IMMERSIVE ART PEDAGOGY: (RE)CONNECTING ARTIST, RESEARCHER AND TEACHER

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD

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DECLARATION

I declare that:

a) except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone;

b) the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award;

c) the content of the project is the result of work carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program;

d) any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged;

e) ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Geraldine M. Burke

30 June 2013
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<td>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority</td>
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<td>ACMI</td>
<td>Australian Centre for the Moving Image</td>
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<td>CBAE</td>
<td>Community Based Art Education</td>
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<td>C/S &amp; S/C</td>
<td>Creating/Sustainability and Sustaining/Creativity</td>
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<td>DBAE</td>
<td>Discipline Based Art Education</td>
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<td>IAP</td>
<td>Immersive Art Pedagogy</td>
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<td>NGV</td>
<td>National Gallery of Victoria</td>
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<td>VCAE</td>
<td>Visual Culture Art Education</td>
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<td>Victorian Essential Learning Standards</td>
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**SUMMARY**

This study explores and describes Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP). What IAP entails, reveals, and contests is examined via three sites of investigation. This leads to an evolving model through which IAP and its ability to (re)connect artist, researcher and teacher was developed. The three sites are understood as creative worlds and each creative world enacts IAP through its contextually unique location.

Creative World 1 explores IAP within a community art context.

Creative World 2 investigates IAP through an art elective for pre-service educators.

Creative World 3 explores IAP through art making as an artist within multi-settings.

The study is presented as an Exegesis and an arts-based Project. The Exegesis contains written and visual text that describes each creative world’s contribution to the development of Immersive Art Pedagogy through the lens of artist/researcher/teacher. The Project is presented as a Photo Book where the evolving model for Immersive Art Pedagogy both inspires, and is informed by, the candidate’s artwork from Creative World 3, and by reflexive a/r/tographic responses to the process. The Project is informed by the practical and theoretical data and by the evolving model through which each creative world is reflexively analysed within the Exegesis. An outcome of the study is the evolving IAP model and the concept of Sustaining Creativity and Creating Sustainability through IAP.

**Terminology**

In this document, the following terms have been used to describe concepts that are integral to the Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) approach:

- **A/r/tography**: This refers to the interconnected roles of artist (a), researcher (r) and teacher (t) and also to the concurrent use of art (a/r/t) and text (graphy);
- **(Re)connecting, (re)thinking, (re)imagining** and other terms preceded by (re): The (re) notation refers to the notion of both connecting and reconnecting, thinking and rethinking, imagining and reimagining, and so on;
- **(S)p(l)ace**: This refers to the interrelationship of place and space;
- **(Y)our (s)p(l)ace**: This refers to the convergence of a group’s place (our place) and an individual’s place (your place) which results in a shared space (our space). For example, in this document the convergence of the Western academic process (our place) and the participants’ heritage (your place) during the art workshops resulted in an intercultural understanding (our space).
1. INTRODUCTION

While the scholar seeks, the artist finds. (Gidé, 1947, p. 243)

Teaching as a source of aesthetic experience, as dependent on the perception and control of qualities, as a heuristic or adventitious activity, and as seeking emergent ends… can be regarded as an art. (Eisner, 1979, p. 155)

1.1 Background to the Study

Art has provided me with a way to create, be and become in the world. Art empowers me to express silences, daydreams and lived experiences enabling a personal and social contribution to my environment. This empowerment, made possible through personal and immersive engagement with art, inspires the way I create and teach, and now research, and has led to the ongoing development of a way of teaching and learning that I call Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP).

Initially conceived as an intuitive response to the interplay of art practice and art teaching and learning, I have come to understand that this approach involves the in-between spaces of artist, researcher and teacher. This led me to explore the creative, critical, connecting and contextual attributes of IAP in the study, to identify what IAP entails, reveals and contests, and to consider how IAP can be employed as a methodological and practical source of inspiration within art practice, art pedagogy and research.

1.1.1 Immersive Art Pedagogy

Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) focuses on creative, personally meaningful and context-driven art practices. It builds a repertoire of creative confidence by encouraging and valuing participants’ expressive potential. By building an awareness of relational contexts, it sustains the creative process across places of engagement.

In the study IAP was positioned as both an ongoing process and a conceptual framework. As a process, IAP aimed to develop personally meaningful contexts, experiential, sensory and playful art experiences and to foster art skills, visual literacy, and aesthetic awareness. The process encourages material thinking (Barrett & Bolt, 2007) as a means to develop physical and conceptual outcomes. In the study, it offered participants a rich perspective which enabled them to create and go on creating using different entry points. The entry points were conceived as simultaneous concepts, not hierarchical concepts. In summary, IAP was used to (re)think art processes and material participation.
IAP links embodied arts-based experiences to creativity, pedagogy, art discipline and local knowledges. Although grounded in arts-based research (Barone, 2008; Eisner, 2008; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004), other theoretical informants also illuminate the process and the conceptual framework.

By interpreting and reinterpreting IAP as it developed across the three sites in this study, I explored the impact of creativity, critical, sociocultural and place-based theories on my arts-based practice. This led me to develop the 4-C analysis approach\(^1\), where creative, critical, connecting and contextual viewpoints are variously called upon to illuminate and interrogate experiential data. I drew upon Irwin and de Cosson’s (2004) a/r/tographic renderings to further illuminate openings and interpretations of the data and my roles within the research process.

This situated me as an interpretive bricoleur (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008) who responded to each place in process (Lai & Ball, 2002) and each changing context by using method as an emergent construction (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991). I pieced together "different tools, methods and techniques of representation and interpretation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, pp. 5-6) to arrive at a post-structural position. Although some may contest the mixed theory approach, it offered me multiple ways to engage with, and interpret, the data.

From the perspective of theorizing about creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996), IAP positions creativity as central to the learning experience and highlights the need to build a self-conscious awareness of our personal creativity that it is fed by, and feeds, societal creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996; Dewey, 1934) and pedagogical creativity (Eisner, 1979; Kindler, 2004b). In the study, IAP promoted creative connections between art discipline knowledge and participants’ interests and lived experiences. This enabled the emergence of simultaneous concepts (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005) and connections between the individual, the community and the culture. Developmental and discipline-based principles were assigned secondary importance.

From a critical perspective, IAP questions and reviews the relationship between power and knowledge within each context, encouraging awareness of the situation and place within which it is performed. Critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970; McLaren & Giroux, 1995; McLaren, 1998; Giroux, 1992; Giroux, 2004a; Kincheloe, 2008a) throws light on the ways “power relations; may be constituted, reproduced or resisted as part of the social” (Grierson, 2003, p. 102). By emphasising the relationship between personal expression and societal views, the artist and teacher standpoint can start to address topics or issues, enabling an interrogation

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\(^1\) My use of the term ‘4-C’ is necessarily different to that of the ‘4 C initiative’ which describes an approach to the use of multimedia in teaching [http://4cinitiative.com/?page_id=39]
of place, power, identity and notions of ‘voice’ and transformation (Giroux, 1992; Giroux, 2004a; Greene, 2001a).

IAP acknowledges the impact that place-based pedagogy has on learning and looks to Gruenwald’s (2003) notions of a critical pedagogy of place as a way to understand the ways that place impacts art experiences in revealing and contesting ways. IAP exposes the assets and problems of a given place in process (Lai & Ball, 2002) and the differences between other places in process. Thus a critical awareness of place, through reflexive investigation of the situated processes of IAP, was built through the artworks and narratives, providing another layer of meaning to the process/product of IAP and its influence on artist, researcher and teacher.

The work of artist/art educators who have taken up critical pedagogy within art contexts illuminates the way voice and power can be constructed through the arts for change, transformation, hope and resistance (Cary, 1998a; Darts, 2004; Darts, 2008; Grierson, 2003; Greene, 1995; Yokley, 1999; Sullivan, 2005a). Of particular significance is the work of Cary (1998a) in critical art pedagogy within postmodern contexts that offers insight into art as praxis whereby art instruction is “grounded in immediate human experience and value rather than abstracted as a sequence of design problems or co-opted by commercial interests” (p. 28). Along with Giroux (1992; 2004b), he advocates for a critical consciousness of relevance to the life world of students and teachers, this as a catalyst for hope and transformation rather than as a focus for a “discourse of despair” (Giroux, 2003, 2004a). Gablik’s (1992) work also informs this approach through her critical re-thinking of art contexts within postmodern times. She advocates a relational, social and ecological re-positioning of art as a means to counter the isolationist and disengaged aesthetic views of modernist art. Moreover, she suggests that the questions needed to be asked in our time are not to do with “style or content, but issues of social and environmental responsibility, and of multiculturalism, or “parallel” cultures, rather than a dominant monoculturalism” (p. 2).

From a sociocultural perspective (Rogoff, 1995, 1998,), IAP positions individual participants as part of a greater whole, where art making and art teaching are understood through personal, interpersonal, cultural, institutional and historical factors (Robbins; 2005, 2007) rather than through the individual as a separate unit. This perspective led me to further explore the relational aspects (Bourriaud, 2002) and the connecting aspects (Gablik, 1991; Springgay, 2008b); of art practice and pedagogy and how they impact on relationships between individuals, groups, culture, and society.

Place-based theories (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Lai & Ball, 2002; Tuan, 1977) illuminate the particularities of place in an IAP process. They influence the way that IAP develops as a tool by connecting place and community, and by exploring diversity within place and between
places (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). Through the lens of place-based theory, the making of environmental art in public spaces can connect environmental and local knowledge to relational concepts so that social, cultural, economic and political (Lai & Ball, 2002) aspects are revealed. Jokela (2008) states that art forms “part of the cultural practice in which landscapes and the values that they incorporate are produced and renewed” (p. 11). Other research work undertaken with colleagues inspired my views on place and space and helped share the study (Wattchow, Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2008).

The insights and openings garnered from IAP are revealed through the in-between spaces of artist, researcher and teacher (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Irwin & Springgay, 2008). By participating in IAP, I became a living inquirer (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) who actively theorized lived practice. As an embodied participant in this study, I continually questioned and re-developed IAP across each of the three places in which it grew. I tested its aims and intentions against each creative world to ascertain what it entails, reveals and contests. For instance, as IAP offered me a means to make personal and social contributions to the world, I also determined whether this same sense of empowerment was experienced by other research participants. Each creative world was designed to foster participants’ confidence in their expressive potential and to enable them to understand how empowerment impacted on their narratives and artwork.

As IAP developed within the creative worlds, I explored how it influenced the roles and in-between spaces of artist, researcher and teacher and how, in turn, these interstitial spaces fed the growth of IAP.

**Key Terms**

In this study three key terms, immersive, art and pedagogy are used. These are described below and discussed in more detail in the contextual review at Chapter 3.

**Immersive**: To be immersed implies that one is drawn, through deep interest and curiosity, into an embodied connection to the inquiry at hand. Burbules (2004) suggests four processes through which immersion occurs: interest; involvement; imagination; and interaction. In addition, I suggest that the immersed artist/researcher/teacher embraces a range of dispositions through which to revisit (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998) their learning to “(re)look, (re)think, (re)imagine and (re)create meanings” (Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2010, p. 312). By fusing together diverse experiences, the immersed artist/ researcher/ teacher becomes intimately connected to the content knowledge at hand (and often gains added insights). These processes and dispositions are explored in my examination of IAP. The term Immersive Art Pedagogy is specifically used to refer to the immersive approaches in which art practice, art teaching and learning are undertaken. This differs to the concept of
immersive art (Bartlem, 2005) where environments are created via virtual reality, internet art and digitally-created installations of an encompassing nature.

**Art**: I position art as a creative and sensory experience, expressed through material or conceptual form that has the potential to awaken us to future, imaginative and transformational possibilities (Greene, 2001a) rather than a means of revealing the already known or the predictable. Western art is an expansive, constantly changing concept that dynamically responds to the cultures from which it emerges (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996).

As an artist, I experience art as a means to express the space between interior and exterior worlds and as a tool to link the personal to the social and the cultural to the critical. As such, I position art as a relational activity (Bourriaud, 2002) that links people across space and time. I also position art as an embodied means through which to think through materials (Bolt, 2006), be they concrete or conceptual (Carter, 2004). Inspired by Grosz (2008a), I view art as “the process of making sensations live, of giving an autonomous life to expressive qualities and material forms and through them affecting and being affected by life in its other modalities” (p. 103).

**Pedagogy**: Pedagogy is generally understood as the science of teaching and learning. While I subscribe to the notion of Immersive Art Pedagogy, in the study I was not prescriptive in defining pedagogy. Instead, I aimed to encourage participants to develop their own emergent and creative endeavours. Influenced by Eisner’s work on the artistry of teaching (Eisner, 1996; Eisner, 2002c), I positioned pedagogy as “an aesthetic endeavour… [where judgments are based on the]… qualities that unfold during the course of action… [and where the]… unpredicted… [is harnessed so that]… the ends it achieves are often created in process… [This view of pedagogy acknowledges]… (a)rtistry in teaching as a pervasive concept… [which]… goes beyond routine, invites risks, courts challenge, and fosters growth” (Eisner, 1996, p. 18).

I therefore use the term pedagogy to refer to the two-way relationship and process between teacher and learner (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005; Malaguzzi, 1998b) as they explore knowledge content together. Each is dynamically in relationship to the other and reflects the role of the other. That is, the teacher influences the learner, the learner influences the teacher (in teaching and learning), and each influences the other’s conception of self. I also use the term pedagogy to encompass the roles of teacher, lecturer, community educator and of participants in my study (children, pre-service teachers and artists). It follows from my

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2 The Western art cannon is inclined to value innovation, the ‘isms’ and movements that develop across time and place. I acknowledge that this is a different aim to those countries and cultures where art tends towards the re-using and re-telling of traditional techniques and stories to keep a tradition alive.
conception of pedagogy, that the role of teacher/learner is greater than the sum of the two individual roles (that is, the teacher role plus the learner role).

1.1.2 Rationale for Developing and Researching Immersive Art Pedagogy

My fundamental objective for developing and researching Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) was to explore new ways of teaching and learning in art. In my experience as an art educator I have regularly visited primary schools and early childhood centres when supervising pre-service teachers. I have observed that art education (especially in primary schools) often fails to incorporate the simultaneous concept development (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005) of art discipline based learning and lived, meaningful, place-based, and immersive experiences. I have become concerned about the lack of complexity that school-based art experiences offer students. Art lessons are often disconnected from the students’ real life world. I have been particularly concerned to observe how art education is so often presented as a rarefied consideration; separate from lived experience.

In my view, art education has too often been reduced to exercise-driven lessons that do not have an innate connection to art practice, as is the case with many contemporary artists, who use their lived experience as the starting point for artwork. Instead, many schools use a type of school art (Efland, 1976) that “does not seem to be a pedagogical tool for teaching children about art in the world beyond the school” (p. 39). This sort of art is not derived from the life world of the child, nor from contemporary art practice (Jeffers, 1996), and does not encourage free expression. It has evolved from the institutionalized nature of the educational system. Predominantly school art reflects the teacher’s direction and influence, which, according to (Wilson, 1974) is inclined towards “game-like, conventional, ritualistic, and ruled-governed… [art practice which results in]… the proper expected look” (pp. 5-6). This view is supported by (Jeffers, 1996) when she says that “contemporary art and school art seem to arise in two distinct, parallel worlds. Although contemporary art frequently arises in a world of provocative ideas and theorizing, new processes and postmodern controversy, school art tends to arise in a more conservative world of familiar materials, routines, and rituals” (p. 21). Efland’s (1976) comments from almost forty years ago, still ring true today: “school art style tells us a lot more about schools and less about students and what's on their minds” (p. 43).

My position is that art teaching does not adequately reflect contemporary art practices and that art teachers could more overtly immerse themselves and their learners in developing artistic and pedagogical relationships that connect the sociocultural and place-based world of the learner and the teacher. In this way teaching could become more than skill-based in its orientation. The canons of art practice, the standard against which art is measured (Perry & Cunningham, 1999), are not sufficient to evaluate art. In fact, Cary (1998a) goes so far as to claim that the canons of art are oppressive, and more like an “exclusive archive” (p. 317) that
is rigidly adhered to within art education. I believe that other approaches that respond to lived place-based experiences should be used together with the canons of art.

For these reasons, in the study I set out to explore an alternative approach to art education, namely, the IAP approach. This entailed constructing art experiences that captivated, were meaningful to, and empowered participants and that connected to their life worlds. I did this by (re)connecting the inter-subjective and living spaces of artist, researcher and teacher.

My approach to IAP reflects that of Irwin and Chalmers (2007), after Pinar (2004), who advocate for a complicated conversation whereby “curriculum-as-lived… [and]… curriculum-as-plan” (p. 179) intersect. This conversation between “currere as the doing, being, making, creating and living qualities of learning experiences… [uses]… a student - or society-based perspective… [with]… a subject-based approach” (p. 179). This reflects my intentions for developing IAP in the study. Cary’s (1998a) views on the colonization of students’ art worlds offers further critical insight. He suggests that the hierarchical status given to the art cannon within traditional art education suppresses students’ real life experiences with art. He states that “Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) art instruction may, in fact, be so driven by archive-based expert judgments that school art activities - particularly in art criticism, art history, and aesthetics - dissolve into rote learning instead of discovering values, skills, and concepts through active, direct experience” (p. 319).

In contrast, IAP deliberately engages the sensual, emotional and cognitive aspects of art practice and learning, to re-invigorate the notion of embodied learning and lived experience as a core component of learning and teaching. Through IAP I wish to take a stand against the disembodied ways in which pre-service teacher curriculum has been increasingly delivered in recent times. My aim is to develop an approach to art practice and art pedagogy that positions knowledge as embodied (Merleau Ponty, 2002; Bresler, 2004; Springgay, 2008c; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005) and experiential (Dewey, 1934), rather than as knowledge separated from lived experience. In this way I can position, for example, my pre-service teachers as artists who theorize about their own practice to illuminate their artist, researcher and teacher identities. In so doing, they would experience an inter-connection between mind and body. As Bresler (2004) suggests “(t)he arts unlike the traditional academic areas, are an arena in which the body is central to the process of inquiry and constitutes a mode of knowing” (p. 9). This is a vital aspect of the immersive process. The interplay between the cognitive aspects of art content knowledge and the body as an enacting being is under-developed in art education. This concept is explored further in this study as understood through IAP, a/r/t/ography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008) and my multiple roles are artist, researcher and teacher. As educator, I am immersed in art. As artist, I am immersed in teaching. As researcher, I
communicate my findings gained through art practice and teaching. That is, each role informs the other.

The recent advent of a/r/tography as an arts-based methodology (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) has led to a range of research outcomes that explore the intersection of artist, researcher and teacher within art and text-based work (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006). This approach has not been widely adopted by art educators and researchers in Australia (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006).

An examination of the interplay between the roles of artist, researcher and teacher in my study provided a new way of viewing art pedagogy within an immersive framework. This was beneficial for art teaching, art learning and art practice. As my employment encompasses artists’, teachers’ and researchers’ work, my contribution to a/r/tographic contexts comes from a hybridized (Robson, 2002) position. That is, I am to speak from the vantage points of being a practicing artist, a teacher and researcher.

In this study I explored the impact of IAP on art practice by defining and interrogating the IAP methodology, its informing process and conceptual framework. I also explored its impact on the inter-subjective roles of artist, researcher and teacher through the renderings of a/r/tography to identify its merits, problems and excesses. In this way, I make a contribution to the art education/art practice nexus and generate new insights from my exploration of the inter-related roles of professional artist, researcher and teacher.

Although art teachers are often skilled in the discipline of art and generalist teachers are often skilled in exploring student focused learning, a bridge between these dispositions has not been adequately explored. The intersecting intentions of IAP and a/r/tography provide entry points for both the specialist art and generalist teacher.

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2007), the New Learning Contexts (Council of Deans of Education, 2001) and the Productive Pedagogies approaches (Queensland Department of Education, 2001-2003) to early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary art education were influential in designing my research. They encouraged an approach to curriculum that allows for transdisciplinary (Joseph & Harris-Hart, 2008) approaches to themes and issues. However, as it stands, VELS is not driven by arts-led practice and does not offer the perspective of artist, researcher, and teacher as central to meaningful inquiry. The Australian Curriculum has recently been introduced and advocates for learning across the arts in primary school, as well as transdisciplinary learning. However, there is a more limited choice of arts subjects in the early secondary years than was the case with VELS. It is my hope that the outcomes of this study will offer teachers immersive ways to work within the art/s and the transdisciplinary aspects of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012).
1.1.3 Research Questions

My three research questions summarise the objectives for the study. They led me to examine a range of contexts in which Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) is performed and evaluated.

With the intent of laying bare the fundamental aspects of IAP, I posed the following questions:

- What is Immersive Art Pedagogy? And following from this,
- What does Immersive Art Pedagogy reveal or contest?
- How does Immersive Art Pedagogy (re)connect artist, researcher and teacher?

Each question is examined further below.

**What is Immersive Art Pedagogy?**

To establish what constitutes IAP, in the study I developed a theoretical framework that informs IAP and tested this against the research data. The IAP model was then refined over several iterative phases.

The IAP model is presented so others can engage with it. However, it is envisaged as organic and will no doubt change as it is applied over time.

**What does Immersive Art Pedagogy Reveal or Contest?**

I view IAP as a practical and methodological source of inspiration across a range of learning contexts. I explore what type of knowledge is made possible through its enactment. In each of the three creative worlds, I documented the process of IAP as an evolving narrative and visual text and then analyzed this to reveal key themes, unique insights, questions and challenges. This allowed me to reflexively examine the ongoing impact of IAP on the actual physical place in which it was enacted. It also enabled me to explore the social, cultural and political context of each learning site as a place in progress (Lai & Ball, 2002). Through critical exploration of the visual and narrative data within each creative world, the process shed light on how place, movement, time and event impacted on IAP. It uncovered new concepts such as creativity/sustainability and our/your place/space that contest traditional views of art education and offer new possibilities for future art experiences.

**How does Immersive Art Pedagogy (Re)connect Artist, Researcher and Teacher?**

The concept of connection is a central theme to IAP. In the study, IAP connected participants to arts-based ways of knowing through immersion, creativity and personally meaningful and embodied expression. IAP was further developed through the living knowledge of participant artists and teachers by privileging practice-based research ahead of literature-based research. The connections that had been formed between artist, researcher and teacher enabled IAP to further evolve. These connections were communicated through art and text
In this study, as IAP developed across each creative world, it re-connected artist, researcher and teacher. The evolving model drew inspiration from what had already been learnt and responded in a dynamic way to new situations and contexts. The study explored the multiple roles that participants and I adopted to understand how IAP (re)considers and (re)connects art practice, theory and praxis. These roles were understood according to the place within which I was working and the inter-subjectivity between identities. I studied my own practice in three different situations and three different roles (artistic coordinator in a community setting, teacher educator in a university setting, and self as artist in multi-settings), and documented and reflected on how relational inquiry (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005) within the process of IAP, enables a means of being (Springgay, 2008d) and becoming (Irwin et al., 2006; Sameshima, 2007b) an interconnected artist/researcher/teacher.

