places. With her heart lamp to light the way, she can fight negative forces. Though this magician is skilled at hiding her weaknesses, they lie within the cloak. She gains skills using her light and cloak, and with practice, she becomes better at navigating her path. She feels with her body and heart. The light of her heart and the magic in her cloak rules the Glow Heart Magician.
This reflective story is new knowledge that emerged through inquiry, which helped advance the exploration and interpretation of the artwork. Through writing, I also connected personally to the work. I wondered what was in the dark places of my life. What does the light not see? What is the meaning of the cloak? To engage and persist (Hetland et al., 2007) with meaningful inquiry, once again, I turned to my artist community to gather fresh understanding.

**Seeing with "New Eyes"
**
I shared the artwork, questions, and story with art club member Eagan and, as Hetland et al. (2007) suggest that artists do, I invited critique to gain perspective. Eagan and I discussed several new insights during the critique. Eagan's observation that the Glow Heart Magician (Appendix F) was "covered in tangles" and that "tangles are a metaphor for the problems, memories, and history that we carry from our past into our present and future" proved to be the most significant new understanding. Tangles became a metaphor for the assumptions we learn throughout life. The encounter with fellow artist Eagan helped me to view my work, my personal experience, my knowledge base, and my reflective writing with what Hetland et al. (2007) refer to as "new eyes." Next, I reflected upon my references through writing in my sketchbook (Appendix H-II) to deepen by knowledge base and to gain clarity on the symbols and metaphors I wove together to create Glow Heart Magician.

**Magician Archetype Reference**
First, I examined the magician archetype to gain perspective on magic and the power a magician might wield. Pearson (1991) characterizes a healthy magician archetype within human consciousness as one particularly skilled in the art of
transformation, especially by changing perception, playing with illusion, and ultimately
changing consciousness. Conversely, the Shadow form of a Magician archetype

works like an evil sorcerer, transforming better into lesser options. We engage in
such evil sorcery anytime we belittle another or ourselves or lessen options and
possibilities, resulting in a diminished self-esteem. The shadow Magician is also
the part of us capable of making others and ourselves ill through negative
thoughts and actions. (Pearson, 1991, p.17)

The magician's primary power to change physical realities comes from their ability to
first change mental, emotional, and spiritual realities.

**Isis Reference**

The Egyptian Goddess Isis (Appendix H-II) was a powerful magician in the
creation myth of Osiris. In the myth, Osiris, Isis's husband, was killed and his body
dismembered into 14 parts that were spread throughout Egypt. Isis gathered the scattered
body parts and repaired Osiris’s body by breathing life back into him. He remained alive
just long enough to conceive a child with Isis. Osiris descended into the underworld after
a proper burial. In the myth, Isis possessed the power to create, repair, and heal by using
magical transformative powers. The story of Isis symbolized healing, rebirth and
transformation in the darkest of situations and this is the metaphor I wish to evoke in the
drawing and in the completed sculpture.

**Iron Man Reference**

Anthony Stark is Iron Man, a super hero who is identified by his body armor,
which contains a glowing orb of light that keeps his heart beating (Appendix H-II). Stark
created his own destruction by inventing a weapon that damaged his heart. Using the
skills he already possessed, he created his suit of armor to save his life and as a result, he
saved many other lives too. Iron man is a symbolic reminder of humans' capacity to
choose how we transform and create our lives.
Glow Heart Magician's Lesson

The Glow Heart Magician is a metaphor for the ways that humans possess the ability to use thought to transform life in positive and negative ways. For instance, I have envisioned that the Glow Heart Magician is capable of evil sorcery like that of the shadow magician as Pearson (1991) suggested. I have also imagined that the Glow Heart Magician has the power to transform into a hero. The tighter humans weave metaphorical tangles, the more stuck humans become in life and as such, the more suffering humans will endure. The more humans untangle assumptions the more free humans become. Humans are like magicians, as Pearson (1991) suggests, when they use their intellectual and emotional abilities to become skilled in the art of transforming their reality by changing their perception and ultimately affect human consciousness. By reflecting upon my knowledge base through questions and critique, I clarified what Glow Heart Magician (Appendix F) is about. Interpreting emerging understanding requires creative and imaginative observation as well as playful envisioning. Gude (2007) refers to this process of play when she writes that artists use "new strategies of making meaning through which they can interrogate perceived notions of "the real" (p.14)."The real" in this case is the way Glow Heart Magician (Appendix F) symbolically embodies a choice for how I choose to approach my life, and thus form identity.

Conclusion

My artist practice is structured by three stages of cognitive process including finding ideas, developing concepts, and interpreting emerging understandings. Strategies that I used included finding ideas by researching visual and literary references to form a knowledge base, developing and layering concepts within images using contemporary drawing practices, and reflecting upon artworks through critique and writing to interpret
emerging understanding. My artist practice is not a formula for art making, but does provide a model including strategies for how one might begin to practice conceptual art making using enduring ideas as the conceptual centerpiece of artist practice. Art practice structured by such cognitive processes enabled me to come, to know, and to reimagine.
Chapter 5: Artist-Teacher Pedagogy

I implemented Phase 2 of this study in my studio classroom in November 2012. After studying the process I used to make art, I embedded cognitive processes such as finding ideas, developing concepts, and interpreting emerging understandings (Daichendt, 2010) into a fifteen-week curriculum unit for 5th and 6th grade students. For this study, I investigated the way I approached teaching the unit based on my artist practice. The following sections include an analysis of successful strategies as well as challenges that I met and overcame as I taught within the framework of artist-teacher philosophy that I conceived based upon the culling of multiple authors' characteristics and explanations of this model (Hetland et al, 2007; Daichendt, 2010; Graham; 2012; Graham & Zwirn, 2010; Smith, 1983/1998; Stewart and Walker, 2005). For clarity, I have provided a description of a typical day in the art room prior to the study in order to illuminate change resulting from approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy.

A Typical Day in the Art Room Prior to the Study

During my first year of teaching, I had great hopes that students and I would spend time learning how to dialogue about artworks, engage in reflective process work, and make art. However, as I implemented lessons, my students and I struggled to persist with process work that I planned for them to do. I allowed complaints from students about process work such as sketches, writing, reading, or talking about art derail me. Disengaged behaviors emerged in the classroom and in an attempt to change unwanted behaviors, I often limited process work in the art room to the minimum necessary to create artwork.
The format I used to introduce new projects was a single 10 to 15 minute presentation in which students and I looked at selected artworks and discussed the theme, the assignment, and the type of artwork they would create. Following the presentation, I gave a technical demonstration about material process along with directions about how to develop ideas and sketches inspired by the artwork or artist under study. After the demonstration, students worked independently while I held conferences to check in with students about their work for the last 15 to 20 minutes of class. Class concluded with clean up.

During subsequent lessons, I spent 5 to 10 minutes of class time reviewing artworks, themes, and objectives. Review occurred as part of what Hetland et al. (2007) refer to as a demonstration lecture, where time is devoted to sharing information verbally while simultaneously showing ideas and techniques for making and concluded with questions. Work continued as I met with students for individual conferences to develop ideas and discuss choices they might make regarding the project. I made space in our schedule for several days of making and pacing was responsive to the students’ work process.

Time concerned me and as such, I anticipated problems each student might encounter and then planned for ways to simplify processes to save class time. As an example, prior to the study, I spent my own time finding reference materials for students, rather than facilitating lessons where each student found their own references. Unfortunately, this time saving option resulted in a decrease in learning about how artists make art and increased the amount of time I needed to prepare for classes. At the conclusion of each project, I attempted to teach about reflective artist statements, but
often we dismissed the work quickly to rush on to fit in the next project. I hung many products in the hall to celebrate the work that occurred. I had gathered assumptions that school communities including parents, teachers, students, and administrators expected art teachers to create and show many products to demonstrate the success of an art program. For many art teachers that I have worked with, this is a very real dilemma. As such, the pressure of time was self-created because teachers, parents, students, and administration never pressured me to create a specific number of projects.

The way I enacted my curriculum prior to this study did not reflect my highest "hopes and dreams" nor did it communicate my "best thinking" (Freedman, 2003, p.106) to my students, colleagues, and our learning community. Embedded in Daichendt's (2010) writing is a solution to this problem. Daichendt writes,

> For both Gonzalez-Torres and Beuys, a slide presentation followed by a technical demonstration would not be true to their individual thinking processes. In their artwork, we can see the types of thought they valued. The same is true in their teaching. Not all art teachers should approach their craft like these artists, but they should consider and reflect upon why they are interested in the arts (p. 69).

Studying my art practice was the first step in taking responsibility for the change I wished to experience in my classroom and to discover the kinds of thought I value, and teaching based on upon my art practice was the next.

**Studio Classroom Environment**

The school was designed with 1950's architectural details such as red brick exterior, boxlike dimensions, white angular interiors covered by cool pastel green and yellow tiles, and shiny, speckled, cement flooring. Teachers and students fill classrooms with a buzz of activity. Outside of each classroom is evidence of the students’ daily presence, including class work displays, student mailboxes, and coat racks. Displays of
art and process work are abundant as you near the end of the hallway, where my studio classroom is nestled.

Upon entering the square studio classroom, the room looks calm, open, and filled with light. Materials are organized and labeled in their designated places. Recycled materials are neatly shelved, bagged, boxed, and ready for transformation. The tables arch around so everyone faces one another and on each table are layers of residue such as paint, glue, and glitter. There is an even smaller supply desk in front of a combination bulletin-white board where I have pinned, a mash up of art, prints, drawing, writing, various teacher prototypes, along with studio agreements and a signed contract created in collaboration with the students. A square carpet anchors the center of the room for lessons, stories, sharing, and sometimes working.