By interrogating the interstitial space (Bhabha, 1994) between each of these identities as well as the meeting place (Hall, 1996) between (my) subjective life and the discourses that position my identities, I responded to the research questions. This included exploring the unique openings and challenges afforded by the interconnection, cross-fertilization and convergence of my roles.

Central to the notion of interstitial space, is the awareness that artist, researcher and teacher, are forever under construction and in a state of becoming (Irwin et al., 2006) and can influence, transform, inform and displace each other within the context of IAP. Through a cycle of reflexive engagement across the creative worlds I (re)connected IAP to the spaces of (artist) practice, (researcher) theoria and (teacher) praxis (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004). By connecting across roles and contexts using multiple perspectives, I answered the research question.

1.2 Research Aim and Scope

The primary aim of the study was to explore and describe what Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) entailed, revealed and contested as it is performed across three designated sites named creative worlds. The scope of the investigation was limited to the three creative worlds. Creative World 1 explored IAP within a community art context in which my major role was that of artistic coordinator. Creative World 2 investigated IAP through a university art elective where my major role was that of teacher-educator with pre-service students. Creative World 3 explored IAP through my own art making and my role as artist. In each site I employed the inter-connected roles of artist, researcher and teacher to illuminate and analyze the data. For instance, in Creative World 3, as artist, I allowed myself the creative freedom to choose which artworks were taken to completion, and which were stored as
ongoing ideas in my visual journal. However, as teacher-educator I did not give students in Creative World 2 the same creative freedom. This realization led me to reappraise the assessment criteria I had set and to (re)think the research process.

The outputs from the study are an Exegesis and arts-based Project. The Exegesis comprises written and visual text and describes each creative world’s contribution to the development of IAP. It includes a series of participant narratives and critical narratives. The Project aspect of the study (Creative World 3) is a Photo Book where the model informs art practice and is used to explore the artworks and narratives. Creative World 3, cognizant of practical and theoretical data, adds to the ongoing growth of the IAP model which I used to reflexively examine each creative world.

The following figures illustrate how Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3 are understood through the context in which IAP is enacted and the multiple roles that I adopt across the three sites of investigation.

**Figure 1: Creative World 1**

IAP is explored in a community art and environment setting where my major role was artistic coordinator.

The interconnected identities of artist, researcher and teacher are presented within a radial circle to depict that these identities are informed by and inform IAP.

Data includes photos, artworks and narratives.
1.2.1 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by the confines of qualitative, arts-based inquiry. The results cannot be generalized beyond the three sites of investigation. However, that is not to say that the developing model for IAP cannot be applied to other sites where IAP may be investigated.

The research is also bounded by the confines of time. Should more time have been available, each creative world could have included a greater number of participants, generating more data for analysis.

By undertaking qualitative research I chose to limit the study to activities that positioned me as an observer/participant in the worlds within which I inhabit. I employed what Denzin and Lincoln (2008) refer to as “interpretive, material practices that make the world visible… [and
through this]... make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (p. 4). I do not generalize findings through quantification, but instead highlight insights arrived at through art experiences and narrative. This is an arts-based approach to research (Barone & Eisner, 1997; Barone, 2008) that is further extended through a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005; Irwin et al., 2006; Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Springgay, 2008c).

1.2.2 Significance of the Study

By exploring the impact of immersion on project artists, community members, pre-service teachers and me as artist, researcher and teacher, a new way of conceptualising art pedagogy was developed. This is presented as an IAP model.

In addition, the study provides a way forward to connect immersive approaches to art pedagogy across the boundaries of community, educational and personal artistic contexts. As such IAP can be employed by artists working in schools, by school art groups working in community contexts and by pre-service teachers working with school children.

The study into IAP shows how individuals/groups can explore art experiences through an immersive disposition while simultaneously connecting their artist, teacher/learner and researcher identities. Often I have felt that I am a part-time artist, a part-time teacher and a part-time researcher; a jack of all trades but master of none. However a/r/tography has enabled me to reconstruct this fractured sense of self to a unified and powerful sense of self where the whole is enhanced by the inter-related roles of artist, researcher and teacher.

The notion of artist/researcher/teacher contributes to the field of art education as it frees educators to draw from their multiple identities thus providing a richer learning environment for students and higher satisfaction among teachers.

I plan to share my framework for IAP with the art/education/teaching/research community so that it can be critiqued, used and further developed in community, early childhood, school, university and artist settings. Further developments could include the application of IAP in other areas such as community health, outdoor education and trans-disciplinary education.

The study has particular potential to inform future educational contexts where it could be further investigated and developed across a range of creative worlds. The embodied and place-related aspects of IAP can be applied in socio-ecological educational contexts.

The study has already made a contribution to this area of research (Wattchow, Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2008; Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2010) as well as to the research themes of place, space and body within education (Brearley, Burke & Potts, 2009; Burke & Potts, 2011). In addition, Zyngier (forthcoming) and Askew include a vignette by de Vries, Hall,
Burke and Bennet that describes the impact of IAP on pre-service teachers. They suggest that to engage deeply with the arts:

teachers and the children they teach can enact an approach that takes on the ‘a/r/t’ of a/r/tography but can also be informed by ‘Immersive Arts Pedagogy’ (IAP). In being immersed in arts practice teachers can become intimately connected to the content knowledge of a given topic and the materials that are used to investigate a topic. (de Vries, Hall, Burke, & Bennett, forthcoming)

The Project aspect of the study (Creative World 3) entailed the production of artworks featured in a photo book format. This offers an important contribution to the ongoing development of arts-based research as it treats images and text as intertextual (Anstey & Bull, 2000) ingredients. The Photo Book uncovers the interconnection between artworks, the developing IAP model, a/r/tography and the insights of artist, researcher and teacher through theoretical, creative, relational and critical attention. By making this Photo Book publicly available the Project can impact beyond the boundaries of academia.

The study provides a unique focus on the role of artistic practice and pedagogy using a research design that emphasizes individual and personal experiences and creative outcomes. Although other doctoral research has used a/r/tographic method (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006), the literature search did not uncover any doctoral research that encompassed the concepts of both IAP and a/r/tography. Although some themes in this study have been addressed in part by others, no previous doctoral research has used the combination of creative worlds and critical narratives. The arts-based Project together with the Exegesis will offer new data through the “crystallization form” (Richardson, p. 934) of multiple perspectives and methods for analysis (Lather, 1991).

As Barone and Eisner (1997) advocate, the significance of:

artistically grounded research that furthers understandings and that enables a reader to notice what had not been seen before, to understand what had not been understood, to secure a firmer grasp and deeper appreciation of complex situations contributes to the end to which educational research is committed. Our conception of validity is rooted in the ways arts based research helps us notice, understand and appraise. (p. 85)

Inspired by a commitment like that of Barone and Eisner (1997; 2012), the study seeks to notice, understand and then appraise unique insights, artworks and processes from each creative world in order to ascertain what IAP reveals and contests across the spaces of artist, researcher and teacher. For instance, in Creative World 1, I discuss how Joy Wandin-Murphy, senior Indigenous elder of the Wurundjeri, suggests that the community sculpture by artist Savaad Felich “recognizes the spiritual significance of the manna gum to the
Wurundjeri people. It promotes a better appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal culture. The way that he has embraced Wurundjeri culture adds another layer to understanding Aboriginal culture” (Scomazzon, Burke, Malone, & Singh Dodd, 2005, p. 52).

This is an example of how IAP encourages relational art practice within community contexts that enables participants to connect to each other through arts-based ways of knowing. By reviewing the process in which the community sculptures were conceived, this approach allowed me to reveal the complexity and richness of IAP through multiple perspectives and to offer an original contribution to the research.

1.2.3 Guide to Reading the Exegesis

This section provides the reader with a guide to reading the Exegesis and navigating between the Exegesis and Project components of the study. The six sections that constitute the Exegesis and the Photo Book are described. Following this is a series of diagrams and tables that describe the contextual literature and the experiential data.

Chapter 1 states the research questions and scope of investigation and discusses the significance of the study and its contribution to the art education field. Methodology and methods are described in Chapter 2. The study design and research sites are defined before the case studies are presented. Research methods, referred to as conceptual practices (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo & Gouzouasis, 2008, p. xxvii) are explored so that arts-based research is understood in the light of the choice of methods that link to the methodological aims. A description of, and justification for, the choice of method tools, including artworks, narratives and digital story, is provided.

Chapter 3 introduces the experiential data from three designated case studies, referred to as Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3. The literature review, together with the case studies, evolves as the study develops. This is depicted in the Figures 4, 5 and 6 later in this section.

The creative worlds are described in turn below.

**Creative World 1** explores the Creative Junction Project, which investigates and locates place and identity through immersive art experiences within a community setting. Participant and author narratives provide the context for a critical narrative which discusses findings from the project and the contextual review. The contextual review is both informed by and informs the practice explored within the site and, in the process, leads the reader through an investigation of immersion, creativity, sociocultural theory, critical pedagogy and environmental art.

**Creative World 2** explores IAP as understood through a Monash University studio arts unit with pre-service teachers. Specific reference is given to the emergence of starting points for IAP. Participant and author narratives, interspersed with text from relevant readings, led to a
critical narrative that discusses the findings and their relevance to the research questions. The contextual literature review explores immersion and the emerging themes revealed through Creative World 2. These are explored in terms of creative, critical, connecting and contextual ways of knowing.

The findings from Creative Worlds 1 and 2 led to a theoretical framework which, in turn, inspired the development of the IAP model. The emerging model for IAP drove the methodological approach adopted in Creative World 3 which included the creation of artworks and narratives by the author. The emergent model incorporates a theoretical position and a methodology. It was developed to inform and help interpret previous sites as well as Creative World 3. An explanation of the model is provided via an informing and evolving review of the literature.

**Creative World 3** is understood through both the Exegesis and the Project. The artwork and reflexive narratives in Creative World 3 are displayed in photo book format and become the Project component of my PhD by Project. The Exegesis interconnects with the Photo Book by discussing how Creative World 3 responds to the IAP model through the creation of artworks and then responds to the model through reflexive narratives. It describes, through text and diagram, how the IAP model informed both the creative process and the analysis of this creative world. In addition, a range of critical narratives are featured. These give added insight into the Photo Book to reveal and contest IAP as it played out across Creative World 3. Creative World 3 is the process that evolved out of Creative Worlds 1 and 2, now understood through artwork, the evolving model for IAP, the Project Photo Book and the Exegesis’ discussion of its set up and analysis.

Chapter 3 investigates the themes and concepts that emerged from Creative Worlds 1 and 2 and which then inform the Project (Creative World 3). These include the notion of creative connections through practice, starting points for IAP and the increasing influence that sense of place and sense of identity play on IAP. This chapter includes a layered and reflexive format in which the contextual literature review is interspersed between participant narratives to highlight how the literature informs and responds to the experiential data. Critical narratives then respond back to the data through the research questions. However, as a/r/tography was not consciously employed as a research approach in Creative World 1, the notion of reconnecting artist/researcher/teacher through IAP in Creative World 1 is explored later in Chapter 5. An emerging theoretical framework is also presented which I present as an evolving model for IAP. This is explored through the various theoretical positions that inform it.

In Chapter 4 Creative World 3 is analyzed using the IAP model as a guiding tool to discuss the findings. In this process, the immersive art practice and artworks were tested against the
model. The findings, understood through a series of layered narratives, enabled me to address the impact of IAP through the lenses of artist, 4-C perspectives, a/r/tographic renderings, the interstitial space of artist/researcher/teacher and critical narratives. A/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004), enabled me to draw out contiguity, living inquiry, openings, metaphors, metonyms, excess and reverberations as well as the cross-fertilizing influence of my roles as artist, researcher and teacher. A critical narrative reviewed the artworks, the model and other layered narratives. It explored the unique insights revealed in Creative World 3.

Chapter 5 reflects on and summarises findings from Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3 and the resultant IAP model, and how these answer the research questions. Implications for further research are explored.

It is recommended that the notion of sustaining creativity and creating sustainability should be incorporated in the IAP model in future applications.

A list of references and the following appendices are provided at the end of the document:

- Ethics Documents;
- Plain Language Statements;
- Interview Questions and Topics; and
- A Model for Reviewing and Developing Artworks.

1.2.4 The Project: Photo Book

To reflect the concerns inherent in the Exegesis, I chose to locate my arts-based Project within the context of IAP. The Project, presented as a Photo Book, constitutes Creative World 3. The IAP model was further developed in the Photo Book. The ensuing visual artwork, my evolving model for IAP and the accompanying narratives and diagrams were collated to address the questions. This enabled me to refer back to the Exegesis and to explore the impact of narrative analysis on the research questions. The Photo Book combines an intertextual use of image, text and diagram to explore the artwork through the model in progress and subsequent theoretical perspectives. It allows the reader/viewer to be immersed within the seven inch by seven inch space of the book format. It deliberately aims to provide an intimate experience for the reader/viewer who can easily carry the book in a small bag. The Photo Book seeks to (re)connect the spaces of artist, researcher and teacher through the collected insights made possible as a consequence of IAP. The Photo Book will be made available for public viewing beyond academia through I-Blurb. The Photo Book forms the durable record of the PhD by Project.
The Photo Book examines my own explorations into IAP. A series of narratives are presented with the artworks to expose the data to many perspectives. This enables a thorough interrogation of the data. Critical counter narratives then speak to notions of personal agency, empowerment, hope and transformation as experienced through IAP.

Each section of the Photo Book includes a critical narrative that addresses the three major questions of the study. The critical narratives emanate from the preceding layered narratives which in turn respond to the model and the artwork. At the conclusion of the A/R/T Photo Book is an overview of the final critical narrative that pulls together pertinent points from the entire Creative World 3. This summarizes and suggests how IAP has addressed the three major questions of the study.

1.2.5 Summary

Together, the Project and Exegesis create and explore layered understandings of Immersive Art Pedagogy to reveal insights and contestations made possible through its enactment. These modes of inquiry showed how such an approach can be employed as a methodological and practical source of inspiration for an emerging theoretical framework within art practice and art pedagogy. This led to a discussion on how IAP can (re)connect the places of artist, researcher and teacher and how the identities of artist, researcher and teacher can inform the development of IAP.

1.2.6 Guide to Experiential Data and the Contextual Literature Review

Following is a set of diagrams and tables that describe and illustrate the experiential data from each creative world alongside themes from with the contextual literature review that informed, or were informed by, each creative world.
Creative World 1: Art and Environment Project within a Community Setting: Experiential Data and Literature Review

Figure 4: Experiential Data and Contextual Literature for Creative World 1

This figure gives an overview of the connections that evolved in Creative World 1: Creative Junction Community Art and Environment Project. As the experiential data developed, it informed the contextual literature review and vice versa. The diagram shows what the research grew from and the major themes that arose. It shows where the Creative World 1 research was undertaken and the cyclical nature of the Project. By mapping the evolving text, it reminds the reader of the layered connections in Creative World 1.
Key: Yellow-orange represents the experiential data in Creative World 1. These elements drove the process and product of the artworks and events in the Creative Junction Project. Blue represents the literature that responds to and informs the experiential data.

### Experiential Data in Creative World 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACE</th>
<th>Creative engagement with ● Guided and emergent investigations ● Walks and talks ● Place responsive learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NATURE</td>
<td>Exploration of macro, messa, micro ● Found objects ● Materials from place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART WORKS</td>
<td>Nature journals ● Visual journals ● Ephemeral art ● Permanent sculptures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVENTS</td>
<td>Project meetings: Community, Artists, Project team, Shire Art &amp; Nature Workshops: Community, School, Kindergarten, Teacher workshops ● Creative Junction festival days ● Welcome to Country ceremonies ● Community feedback sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERVIEWS</td>
<td>General community participants ● Artist participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROSS DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION WITH</td>
<td>University ● Industry ● Shire ● Artists ● Community ● Land as relational and creative site/event ● Self as artist/researcher/teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCUMENTATION</td>
<td>Photographic ● Narratives ● Community postcards ● Site signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Grant proposal ● Annual reports ● Media releases ● Articles ● Web site ● E-mail communications ● Journal writing ● PowerPoints for Shire, Community and Conferences ● Research papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Experiential Data: Creative World 1**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Informing Literature: Creative World 1</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **IMMERSION** | In art, pedagogy and language education - Experiential ways of knowing
  - Play
  - Materiality
  - Sensory engagement
  - Flow
  - Embodiment |
| **CREATIVITY** | Approaches to creativity - Personal creativity - Societal creativity |
| **SOCIO CULTURAL THEORY** | Participatory appropriation - Art as sociocultural - Art as social |
| **CRITICAL PEDAGOGY** | Acknowledging life world - Living Inquiry - Agency - Power
  - Transformation - Praxis - Critical awareness |
| **ENVIRONMENTAL ART** | Place-based pedagogy - Art and nature - Critical place-based pedagogy |

Table 2: Informing Literature: Creative World 1
Figure 5: Experiential Data and Contextual Literature for Creative World 2

This diagram lists the theoretical dispositions and the experiential data that emerged as IAP was experienced through a studio arts class for pre-service primary education students at Monash University. Some of the themes and informing theories from Creative World 1 (where IAP is explored through a community context) are further explored while other theories and experiences emerged as a consequence of the institutional context in which IAP was performed. The diagram can be held up to the evolving text to remind the reader of the multi-layered connections within Creative World 2.
Scope and significance of the study

Key: Mid-orange represents the experiential data in Creative World 2. Blue represents the literature that responds to and informs the experiential data.

### Experiential Data in Creative World 2

| PLACE          | Shared studio • Teacher-education setting • Allocated time frame in set space
|                | • Ongoing displays/exhibitions in studio space and faculty surrounds • Environment as third teacher |
| RESOURCES      | Visual: Art materials, Found objects, Artworks, Postcards, Thematic items, Personal visual journal • Text based: Books, Articles, Education kits • Displays: Student artwork, Posters, Objects, Text • Digital: Powerpoint presentations, Data images, Internet access |
| ART BASED ASSIGNMENTS | Formal assessment: Visual journal, Resource folder, Practical artwork, Critical reflection/Education kit • Requirements: Set journal/internet readings, Optional open-ended research |
| INTERVIEWS     | With Students • Optional involvement • Self-selecting • Conducted after assessment |
| EVENTS         | Studio Art Elective (20 hours) 18 female pre-service teachers. Lecture/Workshop: Starting points, Emergent content, Facilitation of student work • Dialogic appreciation • Visiting speaker • Aesthetic setup of materials • Revamping displays • Student exhibition |
| LEARNING LINKS | Students • Lecturer • Visiting Speakers • Contemporary artworks/Artists • University • Personally meaningful concepts • Self as artist/researcher/teacher |
| DOCUMENTATION  | Student artwork • Narratives, Photos, Painted furniture, Visual journal/Resource folder, Student critical reflection/Education kit • Journal |
| PLANNING COMMUNICATION | Unit guide • Updated schedule • Journal, Powerpoint presentations • Meeting with NGV education staff, Visiting NGV • Radio National art shows • Ordering and sourcing • MONQUEST student unit review |

Table 3: Experiential Data: Creative World 2
### Table 4: Informing Literature: Creative World 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Themes and Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMMERSION</td>
<td>Starting Points • Emergence • Revisititation/reflexivity • Reggio Emilia influence • Artist/Researcher/Teacher • Rhyzomatic connections • Personally meaningful art projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C approach CREATIVE PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>Starting points for creative connections • Bricoleur • Maker/appreciator • First maker agency • Experiential/embodied/living creativity • Interrupting notions of creativity: Complexity, Destruction, Doubt, Chaos, Relational, Systems view, Developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C approach CONNECTING PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>Art as relational • Community of practice/Creative Community • Dialogic appreciation • Listening Pedagogy • Art as a thinking tool • Collaboration • Links between: Artist/researcher/teacher, Maker/appreciator, Everyday/domain, Art/text, Lecturer/students, Gallery/University, Domain/field/individual, Identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C approach CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>In/through/about art • A shift from Modernist to Postmodern art education Approaches to art education • Place/space • Situated learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C approach CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>Site: Power • Sociocultural to socio-critical to the power of the imagination • Critical Art pedagogy • Creative and critical agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creative World 3: Immersive Art Pedagogy in Personal Artistic Practice: Experiential Data and Literature Review

Figure 6: Experiential Data and Contextual Literature for Creative World 3

This diagram shows the theoretical dispositions and the experiential data that emerged as IAP was experienced through my personal art practice in varied settings. Themes, processes and theories that informed Creative World 1 and 2 led to an Immersive Art Pedagogy model. Other theories and experience emerged as a consequence of my preforming as artist/researcher/teacher through personal artistic practice. This diagram summarises the multi-layered connections within Creative World 3. It can also be placed alongside previous diagrams of Creative World 1 and Creative World 2, to show the development of IAP over the three creative worlds.
Scope and significance of the study

Key: Orange represents the experiential data in Creative World 3. Blue represents the literature that responds to and informs the experiential data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiential Data in Creative World 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLACE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of/access to locations over time • Home and garden • Work: Office, Studio, Classroom • Found: While walking/travelling, Cafes, Other places (Creative Junction Project site, Botanic Gardens), Northern Territory landscapes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **RESOURCES**                        |
| Access to: Art materials, Found/collected objects, Artworks, Postcards, Visual journal Art books, Magazines, Galleries, Videos • Digital: Art programs; Video/camera, Laptop, Printer, Internet • Visits: Conferences, Galleries, Self-selected sites • Displays: Inspiring images/words, Changing over time; Informal/as needed • Atmosphere: Music, Radio, Coffee • Input: Self-funded materials, Study leave funding, Monash University (Employer) |

| **ARTWORK AND PROCESS**              |
| Process/product valued • Painting, Drawing, Printing, Photos, Solar prints • Clay, Installation, Collage, Assemblage, Digital story • Visual journals, Artist narratives |

| **PHOTO BOOK**                      |
| (Re)visiting process, Product, Model, Narratives, Diagrams • On web for democratic/ongoing access |

| **EVENTS**                          |
| Extended time frame • Artworks responding to IAP model • Field work • Informal displays/discussions in homes as reflective/reflexive/critical process • Critiques • Reflection/analysis through narrative, digital story, Photo Book • Planning, Editing, Publication of Photo Book • Plan to share Photo Book |

| **INTERVIEW NARRATIVE**             |
| Self as artist/researcher/teacher • Self as critical analyser/forward maker |

| **PLANNING DOCUMENTATION COMMUNICATION** |
| Self-narratives, Artworks, Photos, Word document notes, Digital story • Development of IAP model • Selection of media, Topics, Starting points for emergent artwork • Informal conversations with critical/artist friends • Successful application for fieldwork experience at Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne • Successful funding application through Monash University • Exploration of digital photo book possibilities |

Table 5: Experiential Data: Creative World 3
| **IMMERSION** | As: Artist/Researcher/Teacher  •  Bricoleur  •  Through: Personally meaningful, Situated artwork |
| **IAP MODEL** | Informs process and analysis  •  Reveals and contests IAP  •  Explores (re)connection as a philosophical process |
| **NARRATIVE LAYERS** | Multi-vocality  •  Art + model explored through  •  (Artist, 4-C, Renderings, A/R/T, Critical) narratives |
| **ARTS BASED WAYS OF KNOWING** | Art + digital story + narratives  •  Adherence to IAP  •  First maker perspective  •  Being, being with and becoming through art  •  Material thinking, embodiment, situational making  •  Art skills, aesthetic development and appreciation |
| **A/R/TOGRAPHY** | Renderings  •  Artist/researcher/teacher identities  •  Creative capacity building |
| **SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS** | (CS/SC) - Creating Sustainability/Sustaining Creativity  •  Connecting IAP to lived experience, place  •  Experiential pedagogy, agency/participation |

Table 6: Informing Literature: Creative World 3
2. METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL PRACTICES

2.1 Research Design

This chapter outlines the study’s research methodology including study design and the research sites. The rationale for the chosen research methodology and multi-method approach is presented. The methods are largely informed by the interplay of image and text across a range of conceptual practices (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo & Gouzouasis, 2008).

2.1.1 Introduction to Study Design

Methodology is responsive, driven by the requirements of practice and its creative dynamic… It acknowledges complexity and real experience – it is ‘real world’ research, and all ‘mistakes’ are revealed and acknowledged for the sake of methodological transparency. (Gray & Malins, 2004, p. 21)

The selected methodology was determined by the research questions and by the author’s research in action (which is understood as living inquiry). The methodology accommodates my view on practice-led and informed research, through the roles of artist, researcher and teacher.

The chapter begins with a description of the Exegesis and Project. It explains why artwork and an evolving Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) model are central to the study. The Exegesis and Project are then considered in terms of how each responds to and informs the overall aims of the study. I then detail the choice of research sites and how they are methodologically linked to reveal a creative, critical, connecting and contextual understanding of IAP. Throughout, diagrams that visualize the study design process and the interconnected components are provided.

2.1.2 Exegesis

The Exegesis uses three case studies each of which is explored alongside a contextual literature review (described later in this section). These three case studies are referred to as creative worlds. This term was influenced by Heim’s work, specifically his reference to irrealism and the notion that world is a plural concept where “each world is a variant of related worlds, and each world makes its own context and rules of intelligibility” (Heim, 1998, p. 216). Goodman’s (1978) views also resonate with the notion of creative worlds. He posits that there are multiple versions of the world as we make and remake them through various symbol systems; be it through image, text, numeric or scientific formula, with art being no less worthy than other means of world making. He states “the arts must be taken no less
seriously than the sciences as modes of discovery, creation, and enlargement of knowledge in the broad sense of advancement of the understanding, and thus the philosophy of art should be conceived as an integral part of metaphysics and epistemology” (p. 102). Through art and through narrative, as through knowledge gained by practice or theory, different versions of the world emerge linked, as they are in this study, through the impetus of IAP.

Bruner (1996) also informs the way the study derives reference from artworks, multiple narratives, multiple participants and multiple roles, with each offering a perspective from which possible creative worlds can grow and transform. He suggests that “culture shapes the mind... it provides us with the toolkit by which we construct not only our worlds but our very conception of ourselves and our powers” (p. x). He positions culture as a social negotiation that is constantly transforming to create possible worlds. His work on discourse provides insight into what can be considered the construction of worlds within worlds. Advocating for subjectification, the idea that reality is not depicted through an “omniscient eye… [but rather through]… the filter of the consciousness of protagonists in the story” (p. 25), he calls for multiple perspectives that enable a “beholding of the world not univocally but simultaneously through a set of prisms each of which catches some part of it” (p. 26). To this end, I treat each creative world according to the site in which it takes place with each world deliberately encompassing a range of themes and viewpoints that further develop the possibilities of IAP. Each creative world is a version of the world, where art practice and narrative are key means of expression and communication and are viewed as being innately linked to learning, teaching and research contexts. I acknowledge that there are worlds within worlds. Therefore, methodologically, these creative worlds become prisms through which IAP is experienced and studied.

The three creative worlds in the study built critical awareness (Cary, 1998a) of IAP through its impact and validity via a community based art and environment project, an institutional pre-service teaching context, and the personal art practice of the author, respectively.

In Creative World 1 and Creative World 2, where community and institutional contexts for IAP were explored, participant narratives and my own personal narrative captured the lived experience of those engaged with the given sites. A critical narrative was then developed. This informed both the participant narratives and my own personal narrative. This approach enabled a range of emerging perspectives to be further explored. They highlighted and expanded on unique findings, themes, patterns, issues and turbulences made apparent through the impact of IAP within the given sites. This approach allowed relational contexts to be explored through the voices of the participating artists, artistic coordinator, community participants, lecturer and students to reveal the impact of IAP across a range of groups.
Creative World 3 was developed using both the Project and Exegesis. In the Project I explored my own art practice and associated narratives in relation to the evolving IAP model using the photo book format. I also developed and responded to the Project in the Exegesis at Chapter 4. In so doing, the Exegesis explored the influences that Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3 played on the developing model which had initially been conceived from my views on Immersive Art Pedagogy. IAP was re-contextualized in Creative World 3. The process behind my artwork, the emerging themes that developed, and the significance of the five layers of narrative that were developed as a consequence of the Project, are discussed. By holding the IAP model up to the artworks and by developing reflexive and multi-vocal narratives in the Photo Book, I explored what IAP entails, reveals and contests. A more theoretical perspective is offered at Chapter 4 in which the contextual review is woven throughout the discussion. Importantly I was then able to consider how IAP connects and reconnects the role of artist, researcher and teacher.

In Chapter 5 the findings from the three critical narratives derived from each creative world are considered in relation to the research questions and are analysed through the emerging theoretical framework for IAP, the emerging IAP model and a/r/tographic methodology (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

The experiential data evolved in conjunction with a contextual literature review in Creative Worlds 1 and 2 as was woven into the narratives in the Photo Book and the discussion of Creative World 3 in the Exegesis to reflect my evolving artist/researcher/teacher identity. The contextual review process is gaining currency within practice-led research. The contextual review identified the scope and nature of the study. It was developed alongside each creative world to reveal the impact of theory on the experiential data in each site and vice versa. As Gray and Malins (2004) suggest, it is through the contextual review that the hunch that initiates a research project becomes a tangible gap in knowledge.

In this way the growth, transformation and interconnection of theory alongside the creative worlds is made apparent and demonstrates the emergent and dynamic nature of IAP in action as the study progressed. Although the contextual review was informed by the literature, it continued to develop in relation to art practice and pedagogy within the creative worlds.

The Exegesis and Project components of the research provide the opportunity to critically explore what IAP reveals and contests across art education and art practice, and how it can be understood as a connecting and awakening force between the roles of artist, researcher and teacher.
2.1.3 The Project Component

As engagement with art practice is central to the notion of IAP I chose to explore my own art practice and resulting artworks alongside the evolving model for IAP. The Project component of the study, developed within the parameters of Creative World 3, comprises a Photo Book that presents my artworks, subsequent narratives, photos and diagrams as interconnected and intertextual elements relevant to the evolving IAP model (see Figure 7). These elements respond to the influences of Creative Worlds 1 and 2 and the critical narratives that emerged from the research. The artworks enabled an experiential perspective of IAP to develop. This was founded on my generative art practice and informed by the two previous sites where I had been involved as artistic coordinator and studio art lecturer. Together the photo book format, the artworks and their associated narratives enabled: practice-led research through art practice; the opportunity to track the changes and insights that occurred; and a way to communicate the research findings.

Using this arts-based and practice-led research approach, I examined the evolving IAP model through art works, select narratives and visual documentation to highlight the intentions and processes that informed IAP.

The Photo Book was designed to explore the notion of IAP, and the evolving journey through the insights, interconnections and convergences of the creative worlds. It tracks the development of the IAP model and the theoretical notions that informed the subsequent multi-layered narrative analysis. As each artwork is presented, layers of narrative are developed to enable a multi-vocal conceptualization of data (see Figure 7). The first narrative layer reflects the artist’s intentions. The second layer employs a 4-C perspective to bring, creative, critical, connecting and contextual insights to the artwork and the narratives. This enabled a direct response to the developing model. The third layer, informed by Irwin and de Cosson’s (2004) a/r/tographic renderings was applied to selected artworks and previous narratives, and opened the data to postmodern and arts-based possibilities. The fourth layer explored the cross-fertilization of my roles as artist, researcher and teacher. A précis of the critical narrative, the fifth layer, reveals and contests the IAP model. This fifth layer discusses the openings apparent through a/r/tographic perspectives and suggests how the model may be further developed. A more in-depth and theoretically informed presentation of the critical narratives is offered in the Exegesis. Throughout the Photo Book, the use of images and text combine to provide intertextual readings of the data.

This methodology fostered a clearer understanding of IAP, what it reveals and contests and how it (re)connects artist, researcher and teacher. The resulting insights inform an emerging philosophy of practice, and are conceived not as resolute findings but rather as being in a
state of ongoing development of IAP as it is (re)imagined and critiqued across future and past creative world contexts.

2.1.4 Connecting the Exegesis and the Project

Figure 7: Inter-relationship between Exegesis and Project Components

The diagram above illustrates how the Exegesis and Project are intertwined and how they organically and dynamically evolved as a consequence of their inter-relationship.

IAP drove the research. A model for IAP evolved that informed, and was informed by, the artworks, art experiences and narratives across the creative worlds. A contextual literature review together with the creative worlds in the Exegesis, informed the development of the research. In this way the study inter-relates Exegesis and Project components to create a critical understanding of artistic pedagogy and artistic practice as lived through my personal narrative, participant narratives, evolving critical narratives and creative experiences.

2.1.5 The Research Sites

The three research sites were conceived as creative worlds. They provided case studies that offered unique insights into the role and influence of IAP. These deliberately diverse sites
included community based, institutional and personal/self-based contexts so that IAP could be examined across a range of settings.

The choice of sites reflects my approach to IAP as it does a systems view of creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996) in which the where of creativity is analysed through the interconnection of individual, field and domain. The three chosen sites allowed me to focus on zones of creativity (individual, field and domain) determined by Csikszentmihalyi (1996) with each site providing different foci through which to explore the interconnectedness of components. The sites offered an opportunity to explore creativity as a place-based and relational notion, thus further enriching my understanding of IAP.

Each site generated a critical narrative that emerged as a consequence of researcher and participant interaction with the site. In each site, the way in which participants engaged with their art practice and the issues that informed their art making are examined through the evolving model for IAP. Informing theoretical notions derived from arts-based and practice-led research, creativity research and socially critical, sociocultural and place-based theories were applied to the experiential data to explore the role and influence of IAP in each site.

Participants found their voice/s within the context of IAP and the creative worlds that each site enabled and revealed. Each site was positioned as a creative world for investigation and was examined through an evolving theoretical lens provided by the methodological and conceptual role and influence of IAP. The power and knowledge relationships that existed between me and the participants were explored. In each site my role shifted (see Figure 8). For example, as a university lecturer in teacher education, I assess students and class attendance is compulsory. As artistic coordinator in a community project, participants can come and go as they please. I view myself as an artist when involved in my own art practice.

Many students, commencing university study in my generalist primary teaching units, view themselves as non-artists. However, by the end of the semester, most have developed a belief in their own creative potential and have become creative risk takers. In contrast, participants in the Creative Junction Project are defined as artists and/or community members, some are expert practitioners and others are beginners.

Creative World 1, the Creative Junction Art and Environment Project, aimed to explore sense of place and identity and notions of wellbeing through artistic means (see Figure 8). A critical narrative developed from this site highlights the issues and sociocultural contexts through which participants expressed their sense of identity and sense of power. The immersive arts-based methodology drew out participants’ contexts of power and their relationship to societal

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3 This view was formed as a result of reading and viewing the visual diaries created by students who undertook immersive based studio art classes with me at Monash University
viewpoints so that their own expressive voices were highlighted. It also explored how creative processes across time, space and place can be used to connect participants to each other and to the cultural domain. The critical narrative explored how art media and techniques can be selected to best represent the viewpoint of the participant. This narrative and critical methodological approach was used across the three sites to explore similarities and differences between the different contexts.

**Creative World 1: Immersive Art Pedagogy in a community project**

This site explores the Creative Junction Art and Environment Project through the lens of a developing view of Immersive Art Pedagogy and is positioned within a community context. Expression of place and identity, made possible through IAP is a major focus of this community project.

**Creative World 2: Immersive Art Pedagogy in teacher education**

This site explores an institutional setting where a Studio Arts - Two Dimensional Studies class for pre-service generalist primary education students at Monash University is understood through an evolving view of Immersive Art Pedagogy. The starting points developed for use in this institutional context are a major feature of the site.

**Creative World 3: Immersive Art Pedagogy in personal artistic practice:**

This site explores Immersive Art Pedagogy in relation to my role as artist and as related to the self as teacher and researcher. The artist/self in the making (Ellsworth, 2005) and the personal studio practice of the artist is a feature of this site which is located across private studio, the community and institutional work place, the classroom, outside sites and domestic space.

**Figure 8: Overview of Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3**

The places in which art is made in each creative world revealed disparate levels of power and influence (see Table 7). For example, the use of private space to make ephemeral artworks over time was possible in my home studio, but was problematic in a university setting where three hundred students used the facility each week. The making of ephemeral artworks in the natural setting of the Yarra River was approved by the Yarra Junction Shire. This provided a sense of temporality as the artworks were left to the natural elements. By examining the participants’ roles, the places in which IAP took place and participants’ relationship to me as lecturer, artistic coordinator and artist, further opportunities for contrasting the various contexts for IAP were presented.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>My Role</th>
<th>Variants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Creative World 1**     | Art Coordinator within a Community Setting | • 100s of participants, various ages, male and female, open entry  
• Participants can come and go  
• Community sites/local environment  
• Working with artists, local community, The Shire, project team, funding bodies  
• Advertised program of events |
| IAP in a community project  
Creative Junction Art and Environment Project Yarra Ranges |                                             |                                                                           |
| **Creative World 2**     | Lecturer, Studio Arts within an Institutional Setting | • 18 female participants, aged over 18, 3rd and 4th year Art Elective for Pre-Service Primary Teachers  
• Shared studio/art-room setting  
• Lecturer/student dynamic  
• Prescribed unit guide and assessment |
| IAP in teacher education  
Studio Arts Class, Monash University Faculty of Education |                                             |                                                                           |
| **Creative World 3**     | Artist within Multiple Sites across Private, Institutional, Cultural and Environmental Settings | • Self in artist role  
• Female, aged 40+, undertaking PhD by arts-based Project  
• Artist role managed alongside educator, researcher and family contexts  
• Private spaces, University Art studios, research retreat, cafes, outside settings  
• Access to cultural and environmental sites, critical friends, educators, researchers  
• Self-initiated content  
• Artwork created for IAP investigation |
| IAP in personal artistic practice  
Studio practice across multiple sites |                                             |                                                                           |

Table 7: Research Sites, Roles and Variants
2.2 Research Methods

2.2.1 Introduction to Methodology

This chapter provides an account of the theoretical influences that impacted the research. During the research journey, Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) grew from an intuitive disposition understood through art practice and art teaching to a theorized practice that drew on a range of influences. This complex journey, which encompassed a practice-led approach to theory, is my contribution to the theoretical space of arts-based research.

IAP seeks to reveal and express meanings through immersed and relational art practice and art pedagogy (Bickel et al., 2011). To address my topic, I used a series of methodological approaches that supported and extended my thinking about art practice and art pedagogy. The research questions explored the influences of art practice on the development of an immersive pedagogy and how IAP influenced my art practice and my role as artist and teacher-educator.

The methodological path kept these intentions to the fore and grew out of practice and now informs the theory-practice-pedagogy dialogue innate to the study on an ongoing cyclical basis. The methodological framework served as an incubator for the central concerns generated by the practice of IAP and responded dynamically as issues, themes, insights and awareness of theoretical concepts emerged. The nature of working in this way meant that participants were positioned as artists through practice-led research (Smith & Dean, 2009; Sullivan, 2009); and were positioned as reflective teachers and learners through educational practice-based research (Schön, 1983). In addition participants learnt through arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2009) when they created art and narrative. Together these approaches led me to a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) where artists, teachers and researchers intertwine. These intersecting ways of knowing positioned the approach as bricoleur, a term I understood through the work of Kincheloe and McLaren (2008).

The bricolage views research methods actively rather than passively, meaning that we actively construct our research methods from the tools at hand rather than passively receiving the “correct”, universally applicable methodologies. In its embrace of complexity, the bricolage constructs a far more active role for humans both in shaping reality and in creating the research process and narratives that represent it. Such an active agency rejects deterministic views of social reality that assume the effects of particular social, political, economic, and educational processes. At the same time and in the same conceptual context, this belief in active human agency refuses standardized modes of knowledge production. (pp. 421-422)
I was also influenced by the work of Sameshima (2007a) who uses the concept of the parallax to describe the way that multi perspectives are integral to research. She helped me acknowledge and value my “shifting subjectivities and situatedness, as bricoleur, which directly influence the constructs of perception, interpretation and learning” (2007a, p. xi) and helped me understand how theoretical ideas form and grow as creative worlds are performed across sites. This approach is discussed further at Chapter 3.2.1. and Chapter 4.2.1.

2.2.2 Research Parameters

This section discusses the constraints of the study; why and where these boundaries exist in relation to the research objectives.

The validity of the qualitative research approach, which employed practice-led and arts-based ways of knowing, is also discussed.

As bricoleur, I wove insights from sociocultural, critical and place-based ways of knowing. A fuller discussion of this, as an informing research approach, is included in the contextual review at Chapter 3.2.4.

A qualitative framework was adopted for this research in order to explore the range and intricacies of non-quantitative issues. This enabled me to explore the social and situated aspects of IAP, multivocal expressions, and ways of knowing that come about as a consequence of living art experiences and everyday events. This fits with Denzin and Lincoln’s (2008) description of qualitative research where stress is on “the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry… [emphasising] the value-laden nature of inquiry and social experience as a way to create meaning” (p. 14). The study reflects Denzin and Lincoln’s (2008) generic definition of qualitative research, taking place as it does within situated activities “that locate the observer in the world, [and which make] the world visible [through] material [and] interpretive practices” (p. 4).

The events, artworks, artefacts and interviews in the study are interpreted according to the “the subject’s’ point of view and on the meaning they attribute to experiences and events, as well as the orientation towards the meaning of objects, activities and events” (Flick, 2009, p. 59). The meaning people give to their experiences is privileged over measurement derived data or generalised findings. The research approach was also informed by aspects of the eight historical moments through which qualitative research has developed, defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2008) as moments that simultaneously exist within the present time. The postmodern and post-experimental moment with its concern for storytelling and auto-ethnographic ways of knowing, along with post-structural forms of thought allowed me to adopt alternative methods for evaluating my work including “verisimilitude, emotionality,
personal responsibility, an ethic of caring, political praxis, multivoiced texts, and dialogues with subjects” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 16). Arts-based research both illuminated and restricted my approach as it enables the qualitative researcher to:

access and represent the multiple viewpoints made imperceptible by traditional research methods. For the many researchers committed to accessing subjugated voices, engaging in reflexive practice, and opening up a public discourse, arts-based practices are a welcome alternative to traditional modes of knowledge-building. (Leavy, 2009, p. 15)

Indeed, my artist identity informed many of the theoretical choices in the research. As an artist I responded to emergent ideas, processes and theories that sing to me through the actual process of working within and across lived practice. In this way my approach was practice-led (Gray & Malins, 2004). This practice-led approach to research also informed the way I theorised art pedagogy in the practice of coordinating, teaching and learning. By undertaking a practice-based (and led) study, I derived knowledge from the practices of art and of teaching. This approach valued emergent learning, interpretive ways of knowing and the fostering of personally meaningful concepts revealed through practice.

2.2.3 My Methodological Journey

Initially in this study, I planned to explore the lived experience of people involved in IAP and so adopted an interpretive approach (Greene, 1995, 2001b; Dewey, 1934). However, as I also needed to understand how society influences the meanings people make and the agency they feel, the theoretical informants of the research process needed to include sociocultural (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005; Rogoff, 1995;1998) and socially critical (Anstey & Bull, 2000) ways of exploring images and text. My thinking about the social construction of art and teaching was informed by critical pedagogy (McLaren, 1998) and by research into practice-led (Smith & Dean, 2009; Sullivan, 2009; Gray & Malins, 2004) and arts-based (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2009; Finlay, 2002) ways of knowing. These works helped me examine the relationship between art teacher and learner, the relationship between the artistic coordinator and participants, and the relationship between artist and the subject matter. This allowed me to engage methodologically with arts-based research alongside participants’ chosen subject matter while also investigating participants’ creative agency.

My methodological journey included other theoretical insights that were developed over time and were post-formal in influence. I came to understand that my approach to IAP was in line with aspects of a/r/tography (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Irwin et al., 2006; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004). My methodological journey fitted an artistic participatory paradigm (Australian Technology Network of Universities, 2007; Heron & Reason, 1997), as derived from a radical relational paradigm (Bickel et al., 2011). This enabled me to construct IAP to explore: the
roles of artist, researcher and teacher; embodied and relational ways of knowing; place-based and sustainable ways of knowing; and rhizomatic connections made possible by IAP.