The room swells to host students in grades kindergarten through eight and supplies are organized enough to sustain the changes and transformations that are caused by the daily traffic patterns of a shared space. While my classroom lacks the privacy found in my artist studio, I organized it like my studio to accommodate traffic flow, spaces for breaks, and easy access to tools, materials, and imagery (Appendix I). I designed the open "feel" of the room by arranging the physical space to create ease, comfort, and flow in the room to promote a collaborative and open studio culture (Hetland et al., 2007; Daichendt, 2010; Graham & Zwirn, 2010). The studio classroom is an artifact of the cognitive art processes, behaviors and people it supports, forty minutes at time.
Planning and Translating

The overarching "enduring idea" for the year this study took place was "Exploring Artistic Inspiration," and I planned and implemented the curriculum using artist-teacher philosophy as the framework. I selected this idea to teach students how artists find inspiration and ideas for art making and to help students practice thinking and working like artists. It is important for students to understand that artists use different methodologies to frame investigations about any topic that is intrinsically motivating or interesting (Gude, 2007) and through exploring this theme; the goal is that students learn that there are many perspectives through which to make meaning in the world. I created the yearlong plan (Appendix J) using the curriculum design theories created by Stewart and Walker (2005). Based on my art practice, the key concept I selected for the unit was that artists find inspiration by looking inward to create artwork that is a reflection of themselves, their lives, and experiences (Daichendt, 2010). Among the learning objectives I planned was that students will understand how to use visual metaphors and symbols to express their ideas. The subject matter, artworks, and cognitive processes that I used to make art were a natural fit for teaching this theme, key concept, and learning objective. In addition, the unit represented a developmentally appropriate challenge for my students.

Fifth and sixth grade students are increasingly able to think abstractly about thematic ideas, able to practice viewing the world from different perspectives, and are becoming more self-aware as their identity forms (Smith, 1983/1998; Wood, 2007). My goal was to design a high quality, age appropriate assignment to facilitate students’ engagement with the cognitive processes that structured my art practice and supported
their art making. Hetland et al. (2007) suggest that a quality art assignment develops students’ "alertness" toward making "connections between their subjective experience and the world around them" and teaches students to think about their experiences as visual artists do" (p. 18).

To develop a quality assignment I created a "broad conceptual parameter" (Emery, 1989) informed by the subject matter in my artwork and my students’ interests including mythology, animals, superheroes, and contemporary drawing and painting practices (Daichendt, 2010; Hetland et al., 2007; Stewart & Walker, 2005). I created the parameter by selecting a conceptual group of images (Appendix K) to begin the formation of our knowledge base, just as I did during phase 1 of this study (Stewart Walker, 2005; Daichendt, 2010). The collection I gathered included images of artifacts from ancient Egypt and Greece, totem poles made by Native Americans from the Pacific Northwest, Wounded Deer by Frida Kahlo, and contemporary images of superheroes from popular culture (Appendix K). I selected the collection of images because characters in the artworks modeled how artists composed a hybrid of symbols and metaphors expressed through human and animal forms to communicate aspects of human experience. This was our objective as well. Stewart and Walker (2005) point out that it is important to build upon students’ preexisting knowledge. As such, the content in the images I selected also connected to curriculum students were studying in their general education classes.

**Teacher prototypes**

I created teacher prototypes (Appendix J-I) to think through processes and methods that illustrate a principle for metaphorical thinking (Daichendt, 2010). Engaging
in making prototypes was to anticipate the kinds of thinking students would practice, the knowledge they would need to be successful, and to model drawing and painting techniques that might be useful. I placed the prototypes among the thematic collection of artworks as inspiration rather than as a teacher exemplar. Exemplars are created by the teacher for students to copy or imitate and might result in what Efland (1976) described as school art. Teacher prototypes were not the focus of student learning; rather they were a resource among other resources to choose.

**Visual Plans**

While I wrote my teaching plans in a traditional lesson plan format, I also made diagrams (Appendix J-I) to envision (Hetland et. al, 2007) specific activities to carry out lessons. Rather than planning a lecture and demonstration of materials to introduce the theme and key learning concepts as I had done previously, I created diagrams (Appendix J-I, figures 1 & 2) to help me envision a series of dialogues designed to facilitate finding ideas (Szekely, 2006). For example, the diagram (Appendix K, figure 1) shows how I planned to physically organize my studio classroom by assigning artworks from a particular culture, artist, or thematic group of images to small groups for discussion. The diagrams (Appendix J-I) provide evidence of how I approached my classroom like an artist-teacher because I visually designed a collaborative social climate and open studio culture that promotes building knowledge through social encounters just as I experienced in my own artist community when I searched for ideas (Daichendt, 2010; Graham and Zwirn, 2010; Hetland et al., 2007).

In another diagram, (Appendix J-I, figure 2) I planned for students to use the knowledge they gained from their small groups in a whole-group brainstorm session. The
purpose of this session was to generate ideas about how artists have composed symbols and metaphors as well as why art has been made this way throughout time. Additionally, I planned strategies designed to "move students from where they are currently in terms of knowledge and understanding to the place where they will demonstrate their more sophisticated understanding through the performance task" (Stewart & Walker, 2005, p. 78). I was excited for the possibilities that might emerge, but still nervous that finding ideas through dialogue might not work because the students and I had struggled previously to engage productively in dialogue.

**Dialogue: A Method for Finding Ideas**

My expectation at the beginning of the unit was clear when I announced to students that, "We are not going to dive into making today because we will be looking at art and having conversations about art to find ideas." We would make art with our minds first. I briefly reviewed the theme then introduced the key concepts, and learning objective. I explained that we would engage in finding ideas by working in small groups, and I gave each group a folder (Appendix L) that contained resources such as artworks, literature about the artworks, and topic questions to motivate dialogue and stimulate reflection (Smith, 1983/1998). I instructed students to use the folder contents as resources throughout their discussion, and I asked students to use their art journals to draw and write ideas during the discussion that they deemed worthy of sharing or remembering. I briefed students that the first half of the class period was for working in small groups to prepare for a whole group brainstorm that would begin at the second half of class. After I checked for understanding by asking students to recall and share the directions back,
assigned the students a group, and finished passing out the folders, students began working in small groups to discuss the contents of their folders.

I circulated to observe students’ interactions with the resources I provided. As Smith (1983/1998) suggests, I listened to students' dialogue about the topic questions and artworks to glean how students understood the theme, artworks, and objective to determine how to teach during whole group discussion. As well, I listened with intention to intervene and offer student support if necessary. I noticed a variety of behaviors within both the fifth and sixth grade participants. Some students initially understood the activity and set to work to discover ideas. A couple of students complained that they did not get the folder they wanted but, with a little encouragement and assurance, were able to get to work. Others asked for help immediately by exclaiming, "We don't get this, what are we supposed to do again?" I redirected this group by asking them to repeat the objectives and directions. I witnessed others argue and debate passionately about the works and the questions. Overall, I noticed students leaning into the work with their bodies and their voices had eventually gelled together into harmonious buzzing. However, two students appeared to reject the lesson because they disbanded from their group to wander through the room.

With all of the other groups engaged in dialogue, I shifted my focus toward Brianna and Michael, fifth grade participants who disbanded their partnership, and then I intervened. Just as Hetland et al. (2007) described, I engaged students in reflective dialogue about the artworks by implementing "open-ended" questions that enhanced their disposition towards observation of art works and their ability to envision and express ideas about symbols and metaphor. This particular group was working with a selection of
superhero images (Appendix K). To begin, I asked, "How does the human part of a superhero use the animal?" I designed this topic, question as Smith (1983/1998) suggests, to help students focus on the objective and to see what students know about the topic. Spiderman became the focus of our discussion because the students knew the most about this character. Specifically, the question enhanced students’ dispositions towards observing (Hetland, et al, 2007) how the human and animal parts of Spiderman interact. The students determined that Spiderman takes on the spider’s biological attributes such as spinning a web, to have weapons to catch bad people.

Smith (1998) states that during motivational dialogue that "teachers should be prepared with relevant questions to keep dialogue moving" (p.22) as well as to help students clarify ideas. As such, I posed another series of questions throughout the dialogue to help students understand animal qualities as a metaphor and to guide the students towards discovering their own reason why humans from throughout time might design super humans. Next, I asked,

Why does the human part of a superhero use the animal? Why would a superhero want to have a part of an animal? Why would the superhero be designed this way?

The students in this group determined that the webbing is a "weapon that is also like a tool" that "helps the human work faster" and more efficiently. I continued the dialogue by asking questions such as,

How is a tool useful? Why would this human or any human want to take on the extra tool? Why would any human want to take on a part of an animal? What would it do for the human?

The students decided that the human needed help for the job at hand because he could not do it by himself as a normal human. Interpreting their response in action (Schon, 1983), I noticed that students were observing a profound human need to seek that which they feel
they lack. I continued the discussion by posing more questions based on my interpretation when I asked,

What is Spiderman seeking that he didn't have before?

To this question, the students replied by stating,

Animal qualities, or like highness, counsel... like being able to rule over stuff...to be in control.

Our conversation concluded at a critical point in the motivational dialogue, which Smith (1998) describes as visualization of an idea. Visualization is a point at which the teacher "poses questions to help students translate responses into visual images" (Smith, 1998, p. 22). The conversation below illustrates the translation to visualization in which the student finds an idea.

T: When someone feels like they need to be in control, what are they lacking? What do you have to have to be in control of a situation?
S: Something that I don't have?
T: What don't you have? What do you feel like you don't have?
S: like... calmness
T: Ah! So if you were to choose an animal to help you be calm, what animal would you draw with yourself.
S: A sloth!

The translation illustrated in the dialogue above is similar to Hetland et al. (2007) describing envisioning, in which the student is able to visualize next steps in creating an image that meets the assignment objective. In this case, through interpreting an image of Spiderman, the student was able to translate the idea that calm action is something he was seeking and might possibly lead to control in a situation. The student envisioned that the sloth possessed a quality that was a metaphor for slowing down and gaining control.