This led me to adopt views from a/r/tography in the latter stages of the research. These theoretical approaches drew on thinkers who explore place/space connections (Somerville, 2010, 2011; Bhabha, 1994; Pratt, 1992; Tuan, 1977) and led to the notion of sustaining creativity and creating sustainability. This contributed to a retrospective commentary which told the story of the methodological journey and my theoretical world view. It highlighted my intentions and what the research revealed. It showed how I made sense of those intentions and research questions, interviews, and workshops through further developed insights. The chapter concludes with the methodological insights gleaned through a/r/tography, the artist’s participatory paradigm and the notion of radical relatedness (Bickel et al., 2011). In addition, the chapter notes how, over time, I have seen the limitations of taking up social-critical approaches, in the end preferring to weave intersecting and sometimes competing theories together to achieve a multi-vocal bricolage.

The retrospective stance used to explain my methodological approach is in line with Agger (2007) who argues that methodologies are largely “rhetorical devices, not inherently superior to arguments that don’t have methodology sections, such as a poem or a film” (p. 95). He says that methodologies are really “literary strategies… ways of making arguments… This is not to deny that methods - systematic ways of knowing - are important. Indeed every literary strategy is a method, by definition” (p. 95). I concur with Agger that, together, different methodologies offer acutely relevant insights that no single method could do.

**Critical Pedagogical Influences on IAP**

Initially I looked to the work of Dewey (1934), Freire (1970), Greene (1995) and Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) to illuminate my case studies. I was keen to develop an approach to art practice/pedagogy that built belief in one’s artistic abilities and that explored artistic agency and possibility by drawing inspiration from participants’ life worlds, their identity and their sense of place within the cultural domain. I wanted to critically reflect on my burgeoning approach to IAP through a cyclical process and to question how it might grow, challenge or transform more dominant forms of art education (such as Discipline Based Art Education and Community Based Art Education) to expose deficiencies and build possibilities. In addition, I wanted to theorize through practice so that each finding or happening could lead me to theories of relevance, understood from multiple theoretical landscapes. My struggle to reconcile the roles of artist, researcher and teacher was previously silent. Critical pedagogy seemed to give voice to these identities from a position of capacity rather than deficiency.

As a theory-practice discourse, critical pedagogy acknowledges that the dominant educational paradigm maintains its power through a hegemonic approach. Critical pedagogy
seeks to provide learners and educators with a critical stance to question and review the
dominant forces at work in the school, university or educational institution thus providing
insight into relationships of power and knowledge. McLaren and Giroux (1995) remind us that
it provides a counter logic to positivist, ahistorical, de-politicized discourses that inform
modes of analysis employed by liberal and conservative critics of schooling. It is founded on
the conviction that schooling for self and social empowerment is more empowering than a
mastery of technical skills, which are primarily tied to the logic of the market place (although
skill development certainly plays an important role (McLaren, 1998). Friere (2006) was also
concerned with praxis and its role in empowering people to overcome oppression from
dominant discourses and their impact on limiting human experience and potential. Critical
pedagogy is relevant to methodological position because IAP helps people liberate their
artistic voice through art experiences that are empowering.

Cary’s (1998a) work on critical art pedagogy positioned art making as praxis, with everyday
life a source of knowledge. He rejects positivist notions of culture and the hegemonic
domination of the Western cannon of art in art teaching and learning. He argues for a critical
awareness of art pedagogy and the need to identify “hidden sources of oppression...including the awareness and motivations that propel resistance” (p. 14). This is not a call for
a formula that promotes a specific instructional methodology, but an argument for a “flexible
set of propositions aimed at education’s function as a means to liberation and justice to be
adopted by art learners and art makers in particular places at particular times. Critical arts
pedagogy explores ways through which schools can engage the art world to promote these
goals” (p. 8). He believes that knowledge is socially constructed and that knowledge and
power are related. This is methodologically significant when researching IAP.

Kincheloe’s (2008b) post-formal approach to “multilogical critical pedagogy” (p. 4) and his call
for “critical bricolage” (p. 5) with its respect for complexity, helped synthesize my
methodological choices. He argues that education researchers must be aware of the
existence of multiple methods of research and diverse theoretical constructs and suggests
that methods and theories need to work in synergy as “the power of difference, of diverse
perspectives, and of insights coming from different locales in the web of reality reveal their
significance. All of these worldviews - especially when they are juxtaposed in dialogue with
one another - contribute to our understanding of the world in general and the oppression that
leads to human suffering in particular” (2008b, p. 5).

By creating a conversation between critical concerns and a range of social, cultural, place-
based and environmental insights, I expanded and constructed self-awareness as a form of
critical consciousness and as a means for pragmatic pedagogical action. Indeed, Kincheloe
(2008a) suggests that post-formalism takes up on the spirit of Dewey and Vygotsky and
prioritizes the enactment of pragmatic consequences, where there is the possibility of new
insights and new ways of engaging in the world. This purpose-driven approach helped me revisit and research IAP as it offers new insights and engagements in each creative world it embodies.

Through the influence of critical pedagogy, I reject the traditional empiricist mode of theoretical understanding, where there is no variation in context. Instead I hold the view, like Kincheloe (2007), that theory is a:

cultural and linguistic artefact, its interpretation of the object of its observation is inseparable from the historical dynamics that have shaped it… The task of the bricoleur is to attack this complexity, uncovering the invisible artefacts of power and culture, and documenting the nature of their influence on not only their own research but on scholarship in general. In this process bricoleurs act upon the concept that theory is not an explanation of nature - it is more an explanation of our relation to nature. (p. 949)

This theoretical complexity as advocated by Kinchloe (2007) is evident in my Photo Book when for instance, in section 4, Art adventures in other places, the artwork and narratives expand and construct my critical consciousness. This is brought about through a range of place-based, environmental, critical, social and cultural insights. As my artwork explores drought resistant plants in the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens and the Northern territory desert I am prompted to explore various place-based and environmental insights and theories. This then leads to further artworks and discussion on my (in)ability to connect deeply to this place and how my ‘white’ priveledge (dis)connects me to this hot desert place. The artwork and narratives in this section prompt me to (re)consider cultural, social and critical concerns as they uncover aspects of power and agency in relation to IAP.

*Place-Based Ways of Knowing and their Influence on IAP*

Each Creative World was positioned according to notions of place and space, as material possibility, context and subject. Place, and its interconnection with space, is understood through aspects of environmental art (Gooding, 2002; Sonfist, 1983), Indigenous ways of knowing (Arrows, 2008; Bird Rose, 1996), sense of place (Tuan, 1977), place pedagogy (Somerville, 2011), critical place-based pedagogy (Gruenewald, 2003), intersubjective and sociocultural ways of knowing (McKenzie, 2008), third place ways of knowing (Bhabha, 1994), and the notion of the contact zone (Pratt, 1992).

Acclaimed Australian poet Judith Wright’s work in The Upside-Down Hut calls us to “speak from within… [Australia, and to] live through landscape and event” (Wright, 1969, p. 332). This work prompted me to explore place as a key component of IAP. Inspired by Australian
Indigenous ways of knowing, I also looked to the work of Bird Rose (1996) to ascertain how country and belonging to place is central to ways of knowing and being.

People talk about the country in the same way they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country. People say that country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy... country is a living entity with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will toward life. Because of this richness, country is home, and peace; nourishment for body, mind, and spirit; heart’s ease. (1996, p. 7)

Grunewald’s (2003) work enables place-based ways of knowing to be explored via critical pedagogy. His notion of a critical pedagogy of place provides a framework for educational theory where practice and research synthesize elements of critical pedagogy and place-based education and provide a converged means of looking at the world. Bringing this to the study enabled me to explore the social and ecological places we inhabit in each creative world. It helps me examine the queries and challenges that IAP brings forth that question dominant culture and conventional education (p. 3). Gruenewald’s work fits well with critical art pedagogy (Cary, 1998a) and enables research to openly explore a critical view of place/space through art/place experiences. Building on Gruenewald’s work, McKenzie (2008) suggests that we “accommodate a broader range of possible places of pedagogy” (p. 362) through an intersubjective and socio-ecological approach. She says that such pedagogical spaces need not necessarily be “bounded by geographical locations... [but instead could be]... intersubjective experiences that comprise the where of the learning of the student” (p. 361). McKenzie (2008) suggests that these places do not have to be a physical place “but can also be in and of experiences of friendship, art, literature, irony, cultural difference, community” (p. 361). In addition, Sommerville’s (2007) work on the intersections between place, pedagogy and change gave my research a way to speak about place/space/body and arts-based ways of knowing.

In summary, a critical view of art pedagogy in tandem with a critical view of place-based pedagogy enable IAP to explore meaningful and local topics of interest. These approaches foster agency amongst participants as they explore locally derived materials, context and subject.

**Sociocultural Influence on Immersive Art Pedagogy**

Place-based and critical ways of knowing led to sociocultural ways of approaching art making, teaching and research so that inter-relational aspects of knowing could be included in the research. Sociocultural ways of knowing brought together participants’ interests and lived experiences with discipline knowledge so that in the meeting there was a co-construction of knowledge. The emphasis was on relational connections between the
individual, the community and the culture rather than on developmental standards (Rogoff, 1995, 1998). IAP recognises that learning in art is built by connecting the views of individual, community and society with and alongside the subject/discipline knowledge of art learning and teaching. This approach has certain similarities with Hedegard and Chaiklin’s (2005) concept of radical-local teaching and learning whereby “the societal, the general and the individual must be integrated in subject matter teaching” (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005, p. 42). They suggest a double-move process whereby integration of subject matter with participants’ everyday experiences is integrated as a two way process with discipline knowledge as a means to develop authentic learning.

By exploring the relational aspects between viewpoints, the participants, their community, the institutional and cultural frameworks, we are more able to see where people are connected and involved with each other’s concepts of self, empowerment and disempowerment. By tuning into juxtapositions, difference and sameness of stance, a critical awareness is developed and made possible through the art experience. As Grierson (2003) suggests, undertaking a critical approach to practice ensures that:

> attention is given to cultural, social, economic and political discourses, that throw light on ways power relations may be constituted, reproduced or resisted as part of the social. A critical pedagogical practice enables interrogation of how the arts (whatever the arts may or may not be) may be constituted, considered and legitimated within social relations and institutional systems. (p. 102)

In the formative stages of the research, my intentions were socially critical. The creative worlds enacted an approach to education and art making that viewed knowledge as socially constructed. This influenced me to acknowledge the inextricable relationship between learner and teacher whereby there was shared responsibility between learners/participants and me as teacher/coordinator. In addition, this socially critical view affected the way that I positioned my art practice as an influence on my teaching and vice versa. My emphasis on learning in the community; inquiry based teaching (Hamston & Murdoch, 1996) and participatory and democratic forms of decision making is in line with socially critical theory.

**Arts-Based Influences on IAP**

The theoretical approaches examined thus far do not capture the entirety of my approach. They do not speak to the value of practice in art teaching or practice in art, that in and of themselves offer the research a way of knowing that is arts-based and a/r/tographically informed. For this reason the research invested in the tenets of practice based, arts-based and a/r/tographically informed research, which then intertwined with the other theoretical informants to reveal multiple ways of understanding the data.
Practice is central to IAP and underlying my theoretical position is a core belief in practice as a way of knowing. Practice as teacher and as artist was the central means through which knowledge was understood in each creative world. This enabled relational and meaningful connections to occur. Understanding the impact of art practice and teaching practice on knowledge creation led me to explore where IAP sits on the spectrum of arts-based research.

In the contextual review I investigated various approaches to researching in, through and about art (UNESCO, 2010) and explain how I came to choose a/r/tography as the defining approach.

I consider that including the self in the data, while possibly regarded as a limitation by some, to be a strength in the study. As a practitioner-researcher (Robson, 2002), I was able to reflect on the practice within my work (as artist, educator) and simultaneously carry out inquiry that will benefit my ongoing work in these roles.

My employment also influenced my theoretical uptake. In the university setting, research is part of my job and I am “officially part practitioner, part researcher… [and a]… true hybrid” (Robson, 2002, p. 534) active in art practice, teaching/educational practice and arts-based research. According to Gray and Mullins (2004), it is this “insider knowledge, experience and status [that] lends your research credibility and trustworthiness in the eyes of your peers” (p. 23), largely due to the way that the reflective practice required within such an approach exposes the "complexity, dynamism and unpredictability of the real world" (p. 23).

The following table, adapted from Leavy (2009, p. 259), shows how arts-based research is derived from, and extends, qualitative research in marked contrast to quantitative research. The main tenets of a/r/tography that inform the study are listed. These points are further discussed at Chapter 4.2.1, pp.193-201.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Traditional Qualitative</th>
<th>Arts-Based</th>
<th>Main tenets of A/r/tography that Inform this Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Stories, images, sounds, scenes, sensory</td>
<td>Art as event, Renderings, Heeding the in-between, Embodiment, Inter-corporeality Relational aesthetics, Research constituted through visual and text (art + graphy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td>Evocation</td>
<td>Meaning making through simultaneous use of text, situations, time and s/place,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabulating</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Re(presenting)</td>
<td>Making and becoming self and exploring (y)our/(s)p(l)ace through art, text, situation, time and space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-neutral</td>
<td>Value-laden</td>
<td>Political, consciousness-raising, emancipation</td>
<td>Multivocality Linking artist/researcher/teacher Acknowledging the in-between spaces of artist/researcher/teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Process Interpretation</td>
<td>Authenticity Truthfulness</td>
<td>Rhizomatic ways of knowing Renderings to analyze and open possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non closure, Entanglement Interrupting clarity for authentic meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prove/convince</td>
<td>Persuade</td>
<td>Compel</td>
<td>Acknowledges in-between spaces of traditional binaries eg everyday/institutional; place/space Welcomes complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Trans-disciplinary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: A/r/tographic Tenets that Informed the Research
**Qualitative Research as A/r/tographic Bricolage**

The a/r/tographic tenets (see Table 8) that informed the research included: understandings of the IAP model as always being in the middle of one project and the next; acknowledging the importance of art experiences as embodied ways of knowing (Grosz, 2008a; Springgay, 2008b) ways of interrupting clarity (Clark/Keefe, 2009); and the non-closure seeking approaches that a/r/tographic renderings offer research. The six a/r/tographic renderings (detailed in Figure 9, p.68) offer ways to analyse and think about the research as a forward making set of possibilities. This sits well with the way I think as an artist and is used as a way to build aesthetic voice within the analysis and the developing possibilities that IAP evoked across the creative worlds. These intersections, made possible through a/r/tography, enabled me to explore the complexity and layered nature of what it means to strive for IAP.

Through a/r/tography my research takes up the stance of an interpretive bricoleur; creating a pieced-together bricolage; a set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of IAP as a complex set of situations. “The solution (bricolage) which is the result of the bricoleur’s method is an [emergent] construction” (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991, p. 161) that changes and takes new forms as the bricoleur adds different tools, methods, and techniques of representation and interpretation to the puzzle. The qualitative researcher as bricoleur, or maker of quilts, uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, and empirical materials are at hand (Becker, 1998, p. 2). As artist/researcher/teacher I invent, or piece together, new tools or techniques, as they become needed. This is clearly evident when IAP develops a range of narrative devices to interrogate and lead its development. Choosing which interpretive practices to employ was not necessarily made in advance. As Nelson et al. (1992) note, the “choice of research practices depends upon the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on the context” (p. 2) and “what is available in the context, and what the researcher can do in the setting” (p. 5).

**From Arts-Based to A/r/tographic**

As the story of my methodological approach played out during the study, I moved towards a view of theory with data is understood through multiple, and sometimes simultaneous, theoretical perspectives gleaned through arts-based research and the advent of a/r/tography. My way of working and knowing were not defined as a/r/tographic in the early phase of the research but were later analysed through this arts-based approach to art practice, teaching and research. By employing an a/r/tographic approach I understood the creative worlds within the study. This was achieved by using the IAP model and the in-between roles of artist, researcher and teacher together with the six a/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) innate to a/r/tographic research, thereby adding another dimension to the research.
The a/r/tographic position on embodiment enabled me to employ touch as a means of knowing where sensory experiences and embodiment foster an engagement with given subject matter (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxi). In addition an a/r/tographic disposition enabled a relationship between embodiment and an ethics of being so that attention was given to “understanding the relations between identities rather than in terms of describing identities, intensions, or acts of individuals or groups” (Springgay, 2008b, p. 160). According to Springgay, it is this a/r/tographic disposition to “being-with and the in-between… that enables the possibilities of an ethics of embodiment” (Springgay, 2008d, p. 154). This idea speaks to the notion of the relational artist (Bourriaud, 2002) and the relational educator (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005).

Also important to the study was how a/r/tography’s interest in visual and textual understandings and experiences includes the concept of the non-linear, which enables readers/viewers “to explore competing visions of the context, to become immersed in and merge with new realities to comprehend” (Denzin, 2000, p. 6). This provided a sense of being connected across the data all at once. The simultaneous revelation of ideas and concepts created new possibilities for the reader/viewer and the researcher/writer as they were produced and understood in relation to each other.

**Within an Artistic Participatory Paradigm**

We suggest that an engagement with a/r/tography provides an interrelational map to assist the transition from a modernist viewing paradigm to a postmodern listening paradigm to a post-postmodern viewing and listening paradigm. This involves maintaining the autonomous viewing self while adding the reciprocal listening self to one’s practice as an artist/researcher/teacher within a complex and diverse multicentered society. (Bickel et al., 2011, p. 99)

Ontologically, my research is in line with an artistic/participatory paradigm, a term used to describe participatory action research in relation to artistic means of knowing (Australian Technology Network of Universities, 2007). However, I am aware that these post formal influences challenge the traditional notion of the term paradigm and it may be better considered as paradigm sous rature. I adopted a subjective-objective stance by connecting researcher with participant, place with art making, and participant findings with responsive pedagogy. At times, as in Creative World 1 the research shared a collaborative aim with artists and community members. I created alongside them and planned in conjunction with community input and feedback. Although my pedagogical approach to Creative World 2 was not collaborative per se, it sought to interrelate with the preferred artistic directions of participants to illuminate their interests and foster their preferred artistic directions. In Creative World 3 the act of making art about a given place/topic illuminated my
understanding of the given theme through the interrelationship between the subject and me, as revealed through the process of making. Heron and Reason (1997) explain how this subjective-objective experience is in fact an interactive encounter.

To touch, see, or hear something or someone does not tell us either about our self all on its own or about a being out there all on its own. It tells us about a being in a state of interrelation and co-presence with us. Our subjectivity feels the participation of what is there and is illuminated by it. (p. 279)

Epistemologically, my research took on a critical subjectivity which also reflected an artistic participatory world view. Heron and Reason (1997) suggest that this entails the interplay of shared, experiential and practical knowing. They suggest that, “the knower participates in the known and that evidence is generated in at least four interdependent ways - experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical” (Heron & Reason, 1997, p. 279). Their articulation of these four interdependent ways of knowing resonates with my research.

IAP makes experiential knowing possible as participants directly encounter “feeling and imaging the presence of some energy, entity, person, place, process or thing” (Heron & Reason, 1997, pp. 280-281). Presentational knowledge is enacted through IAP when experiential knowledge is “symbolized in graphic, plastic, musical, vocal and verbal art-forms… [enabling]… experiential knowing of the world in the metaphors of aesthetic creation, in expressive spatiotemporal forms of imagery” (p. 281). Propositional knowing comes about through knowing that “something is the case; knowledge by description of some energy, entity, person, place, process or thing” (p. 281). In the research this was evident when the Creative Junction artists’ combined their own knowledge of place with that of the community to express the energy and entity of the Little River site through natural materials. Practical knowing is also a primary concern and brings the other types of knowing into fruition. “It presupposes a conceptual grasp of principles and standards of practice, presentational elegance, and experiential grounding in the situation within which the action occurs. It fulfils the three prior forms of knowing… and consummates them with its autonomous celebration of excellent accomplishment” (p. 281).

Methodologically, the research was participatory, action and practice driven. It prioritises the practical, experiential and contextual through artistic means. According to Heron and Reason (1997) a participatory world view takes on an axiology which “affirms the primary value of practical knowing in the service of human flourishing” (p. 285). This notion of flourishing resonates with the concept of giving voice to participants' creative agency, and speaks to a sense of wellbeing that can be achieved through creative participation.
For Heron and Reason (1997):

this kind of flourishing is practical knowing: knowing how to choose and act - hierarchically, cooperatively, autonomously - to enhance personal and social fulfilment and that of the eco-networks of which we are a part. Such human fulfilment is consummated in the very process of choosing and acting. So in the participatory paradigm, practical knowing is an end in itself; and intellectual knowing is of instrumental value in supporting practical excellence. (p. 285)

As the IAP model developed so did the articulation of my aim to sustain creativity beyond a given class or project, to empower participants to flourish and to go on creating beyond set art experiences.

2.2.4 Validity and Research Methodology

A position on validity is required for research projects that present data, analysis and interpretation. Piantanida and Garman (1999) provide useful criteria to judge the soundness of qualitative research and dissertations. These are integrity, verité, rigor, utility, vitality, aesthetics, and ethics (pp. 146-155). These criteria are proposed as a qualitatively sensitive framework, and associated language, to assess the soundness and worthiness of a qualitative methodology. This differs to quantitatively-based notions of validity and reliability.

As the research used a qualitative framework, its validity can be appraised using the seven Piantanida and Garman (1999) criteria as follows:

• **Integrity** was a core quality in the study’s architecture; each creative world supported the next as they flowed together conceptually. Justification of each creative world provided well-reasoned connections between how the inquiry was conducted and the knowledge generated.

• **Verité** was evident through the consistency between the study and accepted knowledge in the field. Where I diverted from accepted knowledge, I provided sound theoretical support for adopting other approaches.

• **Rigor** was evidenced by the layered reflective and reflexive devices throughout the study.

• **Utility** was an obvious aspect of the research as each creative world enacted change in the next. The study is professionally relevant to my ongoing career as an artist/researcher/teacher. It is also useful for teachers of art, artists and community artistic coordinators.

• **Vitality** was clearly evident through the use of powerful images and narratives and a sense of vibrancy and excitement through the creative discoveries made during the research.
Methodology and Conceptual Practices

- **An aesthetic quality** was evident in the conceptual elegance of the study’s design and when meaningful connections were made between the individual and the universe, an effect of good art and good inquiry was evident.

- **An ethics** of being and being with (Springgay, 2008b) was clearly evident in the research as was the clear respect for the integrity of the participants. An ethics application to the University Ethics Committee was keenly enacted to ensure ethical protocols and respect for Indigenous participants.

As the research included arts-based inquiry, I also employed arts-based criteria (Finley, 2003). This criteria set was relational in essence and looked to community, to action within community and to visionary critical discourses to suggest future possibilities.