While this student did not select this idea for his final project, he gained practice through
dialogue about how to use images to find ideas, symbols, and metaphors that he could share with his class during the group brainstorm session.

The purpose of having students work in small groups was to use dialogue to help them build visually and linguistically expressive capabilities by observing and reflecting upon the ways that other artists use symbols and metaphor as a means for expression (Hetland et al., 2007; Hubard, 2010; Stewart & Walker, 2005). Further, engaging in dialogue with one another enabled students to collaborate to gather knowledge about the artworks in order to build a knowledge base as I had done in my artist practice (Daichendt, 2010; Walker, 2003). Through dialogue about artworks, the communities' knowledge base evolves to form the context for art making. As an artist, I have practiced on several occasions posing reflective questions to understand artworks on my own and within my artist community to find ideas. Therefore, the use of questions within a conversational pedagogy (Graham, 2012) is how I translated my artist practice to my teaching practice to facilitate finding ideas (Daichendt, 2010).

After we completed small group dialogues, we moved the tables together (a transition we practiced in the beginning of the year) to create one large table for brainstorming. I directed students to select and hang on our brainstorm chart the images that they understood best (Appendix M). Soon students noticed similarities among the grouping and made the connection that all of the artworks illustrated a hybrid of humans and animals. Since students spent time discussing the images to gather knowledge and ideas, I moved our dialogue along further by asking about the aesthetic significance of the images when I posed the question, "Why would humans throughout history combine animals and humans in this way to make artwork?" First, they responded with an
enthusiastic, but disorganized wave of comments because all of the ideas were being stated at once. However, in the final minutes of class, several significant ideas popped out of the group like popcorn. Each idea that emerged was a path students could choose to elaborate on individually. Brainstorming takes practice and once I felt I could manage the wave, we were able to discuss one idea at a time and write them on the student-generated group brainstorm chart (Appendix M). The ideas we wrote are listed below:

- it represents something the artist needs;
- represents the year (horoscope) the character in the artwork or the artist was born;
- to represent a favorite animal;
- represents something about their personality;
- represents how a person acts;
- to show expertise in something you are good at.

Each of the ideas connected to the purpose, value, meaning, and beliefs of the artists who made the work. Implementing indirect instruction such as dialogue and brainstorming (Stewart & Walker, 2005) generated a chart that anchored their ideas for the project. Just as I flooded my studio walls with conceptual groups of imagery, the students and I posted the student-generated chart in the studio classroom (Daichendt, 2010). The walls began to reflect the cognitive processes involved in finding ideas.

**Going Deeper**

I was satisfied students were learning, but curious if students’ thinking could go deeper. I decided to spend a second day discussing artworks with my sixth grade class. I grouped the tables together before students arrived and placed the brainstorm chart on the table so students could predict the purpose of class that day. Transforming the physical environment encouraged discussion and created a hospitable space for finding ideas (Hetland et al., 2007; Graham & Zwirn, 2010). Focusing students on the topic (Smith, 1983/1998) I asked, "What do you notice about all of these images together?" Students responded,
“They are all part of a story," "they all represent something," "they are all associated with animals," some of "the images explain how life was created," and "the images are made up to explain things about life."

I confirmed this with a nod and nudging students along I asked, "What else?" One student motioned toward the totem poles and, after some discussion, a student read an excerpt that described the use of animals in totem poles as spirit guides, illuminating their interest. As Hubard (2010) suggests, I translated student interest into a lens to frame our discussion about all of the artworks. I asked the group, "How do you think the animal can act as a spirit guide? What does that mean?" After some discussion one student responded,

I think, but I am not totally sure, but I think the animals can like... guide them through life. For example, like the beaver would be able to teach about um.. how to be a guide on how to build a good home, or something like that."

As the conversation developed, another student built upon the idea by connecting the totem poles’ use of animals to superheroes when she stated that,

superheroes are like the totem poles except they look different because the superhero gains the animal as a guide. For example, Dr. Octopus gains the strength of the octopus, and [the superhero] Wolverine has the strength of the wolverine, and Spiderman climbs like a spider, so they have the characteristics of the animal they are named after.

The dialogue I have described illustrates how creating a social climate to encourage social interaction helps students find connections between artworks in which new and creative possibilities emerge (Bohm, 1996; Hetland, et al., 2007). Further, the dialogue is a model for students to embrace when they begin to work independently on their own ideas (Hetland et al., 2007). Taking the time to engage in dialogue not only clues me into students' interests, but also is a form of informal assessment because it provides evidence of students’ thinking (Stewart & Walker, 2005). Also, by creating their own examples,
students take ownership of their learning. Through dialogue, the students and I embraced the belief that ideas are foundational to art, with the brainstorm chart we created serving to document this belief (Appendix M). With ideas found, we were ready to envision the next steps.

**Growing Pains: Struggling with Change**

This new process did not come without its struggles. Using dialogue to find ideas was part of art making, necessary for learning, and overall it was successful. However, I often felt anxious about spending too much time on dialogue and finding ideas because of assumptions I have gathered from past schooling, the students I teach, and the teachers with whom I have worked. Among many assumptions, I have learned that art class is time spent doing fun, hands-on learning primarily through material processes. Students and teachers alike have stated, "art class is for doing art, and not for class work like reading, writing, and talking." An assumption like "art is supposed to be fun and relaxing" reinforces beliefs that art class in school does not include cognitive processes practiced through dialogue about art.

As I have described, dialogue about ideas was not something we practiced often in the classroom prior to this study. For example, Brianna, a member of the group I described earlier, rejected the idea that art making included looking at art and using dialogue to find ideas as art making when she stated, "I am bored and I wish we were making art." For Brianna, making art might have meant that she would be doing painting, drawing, or building only. Brianna did not seem to share the perception that artists do both activities to make art. Though most students were open to dialogue, there were a few
participants who expressed similar complaints that talking was boring and not part of art making.

At first, I struggled that students thought the lesson was boring because I wanted learning to be interesting and fun. I found it difficult not taking the students’ feeling personally. I worried that students thought art in our school was for entertainment and wondered if I should be trying to make it more fun. Was I dealing with the "ghost of fun" issue that May (1989) states many art teachers working with reform of any kind deal with? May (1989) writes that when teachers "do battle with the ghost of fun," they struggle to implement "eloquent instructional discourse involving less studio production" because students' and teachers' hold conflicting perceptions about the purpose of artmaking. May (1989) continues by stating that art teachers also struggle with a fear of "the potential for student anarchy or disinterest because they are not making art objects" (p.148). I did not experience anarchy or disinterest; in fact, I argue that the majority of students were interested and open to learning. Rather, the students and I held conflicting perceptions about the purpose of art and what constitutes art making. As such, I was struggling with "the ghost of fun"(May, 1989) because my lesson redefined for them what artmaking in school encompassed.

Teaching from artist-teacher philosophy made me aware of these assumptions. With awareness of my artist process, I was able to engage and persist (Hetland et al., 2007) with the process work because I understood the essential purpose and value of using dialogue to find ideas as part of artmaking. Despite complaints, we achieved the goal of finding ideas for both classes, and while we may have experienced growing pains, we were ready to engage in the next step of developing concepts.
Developing Concepts in the Studio Classroom

As I have described, transitioning from idea to visual image creation can be a daunting task even for a practiced artist. To clarify the difference between idea and concept, an *idea* is an instant thought on a particular problem while a *concept* is an idea, developed through a process of planning to achieve a desired result. To guide students through this transition, I used a variety of tools and methods in the studio classroom to support students in developing concepts through image making. The parameter created for the assignment was open, and I understood that students would develop a variety of solutions (Szekely, 1978). As such my planning remained open and emergent (Graham & Zwirn, 2010) and the methods I used were designed to help students develop and envision (Hetland et al., 2007) their image independently. Students spent several days using “characteristic worksheets,” sketching in art journals, embodying their ideas through photography, and engaging in dialogue with one another and me. In the following sections, I have described how I implemented lessons that taught students how to develop concepts through these tools and methods and how I overcame struggles that I encountered.

Envision and Transition

I created an Animal/Human Hybrid Characteristic (Appendix N) in which I transformed the students' key ideas from the brainstorm chart (Appendix M) into key questions. Studying my art practice led me to understand that transitioning from idea to image begins with posing questions and reflecting on ideas (Daichendt, 2010). Walker (2003) suggests this strategy for developing concepts is promising when she states, "students need to move beyond brainstorming to more deliberate thoughtfulness, and key
questions actively encourage this process” (p.9). In each section of the characteristic worksheet were two questions. The first question structured students’ practice of "looking inward" for inspiration. The second question, helped students envision a place to begin (Hetland et al. 2007; Smith, 1998). For instance, section two on the characteristic worksheet (Appendix N) asks students to consider and list characteristics or qualities they feel they are seeking followed by the transition question, what animals will help you represent characteristics you wish to take on? The characteristic worksheet was a helpful tool used in different ways. Students reflected in the sections that pertained to them and in a variety of responses such as list making, sentences, and pictures and, in some cases, scribbles of words and image combined (Appendix N-I).

Persistence with developing ideas independently was critical in approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy (Daichendt, 2010). As I have described, this was not a standard practice previously. As such this was a significant change for the students and me. Rather than rushing students through developing concepts, I repeated statements such as," the more ideas you come up with, the better your project will be," and "Think it through more. Don't just use the first thing, use the best thing," and "If you don't know your idea, spend a little more time thinking about it. It might take time." Some students sought my approval right away without spending more than a minute at work. For example, the exchange below between me and two other students occurred upon sight of the characteristic worksheet.

S: Can I make a dragon?
T: You are not going to make dragons just because, but does using a dragon connect to an important idea that you have?
S: Can I do a butterfly?
T: Why a butterfly? How does it connect to you? What will that say about you?
I understood the need for approval, but as Smith (1983/1998) suggests, I did not give answers; rather, I responded with reflective questions to help students develop concepts on their own. I modeled the belief that developing concepts was of the utmost importance. For example, at the end of class a 5th grade participant proudly explained his idea and yet he seemed unsettled about the fact that he did not begin a final artwork when he stated,

S: Well, I didn't draw anything yet.
T: Did you come up with your idea?
S: yeah
T: OK! That is the most important part for today.