**Validity through Arts-Based Inquiry**

Arts-based inquiry (like any good qualitative inquiry) should embrace a set of commitments that are… relational: first, to community - to dialogical, nurturing, caring, and democratic relationships between researchers and participants who share their commitment to understanding of social life; second, to action within community - to engage research work that is locally useable… responsive to cultural and political issues… that takes a stand against social injustice… and… to visionary critical discourses - to research efforts that examine how things are but also imagine how they could be otherwise. (Finley, 2003, p. 293)

Finley (2003) says that research conducted in this way is likely to be aesthetically satisfying, and complex with “compelling plots and natural conversation… [with evidence of]… local colour and detailed portraiture of persons and lives” (p. 293). She creates a post-foundational rubric for assessing arts-based qualitative inquiry, which I used in the study. Finley (2003) asks:

Are the researchers performing a useful, local, community service by conducting the research? Could the research be harmful in any way to the community of participants?

Whose voices do I hear most clearly, those of the researchers or those of the participants?

Is there evidence of a blurring of roles, of researcher being researched and of participants as researchers?

Have researchers been willing to experiment with form, both in their practice of research and in their representations? Are they limited by the hegemony of research discourse?
How does the form of representation... create an open space for dialogue between readers/perceivers and research participants, as well as opening dialogue with researchers and artists? Are research documents writerly, or painterly?

Does the research... allow a heuristic, “open” text, in which there are spaces for multiple meanings to be constructed? Does the research provoke questions, rather than draw conclusions?

Is the practice and the representation of research passionate and visceral? Does it involve activity that creates opportunities for communion among participants, researchers, and the various discourse communities who might be audiences of (and participants with) the research text?

Does the representation, both through its form and its content, have the capacity to connect its local, community service purpose with purposes of its audiences? Is the reader/viewer, or participant, likely to be moved to some kind of action?

Finally, I acknowledge that craftsmanship, artistry, and expertism are not among the qualities I seek in arts-based research. I am far more impressed with, and find great artistry in, experiences of passion, communion, and social responsibility. (2003, p. 294)

Finley’s rubric provided a guide for my choice of narratives and discussions in the study. It helped me capture complex yet aesthetically pleasing stories and events that reflected the lived experiences and local of the research participants.

2.2.5 Concluding the Methodological Journey

My methodological story played out over time. Initially I aimed to understand the lived experience of people through IAP. I explored interpretive, sociocultural, place-based and critical ways of knowing. I then acknowledged how arts practice could be understood as relational and critical. This led me to practice-based ways of knowing and arts-based research with particular reference to a/r/tography. Post-foundational theoretical insights further informed my theoretical journey and led to a shift in my understanding of informing paradigms. The paradigm becomes understood as under erasure (sous rature) such that it is necessary but does not fully cover what I need to say. I eventually came to understand that my position is an a/r/tographical approach. This enabled me to construct IAP from a multi-vocal perspective that acknowledged the interplay of a/r/t and the impact that methodological bricolage could offer my understandings of IAP as it grew and developed across the creative worlds.
2.3 Description of Methods and Data

Each creative world developed its own methods according to the site and the intentions of the people involved. Qualitative researchers often discuss the use of multi-method approaches, where a range of methods are used to construct and reveal the data. Being arts-based and arts-led, the study employed multi-methods to create and explore the data. In each creative world the importance of the visual and textual relationship was primary. Visual data was collected through artwork, pedagogical documentation and photos, digital storytelling, visual journals, the Photo Book, colour scheme, artefacts, and found objects from nature. The visual mostly appears alongside narrative accounts so that an intertextual understanding is made possible through image and text.

In addition, the six a/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) were employed as a way in which to explore the possibilities of IAP through embodied art/writing and a/r/t roles. A/r/tographers argue that these renderings are concepts rather than specific methods. They state that “renderings are not methods. Renderings are theoretical spaces through which to explore artistic ways of knowing and being research. They may inform the doing of research, the final representation, and/or the ways in which viewers/readers understand and access an a/r/tographical text” (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005, p. 889).

However, as I position myself as a bricoleur, who has come to a/r/tography through a range of theoretical dispositions, I hold to the notion of multi-methods but also acknowledge that the six a/r/tographic renderings are conceptual practices that are used to open up data to many possibilities. The renderings are discussed further at Chapter 4.

2.3.1 Artwork

In the study artwork was positioned as a way of knowing that opens up aesthetic, poetic, emotional, issue based, place-based, critical/social/environmental, playful and embodied ways of knowing. Artwork, although deeply valued, was not conceived as an endpoint in itself. It is positioned as a way to know more about life. The quality of artworks was deemed to be an important aspect of the research as they showcase the aesthetic potential of IAP as well as provide an example of quality arts based research.

The artwork featured in the creative worlds varied according to the affordances of each site. In Creative World 1, natural materials of place saw community and project artists move from literal to lateral to metaphoric expressions of place. The manner in which we worked with the materials provided conceptual links to the land itself. In contrast, in Creative World 2 students created artworks from traditional art materials. However they were exposed to a broad range of media, skills and techniques applicable to primary school settings. Conceptually, this practice was built on the notion of revisiting as a means to build deep knowledge of a given
subject matter and to develop skill and confidence across media and mark making. In Creative World 3 the choice of media was highly influenced by the IAP process, location, and conceptual themes. In order to be immersed, I revisited subject matter across media, to know the object/concept at hand in a deeply connected manner.

In all creative worlds the artwork was accompanied by narrative to tell the story of the embodied knowing made possible through the IAP process. In all creative worlds the major focus was on artwork as agency rather than solely showcasing technical proficiency.

2.3.2 Pedagogical Documentation and Photos

The Reggio Emilia approach to “making learning visible” (Gardner, Vecchi, Rinaldi, & Paola, 2011) inspired me to document and highlight the learning process in each creative world; to capture “the world of vision - what one can see, what one can understand, what one can convey to others in graphic form” (Giudici, Krechevsky, & Rinaldi, 2001, p. 27).

My use of documentation helped me understand how IAP played out in (Wien, Guyevskey, & Berdoussis, 2011) “locations of learning across multiple domains - in individuals, in groups, classrooms, disciplinary domains, communities” (Concluding remarks, para. 8).

In each creative world the primary use of photography was pedagogical documentation. In Creative World 1 photos explored “important community impulses... [and]... a wider observational focus (through an insider/outsider experience)” (Norman, 1991, p. 195) and the interconnections between participant observations, community interviews and project photographs. The photos provided us with a way to remember, discuss and determine key themes and patterns to use when creating future artworks and communications with the community. In Creative World 2 students documented their learning by taking photos of artworks in process, completed and on display. Their photos featured in visual journals as a prompt to discuss the meaning, process, product, medium and technical skills required to make their artworks. Students undertook a type of “photovoice” (Wang & Burris, 1997) process using participatory photography to represent their creative voice as it evolved across the unit. In Creative World 3, photos documented evidence of given artworks. The photo book genre lends itself to the documentation and reiteration of photographs as an aesthetic system of communication. From Pink (2007), I understand this as a method of “creating and representing knowledge” (p. 22) rather than just being a way of collecting data.

Photos documented process, product, and participation throughout the creative worlds and were highly suited to capture the uniqueness of given artworks and local art experiences. They served as a stimulus for reflective thinking and reflexive planning for future IAP experiences.
2.3.3 Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling is the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. Digital stories derive their power by weaving images, music, narrative and voice together, thereby giving deep dimension and vivid color to characters, situations, experiences, and insights. (Rule, 2011, para. 1)

A digital story was used to further interrogate the notion of IAP through yet another conceptual practice. By taking on a time-based medium with vocal narrative and emotive content, I revisited IAP in a new way. The process saw me craft the seven digital storytelling elements (Australian Centre for the Moving Image, 2008) as a way to (re)think and (re)visit IAP. I was able to (re)process and (re)produce IAP’s story using arts-based methods in both the creation and analysis aspects of the digital story, offering another layer of reflexivity. From an artistic perspective I hoped that the reflexive and creative impetus of the digital genre would help me identify the origins and essence of IAP. By (re)processing, I mean that I was reflexively telling the IAP story in an informal format to (re)discover the intuitive elements of the process, while re-curatoring and re-selecting IAP products (artworks and ideas) of relevance. By (re)producing, I mean that I was retelling the IAP story in a different genre, this time using moving images, text and voice. By adding voice, time and a sense of connection to my lived world, I created an informal account of IAP.

Placing my digital story (Tram Rides to Exhibitions: Exploring Immersive Art Pedagogy, 2008) on a weebly site (http://tramridestoexhibitions.weebly.com) was a socially creative act. Through it I hope to share my IAP experiences with the academic community and to join in the democratization of digital methods as employed in arts-based research.

Digital storytelling works at the intersection of the emotional and the epistemological aspects of learning, bridging story and theory, intellect and affect… As emotions are reclaimed cognitively, they enable students to write themselves into existing discourses and to contribute personal perspectives to an academic community. (Oppermann & Coventry, 2012, para. 1)

2.3.4 Use of Visual Journal – between Images and Words

It is not just theorists and educational scholars who informed my choice of methods. I also examined the visual journals of Frida Kahlo (Fuentes & Lowe, 1995), Peter Beard (Beard, Aronson, & Edwards, 2006), Shaun Tan (2010, 2010b) and Leonardo Da Vinci (Arasse, 1998). Each offered inspired examples of how the visual journal can be both a considered and serendipitously creative journey that integrates disparate and layered knowing through images and text. In the study visual journals were used as a reflective tool (Ganim & Fox, 1999; Deavera & McAuliffe, 2009) for creative inquiry (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008) to
capture the dynamic growth of evolving images, words, ideas and tensions/possibilities within the journal process.

In all creative worlds the visual journal was positioned as a relational tool between people, place/s and ideas in progress. The journals were promoted as an informal process, where mistakes could be made, and where handwritten notes and in-process ideas were valued. Throughout, participants reflected on artworks in the making as their images and concepts roamed and grew to form a repertoire of their creative experiences.

In Creative World 1 the visual journals, photos and narrative data are central to the review and development of the three permanent sculptures that were created in the Yarra Junction site. In Creative World 2 a distinction was made between the visual journal and the resource folder, both of which were prescribed assessments for students undertaking the subject. The visual journal and the resource folder were considered relational tools. In Creative World 3 I kept six visual journals and used them as a tool to help determine the themes for the Photo Book.

2.3.5 Towards a Photo Book Hybrid: the Artist/r/t Photo Book

Although I used the *Blurb* photo book program to create the Project aspect of my research, the resulting book, (Re)connecting: Immersive Art Pedagogy (Creative World 3) is not strictly a Photo Book. *Blurb* and other photo book programs enable the home computer user to upload digital photos, to arrange them into personalized photo and text based memories, and to produce a professional looking bound book and in a relatively cost-effective manner. The Photo Book features photos of my artwork and descriptive narratives. However it is not an artist’s book which would generally be considered to be a book-like object “where the book is intended as a work of art in itself” (Bury, 1995, p. 1).

I used the photo book format as a hybrid form to intertwine photos of artworks, art experiences, narratives, diagrams and explanatory text. My aim was to showcase the art pedagogy undertaken in Creative World 3 - the artworks made, analysis of the process and future considerations relevant to art making, art teaching and art-based research. I came to understand that my book is in fact a hybrid form; not an artist’s catalogue, not an artist’s book and not a Photo Book. Therefore, I named the Project book, A/r/tist Photo Book, with the emphasis being on the role of artist given that the book explores my own artworks albeit through the lens of artist, researcher and teacher.

The printed version of the Photo Book is intimate in relation to the size of a human body, so that there is a sense of encompassing the content. The choice of format was deliberately democratic, so that the Project could be shared beyond the confines of an exhibition and
beyond the thesis shelf of the University Library. The photo book genre form offered a way to make arts-based research more accessible to a wider audience.

2.3.6 Colour Scheme

The aesthetic of orange and blue have always appealed to me. When first introduced to the paintings of Australian artist Sydney Nolan, the orange and ochre-reds of his rocky landscapes under vast sweeps of blue skies sent shivers of excitement down my spine. Through complementary use he made orange and blue sing with contrasting vitality, calling out to the essence of our dry/wet land. Aesthetically, my Photo Book aims for the same sense of vitality through the use of orange and blue, with subdued greys and white/black contrasts to provide graphic intensity.

In the colour scheme for the Exegesis I used a differently hued orange for the each creative world in Figures 3, 4 and 5: yellow-orange for Creative World 1; middle orange for Creative World 2; and red-orange for Creative World 3. I chose orange because of its dynamic impact that calls out to be noticed, and paradoxically is a colour for warning. With each creative world, I want the reader/viewer to think of that creative world as a dynamic site that also alerts us to new ways of thinking about art pedagogy.

The cool qualities of blue, that suggest reflection, are used to delineate the Photo Book renderings and a/r/t narratives. They also delineate various images of water/immersion in both the Photo Book and Exegesis. In contrast the 4-C narratives and the critical narratives employ an orange colour scheme to highlight their content. The contextual literature review in the Exegesis also uses blue to delineate the informing literature for each site, while the experiential data is delineated by orange across the creative worlds. Orange and blue are used as the informing colour scheme in the Project to highlight aspects of the research and reflect aesthetic and storied positioning.

2.3.7 Artefacts

The immersive focus of IAP lends itself to the use of made objects or artefacts. Artwork, photos, narratives, digital story, interview data and the Photo Book itself are important artefacts within this study. Crowther (1993) suggests that we engage with artefacts through both our perceptual and intellectual capacities.

My use of artefacts extended to active participant observations, planning and communication documents, documentation processes, journal articles, PowerPoint presentations, teaching materials and resources, art-based assignments and art books. In addition, I was informed by found objects from nature, that although not man-made, can be interrogated through art to reveal cultural and environmental connections. Photos of the artefacts that were made and used in the creative worlds are presented at Chapter 1 (see Figures 4, 5 and 6).
2.3.8 Found Objects from Nature

The found object was employed as a means to explore immersion in place, culture and material ways of knowing. In Creative World 1 participants collected, wove and sculpted with stringy bark. They collected eucalyptus leaves to dye cloth. They selected found objects from nature to emboss into clay shards that were placed back into the site. They made sculptures from a collection of harvested objects found while walking the Yarra Junction site. In Creative World 3, found objects from place enabled me to explore the outback and found objects washed from the sea enabled me to create sculptural installations. Most of the found objects in the study were naturally occurring (rather than man-made) and offered the possibility of being transformed into curiosities that talk to us about our culture, our place and the art that has surrounded us for the past century.

Found objects offer sensory and immersive ways to develop aesthetic awareness with everyday objects that have not traditionally been thought of as art material. They are context dependent and as such, challenge our definition of the nature of art. I position them as agents for creative and accessible connection to local culture, sense of place and current art practices.

2.3.9 Autoethnography

In the study I was both participant and researcher. In each creative world I included my own subjective narratives as part of the research. These included my observations and understandings of IAP in relation to: my own experiences; participants’ experiences; the settings the cultural context; and my roles as artistic coordinator, teacher and artist. I also related these understandings to the wider world of art/education, creativity, culture, context and critical ways of knowing. This approach is consistent with Springgay’s call for an ethics of “being with” (Springgay, 2008b, p. 160) through a/r/tography and is in line with Ellis’ (2004) definition of autoethnography, where:

research, writing, and method… connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural and social. This form usually features concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection. (2004, p. xix)

I hope that others will question the dominant ways in which art education is taught and appreciate the possibilities offered by IAP. My choice of autoethnographic text aims to call readers and writers into dialogue and debate (Holman Jones, 2005, p. 764) to change the world and make it a better place.
2.3.10 Interviews

A series of qualitative arts-based interviews, of about one hour each, were conducted in the study. The interviews focussed on participants’ views on each creative world and their opinions on the types of learning and teaching experienced through IAP. Interview questions addressed the learning and teaching approaches that were important and relevant to IAP and relevant to participants’ engagement with art practice. Second round interviews addressed notions of agency through the participants’ own art experiences.

Selective sampling techniques were used to recruit participants who had developed new and interesting ways of reconstructing pedagogy and practice. I chose participants who had demonstrated change in their artwork and/or their views toward artistic pedagogy. This enabled me to explore how IAP transformed or challenged participants’ view of art pedagogy.

Pseudonyms have been used for all participants in this study except for the artists employed in the Creative Junction project, my own artwork and narratives; and the found object artwork made by myself and my children, entitled ‘Our Construction’, p.161 – 171 of the photo book.

Rather than directly asking about the informing theories behind IAP, I employed a more open-ended approach where interviewees were encouraged to tell their stories and talk about their particular experiences.

As Chase (2003) states: “the more fully particular are the stories we hear, the stronger our analyses will be of the relationship between the general and the particular” (p. 292). This approach is in line with what Kvale (1996) describes as “intersubjective interaction” (p. 66).

The interviews were taped and transcribed. The analysis entailed identifying emerging themes, unique insights and differences that contested, provoked or revealed the intentions of IAP. I looked for stories that spoke to the concept of immersion and/or the notions of change, transformation, innovation, displacement, uniqueness and individual expression. I also looked for submerged and flowing stories (Chase, 2003) that became apparent through disjointedness or flowing elements, respectively, of the narratives.

The interview data was carefully checked, questioned and theorized to ensure that my take outs and the findings were valid. Verification approaches included re-reading and re-visitng the interview summaries and confirming with interviewees that the interview summaries were a true and accurate reflection of their comments.

The interview discussions elicited a wealth of valuable data that helped inform the IAP model and the evolving literature review that built up as each creative world was performed.

Pseudonyms have been used for all participants in this study except for the artists employed in the Creative Junction project, my own artwork and narratives; and the found object artwork made by myself and my children, entitled ‘Our Construction’, p.161 – 171 of the photo book.
2.3.11 Narrative Method

My approach to narrative inquiry entailed compiling mutual storytelling (from the interview process) and then re-storying as the research proceeded. I used a story format to represent complex phenomena in a simplified fashion. Participants’ stories (including my story) were the phenomena. The ensuing narratives, including the critical narratives which complete each creative world, were the inquiry.

**Storytelling:** While some set questions were used as prompts to initiate discussion in the interviews, participants were encouraged to talk in an open-ended manner about their stories and experiences. The ensuing dialogue, a journey formed through disjointed and fragmented stories, told the story of IAP as understood through participants’ reflexive and subjective accounts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Abma, 1999).

**(Re)storying into narrative:** The interviews were transcribed and constructed into narratives. As narrator (Burke & Malone, 2000), I identified the inherent meaning to the stories, “developing a flow of events and experiences as well as using a number of frameworks” (p. 7). As I wove aspects of these stories into narrative form, I asked: What could these narratives expose about IAP? What could they reveal or contest about IAP? Could they offer new insights or point to gaps in IAP? How could they help me to understand IAP and its growth across sites? And what could they reveal about artist, researcher and teacher? My own artist narratives in Creative World 3 also responded directly to IAP through my artwork, offering a personal response as artist. Further narratives provided a range of approaches that opened the data to multiple viewpoints (Lather, 1991), providing a “crystalline view” (Richardson, 2000) of IAP.

**Narrative inquiry:** Stories can speak for themselves or they can be interpreted to reveal underlying patterns and themes. Throughout this research I collected stories about artwork, participation in IAP and my relationship with art over time. This storied data is narrative data; it is about what matters in each of the creative worlds as spoken by the participants. This narrative data reveals human stories. As Bochner and Ellis (2002) suggest, it is through stories that we make sense of the world, be it our past, our present or our questions about the future.
2.3.12 Critical Narratives

The intersecting ideas behind critical pedagogy and narrative analysis were used to inform the critical narratives in the study. That is, the critical narratives that followed from the participant narratives in the study, speak to notions of power, personal agency, hope and transformation as experienced through IAP. In addition they speak through the narrative process. Like Barone (1992), my aim was to capture the heartbeat, the essence of participants’ experiences, alongside and in intersection with a broader political view that speaks to notions of empowerment. As Barone says, “the critical educational storyteller is out to prick the consciences of readers by inviting a re-examination of the values and interests undergirding certain discourses, practices, and institutional arrangements found in today’s schools” (p. 143). As a critical storyteller, rather than a critical theorist, I did not use a systematic method for analysis. Instead I extracted the themes, patterns and insights from each participant narrative. I used an analysis method that included the 4-C perspective (creative, connecting, contextual and critical view points), the developing IAP model, the a/r/tographic renderings and the lens of artist/researcher/teacher.

The critical narratives helped me construct new ways to rethink and progress IAP. As Denzin (2009) suggests:

the critical democratic storytelling imagination is pedagogical. As a form of instruction, it helps persons think critically historically, and sociologically... It contributes to a reflective ethical self-consciousness. It gives people a language and a set of pedagogical practices that turn oppression into freedom, despair into hope, hatred into love, doubt into trust. (pp. 196-197)

2.3.13 From Reflection to Reflexivity

As an active participant in the study, I became a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983). I took on the roles of artistic coordinator, lecturer, and artist. Through these roles I reflected in, on, for and with action. By this I mean that, I reflected while IAP was performed in situ and reflected on action after the workshops and events of the creative worlds. I reflected for action when creating ongoing plans and purpose driven approaches for IAP and reflected with action as future creative possibilities suggested themselves through the immersive process. Gray and Malins (2004) suggest “this type of knowing is dynamic - knowing how rather than knowing what” (p. 22), allowing the practitioner-researcher to speak as an insider to IAP.

This dynamic process became reflexive as I reflected on the self as researcher. There was “a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self within the process of research itself” (Guba & Lincoln,
A reflexive approach encourages engagement with the research topic, participants and the “fluid self in the research setting… [which]… demands that we interrogate each of our selves regarding the ways in which research efforts are shaped and staged around the binaries, contradictions, and paradoxes that form our lives” (p. 279).

Sullivan (2005c) offers a way to understand reflexivity as it affects visual art practice. He states that the notion of self-reflexive practice is “an inquiry process that is directed by personal interest and creative insight, yet is informed by discipline knowledge and research expertise” (2005c, p. 100). He proposes that self-reflexive practice is built through four components. Firstly, where existing data, texts, and contexts are read for transparent understanding so that they can be opened to alternative conceptions and imaginative options. Secondly, where reflection on conceptual strategies is reviewed so that other options are considered and thirdly, where dialogue with the information enables debate and a dialectic between the researcher and the researched. Lastly, where questioning content and contexts of particular settings reveal potential problematic situations, but open up the area to change and further emergence (2005c, pp. 100-101).

2.3.14 Writing Self

The work of Richardson allowed me to engage with “writing as a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about yourself and your topic… [and to also experience writing as]… a way of “knowing” a method of discovery and analysis” (2000, p. 923). This approach to writing enables the writer to be “fully present in our work, more honest, more engaged” (p. 924) and is, I believe, akin to the art process where new perspectives can emerge through the act of making. Richardson (2001) suggests that when we “view writing as a method, we experience… how we ‘word the world’ into existence” (p. 35). This “non-mechanistic” (2000, p. 923) approach to writing helps us discover “new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it. Form and content are inseparable” (p. 923). This approach enables “postmodernist possibilities for qualitative writing, including creative analytic practices and their ethnographic products” (Richardson, 2000, p. 924). My use of a/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) to open up the research to metaphoric and poetic interpretations positions the writing process as intertwined with the art making process. In the study these renderings enabled layers of reflection to occur enabling creative and dynamic interpretations to develop over time and across places. My writing is positioned as “an open place, a method of discovery” (p. 925) where “the sense of self is not homogenized by static writing methods” (p. 924). Richardson’s approach challenges us to write vital texts that make a difference rather than being based on a “static writing model” (p. 925) that silences the researcher’s voice. This contrasts with traditional methods of ethnography where the writer remain distant from the subject.
The narratives in Creative World 3 owe much to Richardson (who allowed her identity to speak in her writing, influenced by post-structural and feminist theories). Through my artist narratives, I allowed myself to be an artist writing. That is, I accessed that zone of experiencing that thinks through the visual, the poetic and the possibilities that the imagination/lived experience can open. My narrative responses enabled me to (re)think practice/theory and to (re)imagine and (re)awaken the artworks in a non-linear, and at times poetic, way. The narratives enabled me to (re)think my artist role. Then, as I took on other narrative identities, such as the a/r/t narrative voice, I wrote through the separate and becoming-contiguous voice of the artist/researcher/teacher. This approach was influenced by Richardson’s (1997b) notion of the “pleated text… [that]… de-disciplines the folds between academic writing, creative writing and autobiography… [and]… is structured rhizomically, the way (my) life is experienced - lines of flight, whirling whirling skirts of pleated texts” (p. 295). As Richardson and Adam St Pierre (2005) contend, “writing is thinking, writing is analysis, writing is indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery” (p. 967). Through the narrative writing in the Exegesis and the Project, I have come to understand, after Adam St. Pierre (2002), that “the author and the text write each other” (p. 65).
3. EXPERIENTIAL DATA AND EVOLVING LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Creative World 1: IAP within an Art and Environment Project

3.1.1 Introduction to Creative World 1

In this section an overview of the Creative Junction Project, its aims and the breadth of activities it encompassed, is presented.

Following is a series of narratives from artistic coordinator, participants and artists who were employed to work on the project. This form of communication is favoured so that the reader/viewer can understand the level of participation and the diverse art methods developed through the use of local/natural materials.

The first narrative, the artistic coordinator’s narrative, intertwines image and text to capture the process, product and immersive intentions of the project. Following this is a series of community narratives that represent the voices of selected participants who attended workshops, festival days and who volunteered on the project. These narratives report on participants’ experience of IAP during the program.

Three artist narratives are then presented. The first is the narrative of Tania, a professional artist who created ephemeral artwork with community participants at the Yarra Junction project site. Her comments relate to key aspects of immersion, such as tuning in, being present and noticing place. She discusses how her artist’s sense of being becomes the basis for her pedagogy as a community artist. The other two artist narratives are of two of the principal project artists, Glenn and Savaad, who had run art and environment workshops that had elicited inspiring community stories and artworks that in turn, were the informing source for enduring sculptural works at the Yarra Junction. Savaad used an immersive approach to the project. He found this creatively and socially empowering. Through IAP he was able to develop ongoing relationships to community, land and Indigenous ways of knowing which inspired his artwork Meeting Place of the Manna Gum Peoples. Glenn’s narrative highlights the way he interconnected artist-led approaches with layered community stories; accessing industrial, environmental and anecdotal stories as he created his artworks. Despite some difficulties in engaging secondary schools to participate in the program, he reports on the transformative potential of his workshop. He exposes an immersive way of thinking where, through the use of the mountain ash as a connecting theme, he explored how land and sky connect across time and place.
The contextual literature review is interspersed throughout the narratives. It reports on the literature that relates to key themes that emerged from the experiential data, including immersion, creativity, sociocultural understandings, critical pedagogy and environmental art. This demonstrates how scholarly literature connects to the experiential data in Creative World 1. The major themes arising from the nexus of practice, praxis and research within Creative World 1 are explored through a discussion of immersion, creativity, sociocultural influences, critical pedagogy and environmental art.

The concluding part of the section discusses how artist, researcher and teacher are (re)connected to each other through IAP.

**Notice for photographs**

The following photographs may contain the names or images of people who are now deceased. Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities may be distressed by seeing the name, or image of a community member who has passed away.

### 3.1.2 Creative Junction Project: An Overview

The joint Shire of Yarra Ranges - VicHealth Creative Junction Project sought to rethink the public space as both an internal and external site for artistic expression (VicHealth, Art and Community Grant Reference No. 2003-0557). The aims of the project were: to promote a sense of social connectedness, economic participation, diversity and freedom from discrimination; to connect art and environment to personal, meaningful experience; and to develop and express a sense of place through art. Accordingly the Creative Junction Project was inspired by community members’ stories, artwork and living culture, and by their connection to the land and to each other.

As artistic coordinator, working in a project team⁴, I developed a program of site-based events to engage community in situated, embodied art activities that explored local culture with nature, in nature, and about nature. My aim was to make the art and environment experiences as immersive as possible so that deep learning could take place within a local environment. This approach reflected UNESCO’s art education directive that “visual arts learning can commence from the local culture, and progressively introduce learners to other world cultures” (Teaero et al., 2004, p. 43). The art program challenged everyday notions of the landscape genre by positioning participants as active art makers inside the landscape

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⁴ The success of the Creative Junction Project was due to the input of the community, invited artists and Jana Scomazzon (LTG), Geraldine Burke (Monash University), Karen Malone (formerly RMIT), Chris Dupé and Bernie Lobert (Shire of Yarra Ranges), John McLeod (VicHealth), Belinda Gillam (formerly Shire of Yarra Ranges) and the project principal artists Glenn Romanis, Savaad Felich and Jane Poynter (photographer).
rather than as passive onlookers of the landscape. Inspired by the poetry of Judith Wright, I wanted participants to express rather than describe place; to adopt a disposition that "lives through landscape and event" (Wright, 1969, p. 332), to expand on Western notions of place through awareness of Indigenous views of country (Bird Rose, 1996), and to learn to play and create with found materials as a means of undertaking material thinking (Carter, 2004) as arts-based research.

Following the literature review and extensive consultation with the community and project team, a series of connector artworks was commissioned. Expressing local knowledge and connecting the community to place and each other, were viewed as central to the formation of these works. They consisted of:

- A series of community workshops, focusing on nature and art to express ways of knowing;
- Permanent environmental artworks;
- Ephemeral artworks that utilized natural objects from the area as agents for creative connection to local culture and sense of place;
- Ongoing photographic and narrative documentation of the artistic process;
- Two Creative Junction festival days; and
- Postcards and interpretive signage that reflected the project aims and allowed for ongoing reference to the events that surrounded the project.

3.1.3 Artistic Coordinator’s Narrative

The artistic coordinator narrative takes the reader/viewer on a journey through the Creative Junction Project. Photos and text showcase the immersive approach used throughout the two year project which included a series of workshops and the generation of artworks. My narrative approach was informed by journal articles Burke (2004’, 2005a, 2005b, 2006); (Wattchow, Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2008) and PowerPoint presentations I had given at community feedback sessions and conferences. It is rich in visual detail to show the depth of immersive inquiry that was achieved. The narrative gives voice to my pracademic ⁵ (Posner, 2009; Walker, 2010) sensibility, as I privilege the practical and academic side of my roles. The narrative includes images, photos and quotes that were generated in the project by participating community and artists, and from students and colleagues. I position myself as someone who “spans both the somewhat ethereal world of academia as a scholar and the pragmatic world of practice” (Walker, 2010, p. 1). My pracademic sensibility aims to bridge the academic-practitioner divide (Posner, 2009, p. 17) through my narrative.

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⁵ The term pracademic is defined at section 5.3.1
Artistic Coordinator’s Narrative - Creating Connections through IAP

A sense of place is a virtual immersion that depends on lived experience and a topographical intimacy that is rare today both in ordinary life and in traditional educational fields. It demands extensive visual and historical research, a great deal of walking “in the field”, contact with oral tradition, and an intensive knowledge of both local multiculturalism and the broader context of multcentredness. (Lippard, 1997, p. 33)

This project really matters. Can people really (re)connect to place and each other through art and environment? Is IAP that powerful? I’m excited but slightly terrified by the project’s enormity. Can I really do it? Can I manage a two-year project as artistic coordinator, while juggling my teaching job at the same time? Fortunately, working in a project team gives me the confidence and support to go about planning and running the art/enviro program. Everything I do reflects my developing ideas on Immersive Art Pedagogy. I gather up my inspirations. IAP needs to enable participants to be inside the experience of this place to reach a deep, immersive, playful sense of expression through art and story. Judth Wright is seminal. Her words ring out to me.

Australia is still, for us, not a country but a state – or states of mind. We do not yet speak from within her, but from outside; from the state of mind that describes, rather than expresses its surroundings, or from the state of mind that imposes itself upon, rather than lives through, landscape and event. (Wright, 1969, p. 301)

I opted for a tiered approach so that diverse community participation and depth of arts-based inquiry could build momentum and uncover the possibilities of IAP over the project’s span. This tiered approach shifted through a series of phases: from an illustrative approach (nature journals and community journals); to tactile, exploratory and playful practice (tactile workshops and ‘walking place’ experiences); and then to the conceptual and temporal (ephemeral art making). In the second year, it extended into permanent artworks (environmental sculptures), events (Creative Junction days) and the ephemeral documentation of the process (interpretive signage and postcards that celebrated the project process and product) (Burke, 2005c, pp. 20-62).

Our creative journey was truly grounded in the community and privileged ways of knowing that foster deep immersion. The final report for the Creative Junction Project states that:

the immersive, pluralistic approach employed in this project emphasised the importance of process, but particularly the importance of community involvement and connection with the permanent and lasting artworks. The ensuing richly interlaced series of experiences could then be continuously added to, creating a repertoire of
practice that provides a strong model for future community projects within the Shire of Yarra Ranges. (Scomazzon, Burke, Malone & Singh Dodd, 2005, p.20)

From Nature Journals to Workshops - Starting with Children

Children’s knowledge was central. Their eagerness encouraged families and community members to join in. They created nature journals that connected art and nature to express a sense of their place and identity. Their drawings revealed a deep enjoyment of the diversity of nature in their surrounds and an awareness of the logging history of the area. Multi-media workshops explored the many languages of art through local contexts and materials. (Re)visiting across media helped build their artistic repertoire and deepen their observations.

Figure 9: Children’s Nature Diaries about their Place

The children were prolific. They created picture tracings, free hand studies and solar prints of local plants as well as drawings that revealed what they knew about their town. Four year olds’ solar prints of the bracken bush (see Figure 9) led to discussions about how the sap from bracken bush can be used to help lessen the sting and itch of the local bull ant. The emergent journals showcased brainstorming diagrams of diverse social activities and locations of interest to the children. The environmental advocate and past vice-president of the Australian Conservation Foundation states that:
What worries me is that we will have a generation of children growing up that doesn’t have the capacity to see and value the environment. Art can be used to enhance the capacity to see this wondrous diversity and detail. (P. Figgis, personal communication, March 19, 2005)

Professional Development sessions for local teachers introduced them to shared art making experiences using local environment as subject, medium and viewpoint. I shared my knowledge of grass roots art practice, gleaned from teaching in oceanic countries. Other teachers shared their knowledge of local art methods. The sessions were well received; participants committed to using the theme in their own classes and the idea of establishing a local primary art teachers group was mooted.

**Walking, Talking and Workshopping Place through IAP**

We opened the art and environment experiences to the broader community. We walked, talked and workshoped the Little Yarra Reserve from various perspectives. Capturing layered experiences and multi vocal expressions of place became the next focus of our workshops as we spent time in the site carefully selecting found objects to use in artworks (see Figure 10). We listened as Indigenous elder Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy welcomed us to country. During the moving smoke-ceremony, she told us about the manna gum and its importance to the Indigenous people of the area, welcoming us from the roots of these trees to their tips, encouraging us to go safely within these parts and to collect natural materials with respect for the land. In another walk and talk we listened to artist Bee Rawlinson as she guided us through a microscopic study of the site which led to discovery of how sugar houses in the leaves attract bell birds to the site. A microscopic workshop led to further sharing of local knowledge as did a geological walk and talk that allowed us to understand the land in relation to the surrounding mountains and the seasons. Prior to the art and environment workshops, scientists, historians and artists ran guided walks and talks that helped us to (re)think our connection to the site.

Searching for a single, correct interpretation… being guided by just one story, would be counterproductive to not only what natural environments themselves demand, but also to what we should expect as engaged participants. (Brady, 2003, p. 80)
I encouraged the project artists to use tactile engagement and playful, open-ended experimentation in their workshops. The use of unstructured objects enabled experiential learning to take place in a non-threatening context. This meant that participants allowed

**Figure 10: (Re)discovery at the Little River Site**
found materials from the site to suggest the art method they would use. We plaited stringy bark, embossed local plants into clay shards, nature printed feathers and leaves, created different dyes with eucalyptus leaves and fired clay works in a locally built bush kiln... and chatted amongst each other as we went. A friendly welcoming environment was evident.

**Figure 11: Exploring the Site in Microscopic Detail**

Exploration of found materials from the site allowed local knowledge to bubble to the surface. Our investigations revealed the widgee-bidgee burr (see Figure 11, far left) that is native to the area and was used by the loggers of old to make cups of tea. A longicorn beetle (see Figure 11 middle) was found, examined and let go. Its pupae make the large tracks under the bark that shape the beautiful patterns in the trees and which later inspired project artist, Glenn Romanis’ river/longicorn patterning on the Junction sculpture. The profusion of lerps found on the gum leaves (see Figure 11 second from left) enabled us to understand why so many bellbirds were attracted to the site.

**Figure 12: Learning from Each Other**

A child who attended the workshop shared his microscopic photos with his home school group (see Figure 12). In the process he fostered other children’s engagement with art and nature and equipped them with micro, macro and messa ways of seeing and knowing.

The immediate, first-hand experience of environments and their objects constitutes the basis of all aesthetic valuing of nature... seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching, combined with thoughts, imaginings and beliefs. All our senses, alone and in
conjunction with other capacities enable the perception of aesthetic qualities. (Brady, 2003, p. 123)

Visual and narrative documentation was used to track the community’s artistic and storied contributions. Where possible, these were fed back to the community via workshops, a community website, posters and postcards. My visual journal and art making tracked the photos and events through storied responses. After observing the high level of tactile engagement in a series of photos (see Figure 13) I wrote:

These hands ask questions. They wonder at the possibilities that nature provides. They explore the surfaces of the bark and the river reeds. They select a local piece of ochre and grind it into an earthy pulp. They bend, twist and transform the natural materials that have been selected from this special place. They know the wet muddy flow of the river and they have felt the smooth feel of the river pebble. These hands know detail. They have felt the lerp on a manna gum leaf and wondered at its sugar-coated house, the one that attracts the bellbirds to this site. These hands engage with the senses. They respond to the site of a kookaburra feather glistening in the sun and enjoy the smell of the freshly ground ochre. These hands express place. (My visual journal notes)

Figure 13: Tactile Engagement - Reconnecting to Place through Art
Found Objects and Ephemeral Art to Permanent Sculptures

Approximately 450 members of the local community attended the art and environment workshops. The workshops were the catalyst for people to come back and make ephemeral artworks on the first Creative Junction Day. Greater youth participation would have added even more impact to the project’s vitality, but as community capacity building was beyond the scope of the research, I could only recommend that future projects specifically target youth. While few younger people actively participated in the workshops, they were well represented in the audience at Creative Junction events.

Found object art created an easy transition for community members to grasp ephemeral sculpture in the landscape. Many of the project artists helped make this transition possible by incorporating examples of environmental art in their workshops.

The community connected with its environment while participating in collaborative environmental sculptures - some planned and some evolving as the day progressed. Participants and project artists worked together to make artworks that remained in the site and disintegrated over time (see Figure 14). Several artists introduced the community to concepts of environmental and ephemeral art and encouraged participants to (re)visit the site to see how the works weathered and aged over time. Photos were taken of the works to create an enduring record. Participants came to understand that although the physical artwork was impermanent, the memories could be captured through photo, postcard and site signage as a permanent reminder of their creative expression.

Figure 14: Ephemeral Sculptures

From Community Data to Permanent Artworks: Responding to the Community Context

We had amassed a wealth of artwork, interviews, photos and visual journals. These were later used to explore themes, to inform the permanent environmental sculptures and postcards, to assess the sustainability of the project aims and to stimulate community feedback. The model for reviewing and developing artworks included a dialogical exploration of proposed artworks, development of the sculpture proposals, a socially critical appraisal of
the community data and the VicHealth objectives, an analysis of the proposed sculptures through the elements and principals of art, and the physicality and practicality of the artworks (full details are provided at Appendix 7.6). Participants expressed the desire to continue the spirit of the ephemeral artworks and the art and environment workshops – to create enduring works that reflect the community’s sense of being immersed by and in the natural surrounds through art. We spoke of levels of interactivity and continuing the storied process via the sculptures. We discussed forward projection as an informing intention behind the proposed sculptures, rather than them having a historical and iconic focus. That is, we determined that permanent sculptures should reflect the spirit of the ephemeral artwork so that they would invite (re)visitation and exploration within the context of walking and playing in the site.

In the spirit of this intention, one semi-permanent and two permanent sculptures were developed for the site. Both Savaad's and Glenn's narratives reveal this process in the artist narrative section. To celebrate the launch of the three permanent sculptures in the Little Yarra Reserve the Shire organized a second Creative Junction Day to coincide with the opening of the new swimming centre. Experiential art and nature-based activities were held alongside sport, games and other entertainment. It was uplifting = to see locally derived arts-based ways of knowing being sustained within the community arena. There was a re-thinking of the public space and the Creative Junction Project was at its core.

**Journal reflection:** I made my way back to Savaad’s sculpture and perched myself on the stone boulders… This time, as I walked towards the sculpture it seemed to emerge like a surprise from the surrounds of Yarra Junction Reserve, like a chance find in the landscape. It seemed to sing the same earthy tones of the parkland reserve and echo the vertical surge of the nearby gum trees. Sitting there surrounded by the rusted, oversized leaves that Savaad had developed as an essential feature of his work, I became aware of their tapering shadow and upward stance… the way they seemed to be standing to attention, as if listening… suddenly feeling childlike, dwarfed by their magnificent shape… I lay on the ground to be encircled by their stylized yet unique detail.

I thought about Savaad's attentiveness to the aesthetic and natural beauty of this place and about the time he spent in this site… Months earlier, a whole six days had been spent working here, using the materials of this place to fashion ephemeral sculptures. He had come to know the dog owners who called this place their own. He had waded in the river to wet freshly collected ribbon bark, to soften it for the next day’s wrapping and forming of bark spheres. He had spent real time in this place… alone and with others… and he had told us of his sense of spiritual connection to the place that had developed over time. He had walked its paths and attended every walk and talk session planned. He was there when Bee revealed the microscopic wonders of the site, and he was there when Joy Murphy welcomed us to country. He helped others discover naturally occurring objects from the site to use in
sculpture workshops. He had participated in Owen’s botanical and historical walk and talks of the site. Savaad had a reverence for this place which I was now experiencing through his sculpture.

**Sustaining creative connections:** To sustain the project beyond its time frame and to mark the Yarra Junction Reserve as a creative site, we printed postcards of the process and product of IAP for community members to send to friends and family (see Figure 15). We also created permanent signage of the artworks at Yarra Junction (see Figure 16) that documented the learning journey, the ephemeral artworks and the findings of the Creative Junction project.

At the end of this project I realized that we had connected to the living culture of the place, the community, local art possibilities and the environment. Through IAP we had created an emergent and dynamic approach to art and environment with local people who had expressed their creative voice throughout.

My last entry in the visual journal reads:

A place,
a community,
an experience,
through Immersive Art Pedagogy.

**Postcards**

Create: Making art from nature – with Jenny Rowe and the local community. Participants incorporated natural materials from place into clay based creations.

Figure 15: ‘Create, Connect, Touch, Share, Revisit, Immerse’ Postcards
**Connect:** Using local ochre as a means for exploring imagery and culture – a workshop with local community led by Roy Patterson, Tony Nelson, Teresa Howie and Doug White, Indigenous and non-indigenous artists who collaborate with the Healesville Indigenous Arts Enterprise at the Oonah Learning Centre.

**Touch:** Making Environmental Sculptures – with Savaad Felich and local community at Little River Reserve. Using long pieces of stringy bark from the local area participants created hanging bark sculptures that hung over the river, nestled amongst the trees and sat within the river stones.

**Share:** Weaving place: Daily weaving with natural fibres – with Tania Virgona and participants at Little Yarra River Walk. One day a busload of elderly participants were driven to the site. Tania showed them how to weave with natural fibres. At the same time they shared stories of their experiences of growing up in the town and living in the Yarra Junction locale.
**Revisit: Me and My Place:**
Making Nature diaries – with local children from Upper Yarra Children’s Centre, facilitated by Geraldine Burke. Children embossed ferns and drew the many varied leaves that they find around them every day.

**Immerse: Using Mountain Ash Leaves on a Fibrous Backing** – Glenn Romanis and students from Yarra Junction Secondary College created two larger than life sculptural leaves that were floated down the Little Yarra River on Creative Junction Day. The patterning of the leaves represented the river that connects and divides the town. The mountain ash leaves were from the trees that are still logged today.

Figure 15 (cont’d): ‘Create, Connect, Touch, Share, Revisit, Immerse’ Postcards
Sign 1

**Location:** *Junction* artwork by Glenn Romanis: *(Photo 1)* Detail of Junction Artwork: Welcome to Yarra Junction. At the beginning of the 20th century the vast forests of tall mountain ash trees attracted timber getters to the area and the Lilydale to Warburton railway was built. Timber tram tracks from the nearby mountains carried logs down to the railway creating a bustling junction.

A series of sculptures are located on the River Walk and Rail Trail. The inspiration for these artworks came from a series of art and environmental workshops held with the local community under the title Creative Junction. The aim is to encourage health and wellbeing through active community participation.