And again with sixth,

My main goal today is to make sure everyone has an idea and is willing to work with it even if you are not quite sure how to draw it yet. That is half of the battle of making art. We don't always know what we are going to make as we are preparing our idea, but we still have to come up with our idea.

Both exchanges refer to the way I modeled tolerance of ambiguity as well as encouraged students to "delay closure" (Walker, 2004) to help them practice developing concepts and habits such as stretching and exploring (Hetland et al., 2007). While I don't agree with the comment I made that implies art is a battle, I do believe time should be spent wrestling with our ideas and developing concepts before rushing into making products.

Participants created art journals in the beginning of the school year to hold process work, including writing, references, and drawings. After students completed their characteristic worksheets (Appendix, N), students transitioned to sketching. As an artist-teacher, I structured time and space in the studio classroom for students to practice developing concepts visually through creating sketches (Daichendt, 2010). Sketching ideas is a time in which students practice a "cluster" of artistic habits such as envisioning,
expressing, stretching and exploring, and developing craft (Hetland et al, 2007). Evident in students' sketches was how they clarified ideas, reformulated problems (Walker, 2004) and developed concepts as solutions. Rose, a sixth grade participant, created a human/animal hybrid named Panda Girl. Rose's process work (Appendix O) offers a glimpse into the piece she eventually made with flashes of words like overcoming vulnerability, hands, and peace, along with images of pandas and koalas. Among her sketches are several different attempts at expressing the concepts she developed. Rose actively reshaped the problem as she went along in the project until Panda Girl gained clarity, deepened in meaning, and grew into a full-grown artwork. Another example is Katie's work (Appendix O-I). Katie created a character named Juliet, a flying magical owl girl. Viewing Katie's process work in sequence is like watching a Russian nesting doll unpack itself. With each cycle, Katie developed concepts further through image creation. The practice of developing concepts through sketching provides students with the opportunity to explore choice, form visuals, and practice expression.

After studying my art practice, I concluded that altering fashion images was not as meaningful as altering images of one's self to explore forming identity. Reflecting upon my artwork led me to provide students with the option to pose theatrically and document their gestures through photography (Daichendt, 2010). For example, when students identified an animal on their characteristic worksheet that they wished to incorporate with their own body through drawing, but did not yet know how, I encouraged students to pose as the animal and then documented the pose through photography. Posing theatrically is a strategy suggested by Stewart and Walker (2005) to help students to understand artworks, develop concepts by embodying ideas, and reveal options students
did not know were available to them. The juxtaposition of Jordan's photograph to his final artwork (Appendix O-II) illuminates this strategy. Photography is another method that supported students through the transition from idea to image. Further, the photographic image provided students with a reference while drawing and an image to alter as I did when I altered images in Photoshop (Daichendt, 2010).

Photography provided students with an opportunity to form a character’s identity that metaphorically represents students' formation of self. Gude (2007) points out that, Art making can be an important opportunity for students to further their emotional and intellectual development to help formulate a sense of who they might become. Quality projects aid students in exploring how one’s sense of self is constructed within complex family, social, and media experiences. (p. 8)

Megan's process work (Appendix O-III) is evidence of how she experimented with creating a character in which she may have formulated a sense of she may want to become. Megan used theatrical posing to develop the form and concept for the final character she created, a human/tiger hybrid. Posing theatrically and altering the image permitted Megan to characterize a personality that contrasted with the meek cat girl she created in her first sketch (Appendix O-III). Megan seized the opportunity to stretch and explore expressive possibilities through photography (Daichendt, 2010, Hetland et al., 2007) and investigated an aspect of her identity that she characterized as a brave tiger showman in a tuxedo rather than a meek cat girl wearing a mini skirt (Appendix O-III). Taking pictures developed students' abilities to envision their characters, express their ideas by acting out different scenarios, and enabled students to playfully consider and construct a metaphorical sense of their selves through their characterizations.
Breaking Through Blocks with Reflection

Throughout the developing concepts stage in Phases 1 and 2, the students and I experienced blocks even though several tools and methods were available for such work. There were two kinds of blocks; the first was about how to transition from concept to image. The second was about the development of technical craft. Reflective dialogue and thinking upon my artist practice was a method of my artist-teacher pedagogy used to support finding solutions, unraveling assumptions, and breaking through blocks.

Evidence of struggle included shouts exclaiming, "I can't draw," "I need help with drawing," "I have never been good at drawing," and "Ms. Smith I am bad at this drawing, I am bad." Struggle manifested through disengaged behaviors is as simple as deciding to stop working and chat with friends or as severe as crumpling drawings and throwing them in the garbage. Logan, a sixth grade participant, had a clear sense of the concept he wished to develop as evidenced by his characteristic worksheet (Appendix O-IV) and yet he was among many students who appeared blocked in the transition from idea to artwork. Our conversation not only revealed that Logan was struggling, but that the reference images I had provided were not helpful. This was also made evident by the fact that Logan continued to draw the same thumbnail sized sketches repeatedly (Appendix O-IV) hoping that eventually they would improve. I felt frustrated as well, because students with great ideas stopped dead in their tracks because of drawing, and as their teacher, it was my job to help them through the transition. At first, I struggled to teach helpful drawing strategies.

That evening I reflected on my conversation with Logan, the disengaged behaviors I had observed from other students, and my artist practice to find a solution. I
realized that the struggle occurred because my goals and objectives regarding drawing in
the art room lacked clarity. At first, I had encouraged students to use references for
observational drawing, and I discouraged the use of other drawing strategies like tracing.
I wanted students to learn how to draw. However, this action implicitly taught that I
valued observation drawing that focuses on rendering images realistically more than
other strategies (Smith, 1998). Approaching teaching based on my artist practice
challenged this assumption, and I admit that I struggled personally to choose alternative
drawing strategies because it made me feel like a traitor to the craft of drawing. One
student admitted sharing a similar feeling during drawing practice when he stated,
"tracing feels like cheating." The artistic habit of developing craft (Hetland et al., 2007)
in the traditional way I had learned it was our block.

After reflecting, I reevaluated my goals and determined that finding ideas,
developing concepts, and expressing them through image are most important. As such, I
needed to teach drawing with that goal in mind. Smith (1998) offers a helpful strategy
when she challenges assumptions about observational drawing by stating, "Observational
drawing is an intellectual, emotional, and intuitive response to objects and events, not a
correct rendering or visual illusion" (p. 14). I also considered how in my own art process
I used any tools and methods available to get my idea across, rather than limiting myself
to traditional drawing. With my artist practice in mind and goals about drawing in the
classroom clarified I responded by planning a lesson designed to expand students' choice
regarding drawing strategies (Daichendt, 2010; Smith, 1998).

First, students needed to learn about how to find their own references for image
making. I also determined that the students and I needed to expand our ideas about what
drawing includes (Smith, 1998) so that when students searched for references, they could envision what strategies to employ. Smith (1998) also points out, "the teacher’s role is to ask questions that help children discover their own strategies" (p.20). As such, the students and I concluded through discussion that drawing with visual references could include, but is not limited to: traditional rendering, hybrid drawings through combining observation, imagination drawing, narrative, tracing, enlarging photographs on a projector, arranging different combinations of pictures through collage, and layering drawing on top of the references (Gude, 2004). Again, we brainstormed about the different ways an artist might use visual references and after the discussion, students spent the rest of class finding and labeling references (Appendix P) that they could envision using to complete their project. Then we photocopied the references to manipulate throughout the rest of the project. Approaching our struggle with artist-teacher pedagogy expanded the possibilities for how to develop craft in my studio classroom for visual meaning making (Daichendt, 2010).

**Their vision not mine: Learning how to pull back**

I grew personally attached to the artistic vision I shared with my students and this made teaching pedagogy shaped by my artist practice difficult at times. I am passionate about my work and the work of others and while my intention is always to help students work hard to make art they have pride in, sometimes passion gets in the way. It was difficult to realize, but I needed to let go of my vision to then allow students space to develop concepts and images they have worked hard to envision. Unfortunately, at times I noticed that I tried to convince students of my aesthetic preferences, ideas, and vision and I realized I needed to listen better to my students. During the study I learned a great
deal about when to push in to help and when to pull away to let students work. This is similar to the "accordion method" that Pennisi (2013) describes as an active teaching method in which pulling back from the student when not needed is as important as pushing in to help (p. 135). At times, my perception of students’ work was that while their ideas were developing conceptually, I judged the solutions they chose for expression of those concepts as being poorly executed or technically unsophisticated. Sometimes, I boldly offered "suggestions" or "advice" that was unwelcome. This is evident in an encounter with Logan in which he was manipulating his newly found references. I began by asking,

Ms. S: Logan, why did you cut this all apart?

Logan: ‘Cause I wanted to.

Ms. S: Why?

Logan: ‘Cause I want to make it look all broken up and stuff...

Ms. S: Yeah, but you were gonna... how are you going to be able to draw from it if it is all messed up?

Logan: I don't know

At this point, Logan and I both take a deep breath and smile at each other. It is clear that we are both frustrated. Unfortunately, I continued offering advice to fix his work.

Ms. S: I was going to suggest to you that you cut this out, your figure...because look what you could do. You could trace this shape. You just have to trace it.

Logan: No, no, no...no...

Ms. S: Ok, you only want one horn?

Logan shakes his head, communicating to me that yes, he does want one horn and he wants to add it through collage rather than trace it on. Then I proceed with more critique.
Ms. S: oh? ok... the other thing is, (pointing to the mouth) this is a little hard to see. What is happening with this mouth?

Logan: I just want to use this as like a reference so I can see....

Here, Logan did not finish describing his plan because I cut him off.

Ms. S: This one is better. (Pointing to another reference) It is a lot better. I think that one of the things you need to do is that you need to cut this out and we need to get you working a little faster.

Logan: No, no. Seriously, I already know what I need to do.

Logan's responses were soft and confident, but he was advocating for himself and practicing assertion in a very respectful way. I on the other hand did not listen and continued to offer ideas about what he could do to change his work. In addition, Logan did not ask me for help. I made suggestions before understanding more about the concept he was developing. Pennisi (2013) states that habits such as this are typical of a teacher-centered model and that though students' may appear frustrated, they will develop understanding about how to work like an artist if advice is given only when students ask (p. 134). My vision was too strong, especially for students who are still learning to envision and execute their own concepts. Just as I have had time as an artist to form my own vision, students deserve the time to form theirs.

Though I did shape the work made during this unit due to the parameter I created, I tried as much as possible to make space for students' to create a vision of their own. Translating artist practice into pedagogy means that at times the best teaching practice is to pull away from students and give them time and space to make work even if that includes making mistakes or making something that appears unsophisticated in the eyes of an adult. Asking students to adapt their work to match the teacher's aesthetics is not the goal of artist-teacher pedagogy and asking students to fix their work is one aspect that
may lead to student apathy (Graham and Zwirn, 2010; Pennisi, 2013) toward art in school.

**Finishing Images**

I added workdays to the unit that I named finishing days. On finishing days, students had access to a variety of drawing material choices. The materials available included several varieties of paper, paint, colored pencils, oil pastels, markers, and glitter. After reviewing options with students and discussing some of the basic properties of the materials, throughout the year, I trusted students to be responsible with their choices. I taught material development and craft on an as-needed basis because each student was doing something slightly different. Demonstration lectures (Hetland et al., 2007) occurred in action as a whole group or in small groups and I supported students' material development through individual conversations (Graham and Zwirn, 2010). As well, the studio classroom transitioned (Appendix P) while developing concepts through image making. The atmosphere was a relaxed social climate buzzing with the sound of students at work that Hetland et al. (2007) describe as studio culture.

Major parts of the students' artworks were complete and yet, there were many choices left to make before the artworks were finished. During finishing days, I taught that concluding visual images requires students to determine the meaning of their character by what they decide to add through the material layering process. I guided students through the final cycles of problem reformulation (Walker, 2004) and conceptual development when I used questions to prompt students to consider the meaning of their characters. This is evident in the statement I made to students to motivate their finishing,

  Look at your character and ask your self this.... [pointing at unfinished artworks] What does this need to be finished? What will help you tell a story about this character? What kind of clothes does it have? Does the character wear clothes like
what you wear or does it have a whole other purpose that requires a different costume? Your drawing should be able to answer these kinds of questions when you look at it.

Just as Hetland et al. (2007) suggest artist-teachers do, rather than just telling students to think about it, I also used examples from the brainstorm chart and artwork made by several students who had begun to consider this on their own (Appendix P). I circulated during class to pose questions to students and engage in personal conversations that were unstructured encounters about artworks and the ideas students' were working to express through images (Graham & Zwirn; Hetland et al, 2007; Smith, 1983/1998). I encouraged students to layer meaning through materials by considering how color, patterns, textures, costume design, background, environment, symbols, and stories could all visually influence the meaning in their artwork. Gude (2008) writes about teaching meaning making and aesthetics and states that there are two different ways to consider making meaning as curricular goals.

one is to engage and understand artworks through active interpretation; a second is to act as an artist creating works from which the artist and others draw meaning, pleasure, and purpose. Meaning making is the ability to engage and entertain ideas and images; it is the ability to make use of images and ideas to re-imagine one's life experiences. Knowledge from the discipline of aesthetics supports both the interpreter, and the maker in making nuanced observations of form, imagery, metaphors, antecedent practices, related concepts, and social and political implications as well as in utilizing various strategies to construct and develop artworks. (p.98)

Just as Gude (2008) suggests, on both accounts, the students and I actively interpreted artworks to find meaningful ideas and then we acted as artists by developing and translating concepts into visual images of meaning and purpose. Students worked at finishing the images for a couple of days before transitioning to the third stage of
cognitive process in which students interpret emergent understandings through reflecting upon the finished artworks.

**Interpreting Emerging Understanding in the Studio Classroom**

Interpreting emerging understanding is a cognitive process that develops the artistic habit, reflective thinking, and inquiry. For some participants interpreting emerging understandings appeared to happen effortlessly because just like Barrett (2003), they believed artworks embodied meaning. Others had to work harder to understand their artworks and as such, needed guidance. Structuring reflection was important for guiding students through this process. Within this section, I share an example of how I structured reflection as well as how meaning emerged from a student's artwork as we engaged in dialogue to practice interpretation in the studio classroom. Other written examples are available in the Appendices sections O-R.

**Believing in meaning**

Interpreting emerging understanding is a stage in art process based on the artist's belief that artworks are about something and as Barrett (2003) states, when you interpret, "you present your understanding of the work" (p. 159). As such, the images students create are instructional tools used for learning when the teacher schedules time for reflection and interpretation following completion of the artwork (Hetland et al., 2007; Smith, 1998; Stewart & Walker, 2005). Using experience from my own art process and knowledge of best practices regarding reflection, I planned time for students to reflect on their completed artworks to interpret emerging understanding (Daichendt, 2010). I also assumed that my students believed their art was meaningful. However, I learned from my students that not all people share this assumption and that believing in meaning is a topic that requires dialogue. My sixth grade participants believed in meaning, but my fifth
grade participants were not as clear on this point initially. The dialogue below demonstrates the need for clarification when I introduced spending time on reflection to my students,

Ms. S: I want to prepare you for what is coming. Next week, when you are finishing you are all going to begin writing about what this character means to you.

Jordan: What? This character means nothing to me!

Evan: Jordan, that is not how you are supposed to be thinking.

Tabitha: Yeah, you don't have to admit stuff like that.

Megan: Yeah, Shhh, don't let her know that.

Brianna: Shhh, She was still talking while you just cut her off!

Ms. S: So, wait a minute. When did that happen to you with the projects? I can tell you are holding something back. Why are you saying it means nothing?

Brianna: So, now if it means nothing you are all going to have to come up with something that it does mean.

Ms. S: Well, maybe not. No, but if it really does mean nothing then you have to write about it...

During the exchange, I felt perplexed and worried that at some point, students lost belief in the project. At first, I judged the whole exchange negatively. I wondered if I was just being sensitive, I felt foolish to have made the assumption, and I made the mistake of taking it personally. I questioned, if the work had no meaning to the maker, then did that mean they had no ownership over the character? Again, I wondered how their characters could have no meaning to them because I could see the meaning and imagined interesting narratives and metaphors in response to their work.
Finally, after much reflection, I concluded that students have not practiced looking at images they make as having meaning, intended, or not. Smith (1983) points out that, especially for preadolescents whose increased capacity for complex thought is something adults can observe in students' artworks, initially students are not as clear about the meaning they have created. For this reason, guided reflections are crucial to help students become aware of the meanings that emerge from their artworks and the strategies they used to create them. In addition, while I did not want to force anyone, we were there to learn about how artists work and a good portion of artists are certain their work is about something. Therefore, we pursued meaning.

In order to stimulate students’ imaginations and elicit the same kinds of reflective thought I engaged in to interpret my art work, I created a reflection sheet (Appendix Q) that included questions to guide students through this process (Daichendt, 2010). For instance, I used the reflection sheet to pose the possibility that students’ characters came to life. Imagining this scenario, I directed students to create stories that more fully described each of their character’s life and purpose. Through this creative act, I translated my artist process to structure the transition (Daichendt, 2010; Smith, 1983/1998) that enabled students to reflect on understanding that emerged through their stories. Thus, students interpreted their work, and engaged in reflective conversations with one another and me as they wrote.

Understanding Emerges

Jordan was in the midst of finishing his artwork and was aware of the reflection assignment to come. Jordan was staring at the line drawing he created by tracing a photograph of himself (Appendix O-II). Stark white space surrounded Jordan's character
drawn with dark black lines and the figure was the focal point of the image. Appearing at first to be bothered, with hands clasped on his head, Jordan stated, "I think I am finished but, I still don't know what it means." I thought it was not finished because he created such a powerful figure with a strong gesture and yet, the story was absent from the image. I believed there had to be more. However, since I had learned that there were times to back off, I carefully engaged Jordan in conversation (Graham & Zwirn, 2010; Hetland et al., 2007; Smith 1983/1998), but waited for him to come to this conclusion on his own. I asked, "Well what is wrong?" The conversation continued Jordan: I don't think there is anything wrong, I just don't feel like I am complete with it yet and I just don't know what else to add.

Ms. S: One of the things you were really talking about in the past was......

Eric: The horse...

Jordan: Yes, that is it. I want a little tiny Pegasus.

Ms. S: Wait, wait you were talking a lot about wings. You wanted the demi-god to have dragon wings.

Jordan: No, I don't want wings.

Ms. S: Why don't you want it to have wings?

Jordan: Because it looks stupid.

Ms. S: What if I help you draw them with pencil so that they won't look stupid?

I mentioned this because, I remembered in the past that Jordan went through a phase were he really wanted wings. I also knew that Jordan had a tendency to make decisions not to add something he really wants because of the way he judges his drawing skills rather harshly, so I just wanted to be thorough at understanding his choice. Jordan responded,
Jordan: no, no, no!

Eric: Wings Jordan? I don't know about a Demi-god with wings.

Again, with hands on his head, Jordan looked at the picture intensely and appeared to have been pushed by the discussion that Eric, Jordan's friend, Jordan, and I had about wings. Talking with his hands, Jordan firmly states,

The whole thing, I think it should be... my whole... my picture is telling me....well... more about freedom! So, he doesn't need wings to help him. He can do by itself.

Ms. S: OK!