Please take the time to explore and reflect on this place, its history and its people.

*(Photo 2)* Map: The map shows the locations of the sculptures. *(Photo 3)* Historic Photo of timber store: During the early part of the twentieth century this place was the single largest source of timber in Victoria.

*(logos)* Acknowledgement: This project was jointly funded by the Shire of Yarra Ranges and VicHealth.

Sign 2

Junction - Glenn Romanis 2004

This ephemeral sculpture represents the timber tramways. Glenn worked with local timber getters, Des Morrish, Les Adams and Roger Davies to create this sculpture.

Like the original tramways it will decay over time.

Figure 16: Permanent Signage for the Junction Artwork
3.1.4 Contextual Review: Connecting through Immersion

The concept of immersion was vital to the Creative Junction Project. In this section I discuss how the concept of immersion is understood in the literature on art, language education and pedagogy. I also explore the literature on material thinking, embodied learning, sensory engagement, play and experiential ways of knowing as these inform my immersive approach to art pedagogy.

**Immersion in Art, Pedagogy, Language Education**

To be immersed is to “plunge or sink into a (particular) state of body or mind; to involve deeply, to steep, absorb, in some action or activity” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2006a). In pedagogical terms, the immersion course is a method of teaching or learning a foreign language in an environment where all communication is conducted in that language (Oxford English Dictionary, 2006b). More recent pedagogical approaches have explored 3D immersive virtual worlds that capitalize on social aspects of teaching and learning through virtual means (Bronack et al., 2008). Also termed “presence pedagogy… [this way of teaching and learning values]… the concepts of presence, building a true community of practice, and constructing an online environment which fosters collaboration for reflective learning” (p. 59). Bronack et al. (2008) state that learning communities that evolve from presence pedagogy “become members of a broader community of practice in which everyone in the community is potential instructor, peer, expert, and novice - all of whom learn with and from one another” (p. 59). This community of practice notion is not unlike the aim of IAP. However IAP is not based in a virtual context; it values a tactile and embodied experience of pedagogy. My approach to immersive learning was informed by the a/r/tographic position on embodiment, which presupposes that sensory and perceptual experiences are valid means of knowing (Irwin & Springgay, 2008).

More recently, immersion in art practice has been achieved through environments created by virtual reality and internet art, as well as through immersive aesthetics made possible by encompassing and digitally-created artworks. Bartlem (2005) suggests that:

the very term immersion implies that one is drawn into an intimate and embodied relationship with a virtual and physical architecture, whether this immersive effect is generated by a VR system, the cinema, a panorama or another medium. It suggests that one is enclosed and embraced by the audio-visual space of the work, and transported into another realm or state of perception. One cannot be immersed without being affected by the environment on perceptual, sensory, psychological and emotional levels…Whether it is ‘total’ or ‘partial’ these forms of virtual immersion imply that the user experiences a sense of fusion with a technologically generated space - a virtual environment (VE). The user becomes deeply embedded in this illusory space and their
faculties of perception - their senses and processes of cognition of space, time and motion - recognise this experience as being akin to an embodied form of perception. (2005, Defining Immersion, para. 3).

Bartlem (2005) proposes that an immersive aesthetic is developed as a result of embodied experiences, as the role of the viewer is transformed from a spectator to a participant or performer who effectively helps create both the content and meaning of the work as they interact (Extending the body, para. 3).

Important to these different experiences of immersion are the types of presence in which they occur. Sheridan (1992, p. 120) suggests that immersion occurs through: physical presence, such as physically being there; telepresence, the feeling that you are at the remote site of operation; and virtual presence, the feeling that you are present in the environment generated by the computer. For IAP there is a sense of being in the physical space of making; being deeply absorbed and connected intimately to objects, art materials and tactile processes as embodied ways of knowing, rather than through telepresence or virtual presence.

As a process, Grau (2003) states that immersion can be “intellectually stimulating… mentally absorbing… a process, a change, a passage from one metal state to another… characterized by diminishing critical distance to what is shown and increasing emotional involvement in what is happening” (p. 13). He suggests that “immersive strategies in contemporary image techniques tend to relocate the observer in the image, removing the distance to the image space, intensifying the illusion, and renewing the power exerted over the audience” (p. 330). Although Grau is chiefly concerned with immersive image worlds, the notion that when one is immersed there is a shift in mind state and a tendency towards emotional involvement as opposed to a critical distance holds true with IAP. The tendency with IAP is to bring participants into an experience, where they are in the place of making, in dialogue with the materials (Bolt, 2007) and absorbed in the experience.

Materiality and Embodiment

My approach to IAP privileges the bodily engagement of the learner in the content or subject matter of a creative experience. IAP aims to draw participants, through deep interest and curiosity, to an embodied connection to the inquiry at hand. It also encourages learners to identify and embrace a range of dispositions through which they can (re)look, (re)think, (re)imagine, and (re)create meanings (Burke & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2010). IAP values deep tactile engagement with materials and the notion of thinking through materials (Carter, 2004; Bolt, 2007; Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Vaughan, 2008). For instance, the use of found objects from nature to create artworks shows how IAP values sensory, immersive and context-dependent ways to develop aesthetic awareness. In the study, found objects were
treated as curiosities that talked about local place and culture while harking back to the practice of found art (Iverson, 2004) that has gained momentum over the past hundred years. This use of found objects for expressive intention enabled “knowledge of materiality as a means to reveal meaning” (Daston, 2004, p. 17). Carter’s (2004) notion of material thinking is paramount to IAP. He proposes that we need to “understand and interrogate the collaboration between hand, eye (ear, body) and mind in the process of material thinking” (2004, p. xiii) and acknowledge that “creative research is related to the goal of material thinking, and both look beyond the making process to the local reinvention of social relations” (2004, p. 10). That is, he proposes that the relationship between people and the act of collaboration through making enables material thinking. Springgay goes further and suggests that by considering all participants in an artistic experience, we build a relationship between embodiment and an ethics of being. According to Springgay (2008d), it is this a/r/tographic disposition to “being with and the in-between… that enables the possibilities of an ethics of embodiment” (Springgay, 2008d, p. 154). However, for Vaughan (2008) it is the individual placed self that becomes a material thinker, arguing that “the practice of making, the materialising of ideas through materials and processes, is a process of place-making: a realisation of the localised acts of material thinking” (p. 2). She suggests that material thinking comes from practice, whereas Carter maintains that it comes from place/space.

Bolt (2007) suggests that material thinking, which she termed “material productivity” (p. 30), allows us to theorise out of practice, which involves a different way of thinking than applying theory to practice. She suggests that through material productivity “we consider the relations that take place within the very process or tissue of making” (p. 29). She conceptualises that “the materials are not just passive objects to be used instrumentally by the artist, but rather the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence that come into play in interaction with the artist’s creative intelligence” (pp. 29-30). Her view is that “handlability” (p. 33) underpins material thinking, a view that has been influenced by Heidegger’s premise that “we come to know the world theoretically only after we have come to understand it through handling” (Bolt, 2007, p. 33). She suggests that this offers a very specific way of understanding the world, one that is grounded in “material thinking… [rather than]… merely conceptual thinking” (p. 29). For Bolt, material productivity is in “relation to the materials and processes of practice, rather than through talk (with others as per Carter) that we can understand the nature of material thinking” (p. 30). She further posits that an emergent praxical and reflective knowing imbricates and follows on from handling. Bolt (2006, para.1) suggests that material thinking enables us to:

become aware of notions of embodiment, sensory ways of knowing and experiential learning as ways to foster an engagement with given subject matter… In this conception the materials (and our bodies) are not just passive objects to be used
instrumentally by the artist, but rather the materials and processes of production... have their own intelligence that come into play in interaction with the artist's/teachers/researchers creative intelligence. (Bolt, 2006, para.1)

A/r/tography acknowledges that meaning is found residing in-between spaces of “language, images, materials, situations, space and time” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xix).

In the study IAP directly involved participants in embodied experiences to facilitate subjective experiential learning through art. Influenced by Dewey’s (1938) theory of experience, emphasis is placed on participants’ subjective experiences accommodating individual differences through teaching and learning. Dewey maintained that continuity, the ability to be affected by experience and interaction, and that the way in which past experiences interact with present experiences, must be taken into account for strength of learning. Dewey (1938) also advocates for a lack of division between mind and body in the learning experience. Experiential and embodied learning was evident in Creative World 1 in the study when participants brought their local knowledge and experiences to the art activities that employed nature materials that had been collected while walking the site.

IAP is influenced by Bresler’s (2004) work on the mind/body interconnection as an essential part of learning in the arts. She contests the dualism of mind versus body that has been prevalent in Western history and which was apparent to her through her own experience of embodied learning and teaching through the arts. She was informed by major theorists in this area including Heidegger (1971), who advocated for a philosophical approach that acknowledges dwelling as a way of being in the world, as a way of belonging to our environment, and as a way to being attentive to the objects of our environs. This is eloquently expressed when Heidegger speaks of the reciprocity between a woodworker and his material as he tries to “answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering within wood - to wood as it enters into human dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature” (Heidegger, 1968, p. 14). In the same vein, Merleau-Ponty (1968) suggests that our bodies are a permanent condition of experience and not just an object of science.

Bresler (2004) proposes a macro theoretical level through which notions of embodiment influence various disciplines and a micro level that “relates to the lived experience, consciousness and awareness of persons” (p. 9). These two levels affected the conception of the Creative Junction Project. The macro level included funding applications and the two year project plan. The micro level included individual experiences at workshops and the physical enactment of these workshops. As Bresler (2004) says, “these two levels interact and shape each other” (p. 9).
Latta and Buck (2008) further propose that:

> embodied teaching/learning assumes a teacher’s relation to a teaching/learning situation is not that of a thinker to an object of thought. The classical distinctions of form and matter, subject and object, do not apply… Rather, embodied teaching and learning is about building relationships between self, others, and subject matter; living in-between these entities. In this way the body-subject… are bound entities; they intermingle. Such intertwining makes it necessary to develop a place for the body in teaching and learning that acknowledges the relational intermingling and flux.

(2008, para 4)

**Sensory Ways of Knowing and Play**

IAP involves sensory, playful and experiential engagement with art materials as a means of connecting to objects and topics of interest in order to create open ended possibilities and emergent learning. A disposition that encourages “curiosity, fascination and mobility of thought… [for the]… opening up” (Brice Heath & Wolf, 2004, p. 32) of creative thought is entirely possible through playful and sensory investigation with materials. Brice Heath and Wolf (2004) suggest that through playful art experiences “creative accidents can prove valuable for they expand the space of possibilities that we may think of setting out and exploring. In this expansion, we jump across realms or zones of thinking, or we look for possible openings within a given space” (p. 32). Perkins’ theories on the four operations of “break through thinking… [which involve]… roving, detecting, reframing and decentring” (2001, pp. 51-58) are also of value. He suggests that of these four operations “the idea of roving is to move around widely in the space of possibilities” (2001, p. 51). Influenced by Perkins, Brice Heath and Wolf suggest that the concept of roving is the least familiar within learning contexts and yet “without roving, none of the other key operations really matter” (Brice Heath & Wolf, 2004, p. 32). They state that:

> if one is allowed to detect that which is already discovered or only that which is in the head of the teacher or the artist, then the territory is not expanded into creativity. One must then wander, see, and then encircle in some way what it is that has been perceived as the breakthrough. (2004, p. 37)

In theorising about play and its impact on the arts O’Toole (2009) proposes a dialectic of play and the arts. He points out that as children, play and curiosity lead to what if? thinking that enable attributes such as exploring, developing open ended activities, questions, dynamic, alterable, risk, discomfort, open and informal structures. He suggests that as adults, art and curiosity lead to as if? questions that lead to established, rule-based, statements, fixed, reproducible, other-centred, public, prescribing, security, comfort, closed, formal structures. IAP seeks to harness the as if qualities of play and curiosity, to (re)introduce the open-ended
aspects of artful play across age groups. As a member of the Refluxus Art Group (Bendigo Art Gallery, 2002), I am familiar with creating art in playful and collaborative ways. Inspired by the Surrealists and the Fluxus movements, I have come to understand the value of play in art, and how it can open up creative practice to the juxtaposition between often surprising, yet meaningful, results. This experience in turn informs the planning of events for Creative World 1.

As a position on learning, the playfulness of IAP reminds me of Greene’s (2001a) statement:

we are interested in openings, in unexplored possibilities, not in the predictable or the quantifiable… For us, education signifies an initiation into new ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, moving. It signifies the nurture of a special kind of reflectiveness and expressiveness, a reaching out for meanings, a learning to learn. (p. 7)

Flanagan (2009) suggests that through play “artists can challenge objects, behaviours, and ideas and subsequently transform them” (p. 139). This is evident in the history of art especially when play, subversion and social order mix together through movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism, Fluxus and situationism (Flanagan, 2009). In Creative World 1 the project artists and participants undertook playful experimentation with found objects transforming these materials to express ideas about their sense of place and their identities. For IAP, the possibilities that play yields for ongoing art making are a form of becoming where the transformative experience at hand produces a difference through the interplay of a variety of elements and forces in relation with one another (Stagoll, 2005). This was observed in Creative World 1 when the confluence of complex forces combined through the participants, the playful interrogation of the materials, ongoing social and art making events and the Little Yarra Reserve itself.

Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) encourages participants to physically interact with place. By walking, talking and tuning in they are encouraged to use their sense of touch, smell, and deep looking to “live in a mode of inquiry that is sensually and sensitively charged” (Sameshima & Irwin, 2006, p. 4) to create a range of artworks alongside storied investigations of place. Sensory engagement can also be fostered by contact with nature. As Brady (2003), the environmental philosopher suggests, attentiveness to sensory engagement with nature can further our aesthetic appreciation for place. Our sense of place can be influenced by an “appreciation of aesthetic qualities through sensory engagement… [which is]… directed to a great degree by qualities perceived” (p. 127). She also suggests that “sensuous engagement can be thick or thin… perception begins with vision, and vision can direct the other senses to a broader sensuous engagement” (p. 124). She reveals that “touch is one of the most intimate ways we explore nature; it is the least distanced and most interactive of all the senses. When we reach out to touch nature; it touches us back, if not
unintentionally. Touch gives us the feel and texture of our world, and invites bodily engagement through our face, hands, and feet, and in some cases, our whole body” (p. 125). In IAP sensory engagement is unique to each person and gives an intricate and complex access to individual experience.

**Flow**

Many of the participants in Creative World 1 spoke of enjoying their involvement in the Creative Junction Project. Some commented that the act of being immersed in nature and creating art with nature enabled them to feel a sense of flow (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996, 1997). Described as optimal experience, flow is a state of being where respondents report a sense of absorption and “an almost automatic, effortless, yet highly focused state of consciousness” (1996, p. 10). The program of events for the Creative Junction Project enabled flow to occur, for example, when the artists and participants made ephemeral artworks in the site of the Little Yarra Reserve.
3.1.5 Community Narratives

Narratives were collected from community/artist participants who had attended the Creative Junction workshops and Festival Days. The narratives reveal what IAP enabled. They speak to the way that participants felt (re)connected to people and place through immersive art experiences. Some narratives were written by participating project artists as part of the immersive process. Other narratives were the result of interviews conducted during or after the art and environment workshops and the two Creative Junction Festival days.

Preceding each set of narratives is a contextual statement that provides insight into the time, place and activity that prompted the respective narratives.

**Context:** The Oonah Indigenous Collective ran two workshops that provided hands-on experience with ochre as an art form and contextualized the use of ochre within Indigenous ways of knowing (see Figures 17 & 18). Tony, a local artist with the Oonah Indigenous Collective, searched for ochre with Uncle Roy, Indigenous elder, and other Collective artists. Teresa, a non-Indigenous artist, worked with the collective as co-artist facilitator.

The Mother Earth, she is sharing her colours... As the grains of coloured earth pass through my hands between my fingers colouring my jeans with the hues, the Mother is feeling me - my spirit - just as much as I am feeling her spirit. She teaches me to be in touch. I am in Taungurong country at Seymour. I am in Wurrundjeri country at Chum Creek and in Dalry Road which is another cutting with wonderful colours and spirit. The best fun this ochre hunting, the best fun making cuppa’s and yarning, the best fun being with our mob of artists, Roy, Teresa, Doug and me. The best fun us makin’ a sand paintin’. The best fun meetin’ other artists doin’ their “skulptya’s”. Just the best fun. Must be somethin’! Must be healthy! Sunny days, sunny people, sunny paintin’, sunny colours - many sandshoes Mother Earth. (Tony Nelson, Oonah Collective Artist)

![Figure 17: Oonah Workshop Cultural Heritage Images](image)
Roy’s talk on the use of ochre and its cultural significance made an impressive start to the day. We have found him to be a great source of wisdom and information. Everyone went home with a folder containing information on ochre, leaflets and at least one piece of artwork they had created. The Welcome to Land Ceremony by Joy Murphy and the walk along the Warburton Trail were both spiritually uplifting and enjoyable. The sun shone on us all day and after the workshop we all went home feeling tired and happy having had a great day.

The Creative Junction Ephemeral Sculpture Day was a rainy day but this didn’t deter the artists or the local people. Tony and Doug set to work grinding the ochre, Roy drew the outline of *Bunjil the Creator* in the centre of the sand circle and I helped him to spread the ochre inside the eagle shape he had drawn. I also took digital photos of our work at every stage, to be recorded in my visual diary. When the eagle was completed, Roy drew two snakes coiled around the central image. After this was done there were plenty of people eager to make their contributions to the painting. They were very curious to find out where to find the ochre and several children told me they were going to search for some. The finished work looked beautiful and the rain brought out the rich colours of the ochre.

When the work finally disappears into the earth, we will still have many happy memories of the happy time had by all the artists and members of the local community… I’m sure the whole concept of the Creative Junction Project has had a very positive effect on the well-being of the local community, putting them in touch with local artists and helping them to express themselves artistically, some of them for the first time in their lives. It also gave local people the chance to meet Indigenous people and learn about their art and love of Yarra Junction and its environment. (Teresa, Oonah group artist)

I want to understand the land I was born in, to understand it culturally and to understand it naturally. (Kate, Oonah workshop participant)

I love the smell of the ochre paint. It smells like walking through the bush … It’s dusty and dirty not fumy and chemical. (Jane, Oonah workshop participant)
Figure 18: Oonah Workshop - Use of Ochre, Contemporary and Traditional
Uncle Roy Patterson, local Indigenous elder, together with members of the Oonah Collective, depicted an iconic image of *Bunjil the Creator* as the centrepiece. Members of the community were then invited to add personal symbols and images. Ochre from local sites was ground and sprinkled into line work and dots that had been drawn on a bed of sand, creating a unique mark (see Figure 19).

**Figure 19: *Bunjil the Creator* by Oonah Collective and Local Community**
**Context:** During a project community meeting, participants were introduced to the notion of walking place. They walked the site of the Little River Reserve (see Figure 20) to explore the potential of the site for finding, collating and creating with found objects. They then wrote narratives based on their experience of walking the site. Below is Joy’s response to walking the site.

```
Walking
from the
outside and
little by little
it becomes an immersion
experience as you see more and
you become and succumb to the
wetness and the
smell and the
knowledge infiltrating
your pores and your
socks and your nostrils
and you touch the
sharp and the rough and
the smooth and you
are part of the place
you are inside the petals
and the dewdrops
and the bark
and it's beautiful. (Joy, Creative Junction workshop artist)
```

**Context:** Prior to the Making Art from Nature workshop, many participants attended Savaad’s slide show on environmental and ephemeral art. During the workshop participants walked and talked the site, collecting natural materials to use in the workshop.

Workshop participants appreciated and enjoyed the natural beauty of the materials they worked with. Savaad’s talk and slide show set the scene and helped people to see in a
different way. It was an excellent preparation for the walk and collection of materials. I tried to guide people’s selections by demonstration and suggestion. Children respond easily and very keenly to the natural environment.

People were ready and eager to have a go at the workshops… Very quickly there was a buzz in the room as people began having a go at making nature based sculptures. Many stayed for a couple of hours, moving from table to table and really exploring ideas, structures and the materials themselves. I felt that part of the pleasure was the immediacy of creating from the materials just collected from the local environment and that there was no pressure that they were wasting precious or expensive art materials.

One kindergarten teacher was very enthusiastic and commented that she’d be getting out the natural materials with her students. I saw one woman proudly carrying out a beautifully shaped piece of spotted gum bark displayed on a gold and red ochre coloured backing that she had painted herself. She said that she was going to display it in her home. I thought how wonderful that she would consider this as an artwork. I would hazard a guess that if you had told her the day before that this could be so, she wouldn’t have believed it!… It was very pleasurable to watch parents and children working beside each other developing their own divergent ideas; not just the parents assisting their children to make something to take away. All in all it was a very successful day and hopefully good ground work for the larger sculptural experiences.

(Jenny: Creative Junction workshop artist)

The learning was very spontaneous and you had the opportunity to step in there and do what you wanted. Everyone did… The people who were taking the workshops were stepping to the side… If you needed assistance they would help you, but basically it was more involving yourself in the process… The actual set up was wonderful in the sense that everything was there and treasures were found… Joy had set up a wonderful array of natural bits and pieces to work with and there were natural beads and all those kind of things… It was just delicious. It was pure delight… [There was] passage to play, passage to get lost, to be in a sense, being able to go into that whole energy of - I guess, putting it in adult terms, the right frame. Being able to just be involved in that moment and involved in what you were finding and what was flowing out of that… It just came so easily without being a process that you had to think about. You were really in that moment. And that is, I guess, what artwork is about - being so in tune with what you’re working with and not actually thinking about it… And so, therefore, the learning was about being absorbed into that process without actually consciously being in it… Those two workshops… have been a motivating point… of how that has really affected our life and the way that we’re incorporating it in our home schooling. (Natalie, workshop participant)
I like the idea that you can go out and find the materials on the ground... It's an adventure going to get them instead of from an art shop. (Doug, workshop artist)

As a child I made art from nature, bits and pieces... but not as an adult. I am being inspired by everyone including the children. (Max, workshop participant)

You can bring outdoors into your life and integrate it. This is what we are missing. This is what society needs. (Nicole, workshop participant)

**Context: Indigenous Weaving Workshop with Aunty Dot Peters**

We need to be able to encourage young people to express their feelings through cultural activities - it helps people to have an understanding of others. That is important. We can start to feel separated so we need to support all ethnic groups to get together. Through the basket making I have been able to connect with other cultures from around the world (see Figure 21). (Aunty Dot Peters, Facilitator, Indigenous Weaving Workshop)

![Figure 21: Aunty Dot Peters’ Community Workshop on Indigenous Weaving](image)

The workshop was held in the grounds of the Rail Trail Museum. In the near distance a huge log is displayed as an example of the extraordinary size that the mountain ash trees can grow and for which the town is famous.