Jordan: He's a lone rider, all alone, and he can do anything he wants to do!

Ms. S: Oh. And that is what you want for yourself isn't it!

Jordan: Yeah!

Ms. S: Ok. Will you please just write that down because that is fantastic and that is your reflection right there.

With a meaning discussed, Jordan was able to find the forms that he could use to express his idea. Through the guidance of this conversation and feedback from his classmate (Hetland et al., 2007; Smith 1983/1998; Stewart &Walker, 2005), Jordan was able to interpret the emergent understanding in his artwork. Jordan worked in a focused manner, attending to his work by adding the rest of the symbols and finishing details to express the concept he developed (Appendix O-II). Emery describes that a child's belief in art process is present when,

the child showed such qualities as curiosity, interest, and a commitment to search for forms and to arouse association which could be used expressively. When the child showed belief in the artistic process, she also focused on the task and attended closely to the work at hand. When a child's total attention is engaged in this working process, the child believes in the process and thus the product has personal value. (1989, p.247-48)
As for my concern that students lost ownership of their work and belief in the process, I learned from this encounter with Jordan that ownership was present. Previously, Jordan claimed his work had no meaning. However, Jordan and other students were just not as clear or practiced at interpreting meaning due to their developmental level (Smith, 1983/1998).

Conclusion

The three stages of finding ideas, developing concepts, and interpreting emerging understanding that I implemented in the studio classroom are not a formula for artmaking. Rather, sharing the experience of implementing artist-teacher pedagogy in my classroom is like a map that contains useful strategies to help other teachers develop, study, and translate their art process for learning in their classroom. Essential to approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy is that first, teachers reflect on artist practice in order to understand what kind of artmaking and thought processes they value and hope to teach. Second is the belief that an art teachers' presence in the studio classroom is to structure learning to help students' make art as artists do. After studying my art process I learned it is essential for artist-teachers to share and have dialogue about artwork that contains "enduring ideas" (Stewart & Walker, 2005) within a hospitable environment (Graham, 2012; Graham and Zwirn, 2010) in which students can practice actively engaging in finding ideas. Next, it is important for artist-teachers to implement strategies designed to help students transition to envision their ideas and engage in rigorous practice with developing concepts for image making. Finally, an artist-teacher should structure reflection on completed artworks to help students interpret emerging understanding from their artworks. Structuring interpretation is a crucial aspect of artist-
teacher pedagogy because it develops students' awareness of the process and strategies they employ to create artwork. As such, students learn strategies they can choose to embrace to make art like artists do.
Chapter 6

Implications

Over a year ago, I set out on a journey to learn how to translate my artist practice into teaching practice. I understood teaching strategies at a theoretical level, but lacked practice with how to apply strategies in the classroom based on artist practice. Approaching teaching with artist-teacher philosophy as a framework was the solution for this problem because it helped me understand how to use my art practice as a resource for teaching. As such, I sought to clarify confusion about the pedagogy of artist-teachers by studying how my art practice influenced the way I taught in a K-8 public school setting.

Arts-based research is the methodology I used to conduct a multi-site case study that I completed in two phases. I first investigated my artist practice and then studied how I translated what I learned from my art practice into the elementary art classroom. McNiff (2008) points out,

> When difficulties in human experience become deeply lodged within individuals and groups, this is usually a sign that we are stuck in our ways of dealing with them. A shift in methodology can bring tremendous insight and relief. (p. 33)

Arts-based research helped me to gain awareness of the cognitive process I use to make art and this was what enabled me to fuse art practice with teaching practice at the theoretical and practical level. This fusion resulted in a fundamental change in the way my students and I perceived art making.

My findings indicate that artist-teachers approach teaching as a reflective process and translate artist practice through conversational pedagogy. Approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy redefines art making as a cognitive process; as such, conceptions of developing craft in art are expanded through postmodern art practices. For art teachers who teach in K-12 public school institutions this study will highlight the need...
to increase awareness of artist practice because not only does it challenge deeply held assumptions and perceptions of art making, but it also builds confidence regarding art practice and teaching practice. Further, what art teachers in K-12 public schools, teacher trainers, and possibly general education teachers can gain from this study is that every teacher who practices an art form can use art practice as a resource for improving the quality, depth, and meaning of instruction (Daichendt, 2010; Hetland et al., 2007; Stewart & Walker, 2005). This paper provides an introduction for how to use arts-based research to understand art process, offers helpful strategies for how to translate artist practice into teaching practice in a K-8 public school, and provides a model for how to overcome potential issues that emerge because of implementing artist-teacher practice.

**Artist-Teacher: A Reflective Approach**

I view teaching as an art that can be approached the same way art is made.

Daichendt (2010) states that a characteristic of artist-teacher philosophy is that teaching is an aesthetic process in which artist-teachers manipulate classroom techniques, materials, and characteristics similar to the artist's manipulation of the elements and principles of design (p. 147). The way I approached artmaking during the study required rigorous reflection upon problems in which I solved through the artmaking process I have described. Each time I encountered problems in the classroom, I responded to the teaching problem as I would to an art problem, through reflective thinking. For instance, the first significant teaching problem I encountered was how to help students engage in dialogue about art to find ideas and build a knowledge base. Visual planning is a reflective strategy that revealed how my teaching approach mirrors my artist process. Drawing diagrams of lessons in my sketchbook (Appendix J-I) is a reflective process used to envision choreography of movements, transitions, and instruction. Just as visual
planning in my sketchbook helped me to realize my artworks, visual planning of activities and knowledge creation in my classroom enabled me to realize my lesson plans. Additionally, through this study, I have cultivated teaching dispositions that characterize responsive practices such as working, constructing, sensitively interacting, adapting, stretching, exploring and changing images, and ideas along the way (Emery, 1989; Gude, 2007; Hetland et al, 2007). I demonstrated a reflective approach to teaching through the ways I remained open and responsive to students and their emerging concepts. As such, reflective thinking is a conceptually aesthetic process that sits at the core of artist-teacher philosophy.

**Artist Practice Translated through Conversational Pedagogy**

During the study, I practiced conversational pedagogy to cultivate a hospitable environment that supported studio culture. As Graham (2012) states, "hospitality creates possibilities for conversations among students and teachers"(p. 8). Conversational pedagogy allows artist-teachers to embrace several different types of talking between students and teachers to achieve instructional objectives. Formal, informal, motivational, reflective, interpretive, thematic, and encouraging conversations are some examples. Conversations are a means to translate art concepts and model cognitive processes used to make art. Discussions are also tools used to overcome struggles encountered through the art making process. Artist-teacher pedagogy uses dialogue to stimulate divergent thinking, collaboration, and problem solving with a social climate.

Other times during the study, conversations were informal and individualized. Discussions that appeared to sit outside of our curricular focus were useful for building rapport. Personalized conversations offered insight into student life, which enabled me to
build artistic concepts upon students' experience and provided opportunity to teach students how to infuse their artwork with experience from their life. By actively listening and participating in conversations with students in a hospitable environment, solutions for struggles of my own, including assumptions about art making, and finding the right instructional strategies to guide students often emerged. As such, through conversational pedagogy, the student-teacher relationship switched, and at times, the students became my teachers. In moments like this, students and I were like partners in learning, similar to Freire's (1970) description of "mutual humanization." Through conversations, we all had something to teach and something to learn.

**Artist-Teacher Expands Artmaking through Postmodern Practice**

Approaching my classroom with artist-teacher philosophy redefined artmaking as a cognitive process. This finding emerged because of using arts-based research, a method of study in which the focus is on cognitive process used in art to build knowledge and change perception (Marshall, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). Additionally, using the enduring idea "Exploring Artistic Inspiration" was a major conceptual factor (Stewart & Walker, 2005) that shaped our inquiry to focus on artist's cognitive processes as a way to understand artmaking. Redefining art as a cognitive process expanded what art making includes. For instance, implementing process work such as looking at art to find ideas, discuss art works, develop ideas into concepts, reflective writing, and manipulating materials are all included as artmaking. By engaging in process work such as this, my students and I actively challenged our assumptions about the types of activities artists engage in, therefore expanding the activities we engaged in within the walls of the art room.
Further, for both my students and I, redefining artmaking as a cognitive process expanded the concept *developing craft* (Hetland et al., 2007) to include manipulating ideas as a craft of postmodern artist practice. By expanding, develop craft I also embraced non-traditional contemporary drawing practices. Expanding craft to prioritize developing concepts in artworks occurred any time a participant permitted the use of any tool or material necessary to express an idea that focused on content. While, developing traditional notions of craft is useful, expanding perceptions of how students can approach developing craft with materials and ideas is more useful. For example, when my students and I developed concepts through image making, postmodern drawing practices expanded student choice further to include layering a hybrid of concepts, images, and materials (Gude, 2004). Further, expanding how students approach the development of craft is more useful for students in public school who may decide not to pursue higher levels of art education in high school or a career in the arts. Freedman (2003) points out this issue that many students in public school face when she writes that,

> The pervading belief is that students cannot express their ideas until they have learned formal and technical skills. The problem with this argument is that most students will not be professional artists and will never get the advanced high school art courses in which ideas are focused upon. Junior high or middle school art will be the last formal art education for many of those students, and they will leave high school thinking that art is just a matter of talent or formal and technical training (p.41).

This argument for using artist-teacher philosophy as an approach to expand the development of craft is not meant to challenge those students who want to pursue higher levels of art education, but it is meant to support and teach those that don't. Translating my artist practice in the classroom expanded our perceptions of what art making includes, thus reconceptualizing art making as an intellectual pursuit.
Recommendations for Further Research

This research raised other possibilities for future research. The inquiries below may provide further insight into the complexities of artist-teacher philosophy:

School Environment

In what ways might the environment of one's school impact how an artist-teacher works? Within my school community, I did not experience opposition from administrators, teachers, or parents regarding the implementation of artist-teacher philosophy. However, the exact reasons why were not investigated in this study. For instance, does the administration and school community support teaching and learning that is process based like artist-teacher philosophy? Does the artist-teacher have full trust from their administration to use their expertise to implement quality arts curriculum, or is the artist-teachers autonomy a result of the view that art is a lower priority of concern due to the myriad of administrative responsibilities and academic programming required within the school landscape? Further research regarding the artist-teacher and her relationship to the broader school environment is needed to understand these important questions better.

Arts Integration

How can artist-teacher philosophy inform research in the area of arts integration? For example, research on The Reading and Writing Project (Calkins, 2003) reveals that writing is also a creative practice structured by cognitive processes, and seems to share considerable overlap with the instructional strategies I used to teach art making. As such, I suggest that further research is needed to understand what happens if teachers work together to align those processes to meet evolving objectives in both.
Leadership

How might artist-teacher philosophy affect leadership in the broader school community? Artist-teacher philosophy enhances the artist-teachers professional expertise regarding teaching art making. This is particularly important for art teachers working in K-12 art institutions because, as Freedman (2011) writes, an area of leadership in art education calls for art teachers to employ the power of their expertise. Freedman (2011) goes on to explain that school communities and administrators, even the ones who support the arts, "tend to be unaware of the larger aims and goals of art education and know little of what is actually learned through the study of the visual arts (p. 44). However, many of the arts professionals referred to in this paper have been doing the work of studying artists because overall, art teachers lack sufficient awareness of art practice (Walker, 2004). If art teachers lack sufficient understanding of art making activities then it is difficult to employ the power of their expertise as Freedman (2011) suggests.

Not only do those I have mentioned lack awareness, but also, as Sullivan (2006) points out, artist process is an activity "less well studied from the perspective of the artist." Sullivan (2006) goes on to state that,

As an "insider" the artist has most been content to remain a silent participant, even if the inquiring eye of interested others has given plenty of insight into artistic experiences and activities." (p. 26)

This issue is connected to leadership in art education because, as Sullivan (2006) concludes, "Perceptions about artistic practice are therefore shaped as much by what others say as artists themselves readily mythologize it" (p. 27). Artist-teacher philosophy fuses artist and teacher into an approach that improves the quality and depth of art
education and enables artist-teachers to make their artist processes transparent and can therefore demystify the activities of artists for school communities, administrators, and society. As such, artist-teacher philosophy may have a significant impact on leadership in art education.

**Artist Practice in Teacher Education Programs**

In what ways might artist teacher philosophy influence arts-based research and artist practice in teacher education programs? Findings of this study are particularly significant for art teacher education because artist practice has provided me with an improved ability to translate artistic theoretical premises for application in teaching practice. Since students in teacher training programs may not have had the opportunity to study artist practice and translate artist process for learning in the classroom as I did, I would suggest that more research in this area as well as opportunity be afforded to pre-service teachers to experience artist-teacher philosophy within teacher training programs.

The narrative within this thesis illustrates just one version of how teachers might approach their classrooms using artist-teacher philosophy as the framework. Approaches that other artist-teachers enact may have revealed very different stories. The focus of this paper is my artist practice and how my teaching changed through approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy. Through analyzing data differently, other stories existing alongside the narrative I presented include how students and I used art production as a form of research to investigate the formation of identity (Freedman, 2003; Gude, 2007). I may have also provided a narrative of the ways that artist-teacher philosophy affect democratic practices in the elementary classroom (Schultz, 2003) as well as how this philosophy contributes to developing youth assets(Weiner, 2006) with
the context of art education. While other narratives simultaneously existed, my choice to
highlight the study from the perspective of the artist-teacher filled a void in the literature
and provided a model for other art teachers to use in their classrooms.

Conclusion
Artist-teacher philosophy is a viable approach for those interested in fusing artist practice
and teaching practice at the theoretical and practical level. My investigation of
approaching the elementary classroom using my artist practice as a resource for teaching
revealed characteristics of what teaching practice grounded by artist practice might look
like in a K-8 public school setting. My findings indicate the importance of art teachers'
belief that their presence in public schools is to help students make art as artists do, and
as such their engagement in and awareness of artist practice is a crucial first step for
approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy as a framework. Further,
approaching the classroom with artist-teacher philosophy revealed findings that this
framework for teaching is an aesthetic process and that artist-teachers' ability to translate
cognitive art process and art learning concepts through conversational pedagogy is
important. Other findings indicate that artist-teacher philosophy redefines artmaking as a
cognitive process and as such expands conceptions of developing craft in art to include
concept development as a craft of art. Therefore, artist practice is based upon cognitive
process and knowledge creation rather than on personal opinion (Freedman, 2003), thus
making the creation of art an intellectual pursuit. Approaching teaching with artist-
teacher philosophy "troubles" (Freedman, 2003) older paradigms in which the artist was
removed from teaching practice (Daichendt (2010) as well as initiates artists and art
teachers in a process of demystification regarding artist practice and art teaching.
Embracing artist-teacher philosophy provides a new path that reinvigorates teachers wishing to lead a paradigm shift in the area of art education
References


Graham, M. (2012). Teaching conversations, contemporary art, and Figure Drawing. *Art Education, 65*(3), 6-11


Appendix A: Parent/ Guardian Permission Form

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing this letter to ask your permission for your child to be part of a special art study this coming school year. As part of my Masters project in Art Education at Buffalo State College, I will be collecting data in order to better understand, analyze and make recommendations about how elementary practitioners of the artist-teacher philosophy teach and make artwork with young students in a public school setting.

I am a teacher and artist and the goal of my research is to investigate, “How might I implement artist-teacher philosophy in my own classroom and how might practicing artist-teacher philosophy guide students to create their own work as artists do?” The material I collect will include notes from class observation, artworks, sketches, photographs, and transcripts from audio recordings of class sessions.

All data that is collected throughout this study is for educational purposes and will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used throughout this study to protect your child’s privacy. Your child has the right to withdraw from this study at any time, though they will continue to participate in normal art room activities. I appreciate your time and willingness to help me in my professional development. Thank you very much for helping me make this project possible. If you have any questions or concerns about this study please contact me. I will be very happy to explain in more detail what I am doing.

Please sign your name below, to give permission for the following:

- I do give permission for my child to participate in this study.
- I give permission for any images involved in the making of my child’s artwork and class work to be photographed for purposes of documenting and backing up observation of this research project.
- I give permission for my child to participate in audio recordings used to document conversations, interactions and ideas as they arise during art class.
- I give permission for my child to be interviewed about their experience with art making in the classroom.

Please print, sign and date the line below.

Student Name (Print)  

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)  

Parent/Guardian Name (Sign)  

Date  

Sincerely,
Ashley Smith
Appendix B: School Permission Form

Dear Principal,

I am writing this letter to ask your permission for our students to be a part of a special art study this coming school year. As part of my Masters project in Art Education at Buffalo State College, I would like to implement the artist-teacher philosophy in some of my classes this year.

The goal of my research is to investigate, “How might the implementation of artist-teacher philosophy guide students to create their own work as artists do?” Our students will have the opportunity to engage in authentic artistic practices within a studio culture environment that promotes artistic thinking and behaviors. Students will explore materials, art techniques and ideas while learning about how artists work.

Pseudonyms will be used throughout the study to protect our student’s privacy. Students have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, though they will continue to take part in normal art room activities. Everything created for this research project is for educational purposes and will be kept confidential. I appreciate your time and willingness to help me in my professional development.

☐ I give permission for you to conduct the research study with our students

☐ I DO NOT want our students to participate in this research project

Please print, sign and date the line below.

Principal Signature _____________________________________________

Date ____________________________

Sincerely,

Ashley Smith
Appendix C: Sculpture Studio

Sculptures and installations made prior to the study

Sculptures in progress, image flooding in the basement studio space, and visual plans for sculptures
Appendix D: Third Floor Studio Space

Bay window nook during finding ideas stage

Work table, morning pages in my notebook, and preparing to work on preliminary sketches in my sketchbook
Appendix E: Drawings developed

Groupings of drawn plans in progress in both studio spaces

Optimistic Dragon Fly Warrior

Shadow Dragon Destroyer  Glow Heart Magician  Earth Sitter  Warrior
Appendix F: Glow Heart Magician

Conceptual plan for Glow Heart Magician's sculptural costume and environment
Appendix G: Finding Ideas

Below: Conceptual Grouping of Visual References used to make Glow Heart Magician

Unknown Fiber Artist

Iron Man

Sound suits made by the artist Nick Cave

Couture Fashion Image (designer unknown)

Egyptian Goddess Isis
Appendix H: Studio Environment (Developing concepts)

Physical transformation of studio environment

Image flooding, hanging conceptual groupings of reference material

Developing Earth Sitter
Appendix H-I: Developing Concepts

Developing concepts by making several preliminary sketches in the sketchbook

Photoshop is a contemporary drawing tool that allows me to adapt found images for drawing

Figure 1-7 shows the stages of my drawing process and the way I layer meaning and form using collage
Appendix H-II: Interpreting Emerging Understanding

Character Description and Final Reflection in sketchbook on Glow Heart Magician

Juxtaposition of Iron Man Reference and Glow Heart Lamp Magician

Juxtaposition of Isis reference to the couture fashion reference used to create the Glow Heart Magician
Appendix I: Studio Classroom Environment

View of classroom from the doorway of my studio classroom

View of the visuals board, tables, and sink area

Building material, supply storage and art journal bookshelves
Appendix J: Curriculum Design

Curriculum design using enduring idea, key concepts, and essential questions (Stewart & Walker, 2005)
Appendix J-I: Visual Planning

Figure 1-2 illustrate drawn lesson plans that I used to envision ways to implement dialogue for finding ideas

Teacher Prototypes created as part of the visual planning process
Appendix K: Visual Conceptual Parameter

Conceptual Grouping of Visual Culture used to set the parameter for exploring the key concept looking inward
Appendix L: Resources for Small Group Dialogue

The images and essential questions are the contents of a folder used by students for finding ideas to build their knowledge.

Student written responses to the contents of the Greek Folder above
Appendix M: Group Brainstorm Chart

Students in both 5th and 6th grades created the chart above after small group discussion and during whole group brainstorming and discussions. The Chart represents the ideas discussed during the idea finding stage of art making.
Appendix N: Animal/Human Characteristic Worksheet

Name: ____________________________________________________________________________________________

**Directions:** Read each section carefully and complete the sections/s that will help you develop and clarify an idea for your artwork. List the characteristics and answer the question completely and carefully.

1. List characteristics and qualities that you feel describe you. What animal/s might you pick to help describe this aspect of yourself?

2. List characteristics and qualities that you feel you are seeking. What animal/s will help you represent these characteristics you wish to take on?

3. List fears you might like to overcome. What animals might help you to overcome this?

4. List characteristics of another person or event that you may want to memorialize. What animal/s might you use to create a memorial for the event or person
Appendix N-I: Student Samples of Characteristic Worksheets

Logan's Characteristic Worksheet

Eric's Characteristic Worksheet

Katie's Characteristic Worksheet

Rose's Characteristic Worksheet
Appendix O: Rose's Process work

Characteristic worksheet, references, sketching ideas and planning materials

Developing Concepts by layering meaning through form

Ms. S: So, we left off talking last time and we were trying to think back to the beginning about the idea of the panda paw.

Rose: Well, like the hands can symbolize both being vulnerable and strong. They can symbolize peace and stuff cause you can hold hands and humans and koalas can do this. They are koala paws and I think Koalas are associated with peace and they climb so they are strong.

Ms. S: hmmm. And the panda head would symbolize what?

Rose: Well, Both Koala and Panda are strong animals and the panda is aggressive and yet they are endangered. So they are both strong and weak. The wings I guess are there to like say you can believe in yourself cause you can like I don't know, like (she smiles) rise up and be strong even though your vulnerable and you can do different things.

Ms. S: Oh, I get it. It is a character that honors the strength and weakness of living, but is at peace with having both qualities. It is a really wonderful character and a beautiful idea. Your going to have to write that out when your finished.

Rose: mmhm

Panda Girl
Once there was an average girl. This girl was endangered, bullied, teased. Then one day she was granted the strength and weakness of hands to show she was strong but only human, everyone can break. She got wings to fly away. Away from the bad and to appreciate the good. She moved on. They were worn and torn to tell what she has been through. The girl was panda girl.

Reflective dialogue between Rose and me and the creative story she wrote during the integration stage.
Appendix O-I: Katie's Process Work

Characteristic worksheet, references, and theatrical posing are part of process work to develop idea.

Developing concepts by layering meaning through form using several drawing strategies

**Chapter 1** - Juliet was taken from her homeland and brought to a new land by animal trappers. Juliet was in their house and started fluttering about. There was paint on the shelf and a paint pallet with fresh paint. She slid through it making her legs rainbow! Then she escaped through the back door. Through her eyes she saw a beautiful land with millions of flowers and glittery wind blowing.

**Chapter 2** - Juliet decided to soar through. I saw Juliet soaring and loved her gracefulness. She flew so beautifully. My dream was to fly and when I saw Juliet flying I felt like I was flying.

**Chapter 3** - Juliet came over and stood on a small tree by me. She could understand me and I could understand her. She said, “In my original land I will have unthinkable powers.” She told me that the only way she could reveal her true powers were if she was brought to her homeland. “Will you take me there in the wind?” she asked. I couldn’t help but take her there. So we got a boat and we were off. It took about three days and one magical journey to get there.

**Chapter 4** - We came up to a beautiful beach with rainbow sand and hard candy rocks. She, right away started showing me her powers. There was a wounded deer and she flew in a circle around it. There was a rainbow trailing behind her. Somehow when she landed the deer was fine, running and scampering like nothing had happened. Juliet was amazing. Then Juliet saw a squirrel falling from a tree and she swooped to its rescue just in time.

**Chapter 5** - In two days it was time for me to leave. I had to let Juliet go. I didn't want to but it was the best thing for Juliet. So we said Goodbye and I left.

Creative writing and a written reflection created by Katie after completing her artwork.
Appendix O-II: Jordan’s process work

Jordan finds meaning by engaging in theatrical posing to create a reference to work from for his artwork.

Sketches made by Jordan where he combined tracing and rendering strategies to prepare for his final artwork.

Jordan’s finished work
Appendix O-III: Megan's Process Work

Developing concepts by layering meaning through form using several drawing strategies

Megan's Reflection: Searching for Purpose
Megan: I don't want to write a story!
Ms. S: Yes. You need to because these characters, you have brought them into this world and whether they mean something new or if they mean what you intended when you began, these have meaning now and they are about something.
Megan: This doesn't have any meaning and it is like such a mistake!
Ms. S: Look at the character. It is ok......
Megan: It all happened by mistake.
Ms. S: It is ok because now that it is a mistake that happened... (I was about to tell her to write about a mistake and then...)
Katie: You can write about a mistake (she finished my sentence)
Megan: with A mistake life
Ms. S: A Mistake Life! And how this character is (Hugh smile)
Megan: Yes. A mistake life and how he is struggling to not make a mistake and find his purpose.
Ms. S: (I am silent here because I am blown away and excited about this thought after a pause) I say, “Sounds like an interesting story to me.”
Megan: yeah right!
Ms. S: I mean it, it does! Go! Write!
Ms. S: (I approached Megan while writing)This story, there is something really important in this (pointing at her reflection sheet) yes. If this (pointing at a question she answered) is what your character teaches you then you need to write about how your character learned this.
Megan: yeah

Above: Illustrates the recorder conversation that Megan and I have after she finishes her character and right before she fills out the character reflection sheet shown above. The dialogue and the reflection sheet was process work completed during the integration stage.
A Tigers Wings: The Carry on in Life (Draft one)
His name is Rejou. He lives in a cave away from all villages, hamlets, houses, cities, farms. He can't be seen. If he was, it could cause a disaster. Fire would drown water would burn mothers and fathers and kids, teachers, and workers could die! Scary. You have not heard it all. This is only the beginning. The beginning of a story, the story of Rejou. Rejou lived in her life of misery in the cold grey mountains of Cantere hills. She has no life and no friends. She doesn't know where she came from but she looks for a job to build a house and to make a living. So she goes to the first hamlet. "Give me a job!" Said Rejou to the Mayor of %&%^%& (that means Locksmith). "Why would I give a beast like you a job? You're hideous! I'll never make any money with you around! Shew! Go! Go to another hamlet! Another village! Not here!" So Rejou went to the next village. "Job! I want a job," said Rejou to the mayor of Buffalo. "A job? You seek a job. No! Never! People will never visit Buffalo with you around! Ugh! How dare you even ask!" To be continued......

A Tigers Wings: The Carry on in Life (Draft two)
Rejou lived in a cave away from all the hamlets and all the villages and houses. He wants people to know that he is no monster. In fact, he is a beautiful creature. The gods call him peacemaker even though he causes destruction. People say he is a bad tiger. People say he has now wings, but he did have wings indeed. He flied reader. I could not even say how beautiful his wings were. However, nobody knew because he would never show his wings.

So, one day he decided that people should know what he really is and what he really does. He went to the first hamlet. "People might you know what I am and what I do. I bring no harm!" but nobody listened. They ignored him and said nothing. So he moved to the next village. People it is time you know more about me! I bring no harm!" but the people laughed and called him a coward. So he went to the next set of houses. "Anyone please explain whey you have hate towards me!" but no one answered him. The poor tiger dragged his tail home trying to ask no one but himself why no one would like him or see who he really is. The tiger would be no one but himself and would never change but somehow he wished he could so badly! The tiger fell asleep not know what would come next.

It was twelve by the village clock when the sleep fairy made his way to the tiger's humble home. "Tiger? Why sleep sad when you may sleep happily?" asked the sleep fairy. He pulled out a special wand and flew it over the tiger. "No one! No one!" He dreamed. The tiger awakened and said the words in his head. "No one."

Something was bound to be done but what? The tiger tried on new clothes and makeup, but alas, nothing worked for the people. The tiger now knew that nothing was to be done. He figured that his place in life was here being a sad lonely tiger. And he walked away. The sad tiger was left to rot in his dark cave of kings.

Draft Three
There was a third draft that was same story in draft two, but the title read; My Character doesn’t have a Purpose

Drafts of the creative story that Megan created to describe her character
Appendix O-IV: Logan’s Process Work

Characteristic worksheet, references, and theatrical posing are part of process work to develop idea.

The references Logan selected during reference finding day

Developing concepts by layering meaning through form using several drawing strategies

Logan’s completed character reflection sheet
Appendix P: Students at Work

Students spent a day searching the art library for references to help develop their ideas through drawing.

Developing Craft and drawing strategies using references.

Students are finishing their work by thinking about purpose as they layer materials to form meaning in a collaborative studio workspace organized to promote discussion.
Appendix Q: Character Reflection Sheet

Name: 

Directions: Imagine that the character you created by making, a hybrid of human and animal characteristics really does exist and you can interact with it. Help me understand more about your character by answering the following questions. Use your imagination!

1. What does the character that you created do and where does it live? Create a short story that tells something important about your character. Use how your character looks to help you create this story.

2. How is the character you created like you and/or different from you? Does the character you created have a characteristic that you are seeking?

3. Describe why you chose to work with the animal(s) that make up the character you created?

4. What can you learn from the character that you created?

5. Now that the project is finished, please describe one thing you think you did well and one thing you would do differently
Appendix R: Interpreting Emerging Understanding in the Studio Classroom

Students are working independently on writing creative short stories and a written reflection. The studio classroom is set up for independent work.

Eve created a poem about her artwork and beginning work on the reflection sheet.