**3.1.6 Contextual Review: Connecting through Creativity**

The theme of creativity informed much of the thinking behind the Creative Junction Project. Exploring creative experiences and their social consequences helped to develop and understand emergent themes within Creative World 1.

IAP contextualized participants as creative, imaginative and dynamic investigators who actively undertook living inquiry (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005) be they artistic coordinator,
artist, researcher, teacher, student or community participant. Ewing (2010) suggests that “creativity and imagination” define the arts (p. 7) and that creative and imaginative experiences are especially important given the emphasis that society places on creativity, imagination and innovation in contemporary times. As Ewing states, “creativity has become one of the most desperately sought-after qualities for young people, both for the present and in the future” (2010, p. v).

Contemporary theories on creativity helped when designing individual and group experiences in the Creative Junction Project. Contemporary attitudes to creativity vary as follows:

- Gardner’s (1993) approach where creativity is understood through eight multiple intelligences;
- The triarchic theory (Sternberg, 1997) where creativity is understood through synthesising, analysing and practicing abilities;
- Arts Corp (2000-2013, para. 5) that advocates for imagining possibilities, persistence, discipline, critical thinking, courage, risk-taking and reflection; and
- The optimal experience or flow theory espoused by Csikszentmihalyi (1996).

The work of Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Kindler (2004b) relate to the creative process in Creative World 1. These works broadened my thinking on how creative growth across personal experience, teaching/learning and the cultural domain is fostered. It is not just the individual who is the creative focus; personal creativity is fed by, and feeds societal creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996; Dewey, 1934) as well as pedagogical creativity (Eisner, 2002b; Kindler, 2004a, 2004b). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) encourages us to consider the cultural/community denomination of creativity. His systems model of creativity shows how we can connect a theory of creativity to art pedagogy. Csikszentmihalyi takes us beyond a belief in individual creativity to an approach that values the interrelated sites of creativity: the domain; the field; and the individual. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) encourages us to ask not so much what creativity is, but where creativity is. He suggests that creativity does is not just what happens inside people’s heads, “but in the interactions between a person’s thoughts and a socio-cultural context” (p. 23). Eisner (2002a, p. 7) also suggests that the symbiotic connection between culture and people’s imaginative sensibility and imagination enrich their lives. Dewey’s fundamental premise on art as experience (1934) underpinned the Creative Junction Project. Dewey states that:

> aesthetic experience is a manifestation, a record and celebration of the life of a civilization, a means of promoting its development, and is also the ultimate judgement upon the quality of a civilization. For while it is produced and is enjoyed by individuals, these individuals are what they are in the
context of their experience because of the cultures in which they participate.  
(Dewey, 1934, p. 326)

Csikszentmihalyi’s systems model of creativity (1996; 1999) helped connect Creative World 1 to a theory of creativity and helped in the conception and coordination of creative processes central to the Creative Junction Project. Csikszentmihalyi’s three sites of creativity (1996, pp. 27-28) are defined, in turn below together with a brief explanation of how each applied to the Creative Junction Project.

**Domain**

The domain represents what is usually known as culture, the symbolic knowledge shared by a particular society, or by humanity as a whole.

In the Creative Junction Project, the domain was understood through the site of Yarra Junction, with particular reference to the Little Yarra Reserve. The site enabled multiple layers of knowing evident in the domain and was conceived as a place that continues to contain the remnants, past or present, that exist in this place. It reflected a diverse continuum of knowing explored through many voices and artefacts - from Indigenous, logging, Western and child-focused aspects. My role as artistic coordinator was to encourage and foster creative expression that spoke to and explored the cultural knowledge of this place. I chose the languages of art and nature as lenses through which this symbolic knowledge could be expressed.

**Field**

The field constitutes the gatekeepers to the domain and selects what artworks need to be recognized, preserved, and remembered.

In the Creative Junction Project, the funding bodies, the project management team, the selected project artists and the participating teachers from local schools and kindergartens constituted the primary gatekeepers to the symbolic knowing of place. At a secondary level, this field aimed to further recognise, preserve and remember the culture of this place and culture generally, as actualised through the visual journaling process, project marketing and publicity material, scholarly articles, editorials, postcards and brochures that celebrated the Creative Junction Project.

**Individual**

Individual creativity occurs when a person, using the symbols of a given domain, has a new idea or sees a new pattern, and when this novelty is selected by the appropriate field for inclusion in the relevant domain.
In the Creative Junction Project, participants took part in art workshops and the making of ephemeral sculptures which exposed them to concepts in the domain and which were documented for possible inclusion in postcards and project documentation. Participants were mentored through the process by field members: the artists; teachers; and project team members. Community members who did not participate directly in the project but who received project postcards were introduced to the domain and the artwork of fellow community members through the postcards.

Kindler (2004b) takes up on Csikszentmihalyi’s systems approach and applies it to artistic development. She moves away from describing artistic development in terms of a psychological perspective because, in her opinion, this creates a distance between the concept of artistic development and the changing world of art. This is relevant to IAP as it helps us understand how we can link individual artistic growth to the domain and field. Kindler (2010) proposes a “theoretical framework that recognizes the dynamic interplay between the three key variables: the individual, the field and the domain, in conceptualizing artistic growth” (p. 6) suggesting that “artistic development is a relational, dynamic concept, constantly in flux and constantly in the process of redefining… that involve(s) changes within an individual in relation to the art domain and field” (p. 5).

This was evident in the Creative Junction Project when participants were introduced to new ways of dyeing fabric from eucalyptus leaves or taking microscopic photos of nature. Participants became aware of how these art forms and techniques were used in the greater art world and developed skills in these areas, extending their repertoire and skill base. They then shared their learning with other members of the community.

This creative approach to learning is in line with Kindler's (2004a) suggestion that a dynamic pedagogical interplay between the artistic domain and “the field of its custodians enhances creativity in art education experiences” (2nd Asia Pacific Art Education Conference)

The literature informing Creative World 1 helped create an art and environment experience that valued the potential of creativity to connect community. The following quote from Jalongo (2003) helped us understand the sustainable outcomes of such an approach for lifelong learning within the Yarra Junction community and beyond.

> When we value creative thinking and creative expression in society, it becomes part of our social consciousness and social capital. Society then protects its reserves of creativity by fashioning networks of support that are capable of instilling confidence, promoting resilience, and multiplying ways of being intelligent in every person, commencing in childhood and continuing throughout the lifespan. (p. 15)
3.1.7 Tania’s Narrative

Figure 22: Weaving Place by Tania Virgona and Community Participants

Context: Tania worked with elderly community members who had been driven to the Little Yarra Reserve and others who had come independently to participate in the making of Weaving Place, an outdoor sculpture made from natural fibres found in and about the site. Woven around a hub over a five day period, the local community dropped in to work on it (see Figure 22). Participants shared storytelling and experiences. The sculpture was then left in the site, under a manna gum tree, to disintegrate back into the land (see Figure 23).

Local people walk along and see the large woven basket being made… They’re definitely drawn in by the craft and art element. I don’t want to push anything… I’d like people to willingly want to be part of it… Even the conversation that might take place with them
watching the craft being made… They start talking about their story of being in this place. So, even though they might not actually be weaving on it, they’ve actually being part of it on the sidelines. I’ve been here every day last week. I see the regular people walking there and they actually start to build courage to want to weave on it. I present it to them at times if I see they’re mildly interested and offer them the opportunity. A young girl got into it and took on the concept enough to relay that information to somebody else. She was very proud of her ability to create so she passed it on… It happened twice.

I guess the type of learning I am experiencing is actually about what kind of collaboration can happen with different types of people. I think the fact that there were so many different ways that people could learn about the environment in this project is catering to a really broad section of people – there’s just so much diversity that it caters to a whole range of different ways of learning. There is also a diverse group of professionals coming together and this project is a different way of collaborating in relation to my other projects. The site tour, for instance, had people from different departments willingly offer advice.

By offering a new way of getting people interested in the site, which was the walking, made me realize how I get people into the site, which is not by walking but by being. It kind of worked backward because instead of starting with a walk, people sat down and wove and then got up and found things and put it back into the weaving. People have been able to make a contribution that they can say was their contribution and then the artwork will be out there in the landscape which they visit regularly. It will give them a sense of ownership. I really like the way that one of the ladies weaved in wool from her knitting. She is knitting a jumper for her son. She and her friend gave the whole day to weaving on the artwork, without mindful intention of being part of this at all… and they contributed in a very meaningful way, rather than just as spectators… I found that really interesting and powerful.

It’s like a moment of clarity in a way… it’s actually out of the mind and into a total experience of your body as well. I guess it’s about being quiet and it’s about being still and it’s a very hard place to reach if you’re not used to being in that space. And that’s why I think a craft such as basket weaving can help people access it very quickly, because their mind gets taken by the challenge. And then once they get the rhythm, their focus is on the basket weaving and then people start to connect without any self-consciousness, without any judgment, without a lot of things; at a meaningful level, definitely. My workshop was set to go through that process and that journey. I found that what I was up against was their disbelief within themselves and their need to be instantly gratified quickly - but persisting and pushing through that, they actually saw their capabilities.

Working as an artist in school, the influence from the teachers was always to try and steer it into something active, to keep them stimulated, something to stop them from getting bored.
And keeping them happy was a very important thing... because I wasn’t keeping them happy but asking them to challenge themselves, the students wanted to back out. But I found I could work with students through it, getting them to build up their ideas... and actually when they removed it from a context of observing something and saw it as a state of being, it changed the way they were looking at it. They actually started to see something in it.

When I think about IAP, the first thing that comes to me is being connected to the landscape and the whole concept of this idea is bringing people to a very basic and primal way of being which has got to do with the landscape. So you know, soaking things (the reeds for weaving) in the river and just being here and weaving the earth fibres and things makes me feel I’m partaking in that ritual all over again... It is actually being connected to the environment, which is about just being, because if I look at what’s around me everything is just being. So the trees are just doing their thing. I mean it’s not like they are jumping for joy. They’re not doing anything out of the ordinary. They’re just doing what they’re doing. And I’m just here doing what I’m doing and encouraging people just to do what they need to do, or learn something in this space of being - and that actually stimulates creativity for me. It actually allows for something to come up - for contemplation. So it actually has a huge effect. I feel like if I'm in a state of being (through art practice and pedagogy) I can incorporate or understand, or find another way to communicate what they might not be getting. But if I'm in a state of doing, I can get very frustrated.

Figure 23: Weaving Place Decayed and Returned to the Earth
Figure 23 (cont’d): *Weaving Place* Decayed and Returned to the Earth

As *Weaving Place* decayed, the colours of the fresh leaves and reeds were camouflaged by the dirt and bark (see Figure 23).

3.1.8 Contextual Review: Connecting through Sociocultural Theory

Vygotzky proposed that learning occurs through social, cultural and historical contexts (Cladbaugh, 2010). This approach to development is known as sociocultural theory or cultural historical theory (Edwards, 2009). It values how cultural influences and attitudes influence the manner in which teaching/learning occurs.

IAP recognizes that learning in art is built by connecting the views of individual, community and society, as living history, with and alongside the subject/discipline knowledge of art learning and teaching. This approach has certain similarities with Hedegard and Chaiklin’s (2005) concept of radical-local teaching and learning whereby “the societal, the general and the individual must be integrated in subject matter teaching” (p. 42). They suggest a double move process whereby the integration of subject matter with participants’ everyday experiences is a two way process. In the Creative Junction Project, participants brought their own local experiences to given artworks and learnt new art skills and concepts from the project artists.

Like Vygotsky, Rogoff (1995) suggests using the activity or event as a unit for analysis. In Creative World 1, the units of analysis were the workshops, festival days, artworks and narratives. Rogoff states that using such activities or events for analysis offers:
active and dynamic contributions from individuals, their social partners, and historical traditions and materials and their transformations… [and]… allows a reformulation of the relation between the individual and the social and cultural environments in which each is inherently involved in the others’ definition. None exists separately. (Rogoff, 1995, p. 140)

Rogoff’s thoughts on participatory appropriation give focus to the manner in which learning occurs in much of Creative World 1. Rogoff’s (1998) theories on sociocultural approaches to education suggest that a “transformation of participation… [approach supports the]… premise that individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are not independent entities” (p.39). This transformation of participation notion suggests that “learning is a process of transformation of participation in which both adults and children contribute support and direction in shared endeavours” (Rogoff, Matusov, & White, 1996, p. 389). This is evidenced in Creative World 1 when a child undertaking a Creative Junction microscopic workshop went back to his school and taught his fellow students how to use digital microscopes to capture images of nature. We reframed and revisited place to tease out relational aspects between viewpoints, seeking Indigenous, botanical, historical, artistic, playful and logging perspectives. We hoped that by capturing the layered experiences we would be able to see how we were connected and involved in each other’s definition, as recommended by Rogoff (1995).

IAP advocates a sociocultural disposition to open up possibilities for co-constructed teaching/learning, so that emergent topics, themes and issues that are meaningful and important to the participant can become the participant’s focus and the teacher’s research work. By exploring the individual, social and cultural aspects of a given theme or issue, students and educators can find powerfully pertinent juxtapositions, ideas, aesthetic considerations and personally meaningful contexts for use within art contexts.

The work of Robbins (2005) is relevant. Her view that dominant research methods frequently portray children as anonymous and decontextualised with little reference to their everyday lives, holds true for all age groups. Richards (2007) also suggests that we document the voice of the child and the real life world of the participant advocating an approach that applies sociocultural perspectives for the consideration of “the social, cultural and historical nature of children's art experience” (Where to from here? para. 2). In Creative World 1, the social, cultural and historical aspects of participants' lives were called upon to inform their art and narratives.

Wenger (2000) suggests that “our belonging to social learning systems can take various forms at various levels between local interactions and global participation” (p. 227). He distinguishes three different modes of belonging (pp. 227-228): engagement; imagination;
and alignment. In Creative World 1, participants were engaged when producing artefacts alongside each other and when talking about artefacts in the making. They used their imagination to construct images of themselves and their community. The Creative Junction Project coordinated perspectives, interpretations and activities that enabled a higher goal beyond the project itself. Participants developed skills and capacities to continue creating art within community contexts beyond Creative World 1.

This exploration of concepts can be used as a way to develop critical awareness of context thus encouraging “self-examination of attitudes, values and beliefs within historical and cultural critique… [so that]… students and art teachers combine the power of artistic means with political action as they question ideological formations, and indeed all facets of life, through projects of possibility” (Yokley, 1999, p. 24).

3.1.9 Contextual Review: Connecting through Critical Pedagogy

The critical art pedagogy framework was used to explore critical notions in Creative World 1. The work of Cary (1998a), who in turn draws influence form critical pedagogues such as Freire, McLaren and Giroux, is important to this understanding.

Cary (1998a) proposes that the concept of the life world and the colonisation of the life world are central terms that guide a critical approach to art pedagogy. He states that “life world is the lived experience of individuals as they themselves live it in active engagement with culture… [whereas]… colonization of the life world is a pejorative phrase that refers to the subjugation or distorting influences of power interests of the life world” (p. 30). In Creative World 1 the life world of the participants was at the forefront of the activities. Our approach was deliberately non-colonizing. The approach to the art/nature activities was organized in conjunction with community and Shire representatives and employed the use of materials and environs of the site. This gave local people the agency to create from their social world. Irwin and Springgay also advocate for “living inquiry” (2008, p. xxiv) as a form of developing creative agency through first hand experiences.

Just as critical pedagogy aims to build a critical awareness of aspects of our daily lives to foster agency amongst participants, so does critical art pedagogy (Cary, 1998a, p. 13). A conscious engagement in the world leads to agency that can be expressed through art and narratives. Cary suggests that:

the heart of critical theory is its concern for social justice through the empowerment and emancipation of the oppressed. The mind of critical theory... accentuates openness to new and diverse forms of knowledge... promotes awareness of hidden means of oppression... rejects the culture of positivism and accepts the idea that facts and
values are indivisible. It holds that knowledge is socially constructed and that knowledge and power related. (p. 10)

The participants involved in Creative World 1 did not claim to be oppressed. In fact, they were empowered to make art from their local surrounds through a range of activities to which they may not otherwise have had access. For instance, elderly participants were bussed into the site for workshops and every workshop was free. Participants were also (re)introduced to diverse forms of knowledge about their place as a way to socially construct their own artworks. Their responsive artworks were displayed publically through postcards, photos, community journals, ephemeral sculptures and permanent sculptures. This is in line with Giroux's (2003) call for “resistance and possibility” (p. 43) which he advocates as an approach both for horrific acts of oppression in our time as well as for smaller acts of empowerment. Giroux (2004b) says that “hope makes the leap for us between critical education, which tells us what must be changed; political agency, which gives us the means to make change; and the concrete struggles through which change happens. Hope, in short, gives substance to the recognition that every present is incomplete” (2004b, p. 39).

I consider that resistance and possibility has relevance to IAP. The participants of Creative World 1 changed the status quo by contributing to a series of community artworks. They had a say about their place, their history and their way of being. This was reflected in the enduring sculptures. They proclaimed and made public their artworks through postcards that were shared within and beyond the community. As Savaad said, this opportunity also gave him the experience and confidence to go further; to take on similar work into the future. The Shire also identified capacity to take on further such projects into the future.

Educators, scholars, and policy-makers can make an important contribution politically and pedagogically by revitalizing a language of resistance and possibility, a language that embraces a militant utopianism while constantly challenging those forces that seek to turn such hope into a new slogan or punish and dismiss those who dare look beyond the horizon of the given. (Giroux, 2003, p. 43)

Cary (1998a) suggests that we engage with Gablik’s (1991) remythologising of art as ‘a language of hope and possibility’ (Cary, p.11). of hope and possibility. Gablik (2004) argues for a state of mind that “understands connections between things, understands consequences, and uses the artist’s calling to heal community” (2004, para. 32). Gablik (1992) challenges us to rethink the modernist call for freedom and individualism by considering radical relatedness and interaction as key concerns in art making. She says:

In the post-Cartesian, ecological world view that is now emerging, the self is no longer isolated and self-contained but relational and interdependent. What are the implications for art born of these changes in our notions of selfhood? Art that is rooted in a
"listening" self rather than in a disembodied eye challenges the isolationist thinking of our culture because it focuses not so much on individuals but on the way they interact. Art that is grounded in the realization of our interconnectedness and intersubjectivity - the intertwining of self and others - has a quality of relatedness that cannot be fully realized through monologue: it can only come into its own in dialogue, as open conversation. For many artists this has meant expanding the number of voices to which they heed or letting groups that have been previously excluded speak directly of their own experience. It can also be understood as a shift from self-assertion to integration. (1992, p. 4)

Cary (1998a) tells us that art is regarded as praxis in critical art pedagogy “with art instruction grounded in immediate human experience and value rather than abstracted as a sequence of design problems or co-opted by commercial interests” (p. 33). IAP shares this approach in Creative World 1, ensuring that art instruction is based around the materials, experiences and place of the participants for meaningful application. This is the opposite to techné where art skills and techniques sit outside personal experience. Cary (1998a) also reminds us that a critical approach to art pedagogy acknowledges that “oppression comes from outside as well as inside the self, and we must address both if we are to live in the kind of world in which freedom of expression exists for everyone” (p. 160). IAP aimed to build creative confidence amongst participants across the project by incrementally building on the art/nature workshops so that participants had the opportunity to develop skills and experience new art methods. In addition, IAP valued community input as an informing force for the permanent sculptures, thus valuing and validating all artistic contributions.

3.1.10 Savaad’s Narrative

The Ribbon bark workshops: I brought in a trailer-load of bark. Participants were excited unloading it... Keen for people to experiment and play with bark, I learnt from watching people do their work. One person, a competent craftsman in bark weaving and plaiting, did some incredible things in a very short time because he had the know-how. Others were intrigued by his skills... He would show people a basic plaiting technique, which they'd go back and use. They'd naturally gravitate towards each other and talk about what they were doing. My initial approach to bark was that I didn't go off and learn a technique; I wanted to find my own way with it. What I like learning from participants is their excitement and playfulness. It gives a sense of flow and a freedom to play with bark. Some people were doing things I wouldn’t think of doing and you watch them twist and add things together that I wouldn’t consider... I like to work from experiential place and then introduce simple techniques, but I wouldn’t start with technique first. It flowed and people were immersed, working with the bark and talking about where they lived. One woman from New South Wales
was saying, “Well, this is something I could do at home that I’ve never thought about… I could use fern or bracken.” So she felt encouraged to do more things at home in her environment.

**Figure 24: Savaad’s String Bark Sculptures**

**Taking up IAP:** Since these workshops, if I take a walk somewhere I’m looking for different materials that I can use in my art. I’m opening up. That’s what’s happening. Before, because I was mainly working in timber, I was looking at timbers... now I’m looking at leaves, at different sorts of bark and feathers and seeds and nuts and things that I can use in environmental art. So it’s opened my vision, my seeing. It’s opened up a whole new world to me. Now I’m thinking about my art, what it means, what it means to my life and I feel I’m on the right track historically. Last year, I was in the position where I was thinking of giving art away and becoming a counsellor and this project came up. I had to make a decision - did I want to continue with my art or change my lifestyle? I spent a long time considering this and decided that I am an artist. That was me and where I wanted to go. This project has confirmed that I made the right decision.

**Visual journal:** I’ve never kept a journal to such an extent. So I’ve been keeping photographs, cuttings, found objects, writings, quotations - and it builds up. So you have a resource of all these images available to you... Before it seemed to be one track in that I’d think about creating one piece. This journal opens up a whole field. I’ve got so much to choose from. I feel my work is going to change with more freedom about it. A lot of my work seemed to be very… crafted. I feel as though I’m on the edge of something different. And I found with this involvement, by keeping the journal, that movement has kept going. So even if I don’t feel like I’ve lost my track, it keeps me focused and it keeps that inspiration flowing. So you don’t have to wait for inspiration. You can start working and it will bubble up. Although there’s a lot of information, there are some strong images and possibilities starting to show up. It’s a bit like having the tree with all the leaves and then coming into the branches and
down to the main trunk. It’s like it’s all being condensed into some silent images that are starting to surface. So I haven’t found it confusing at all. In fact, it’s been clarifying. I think it’s been more confusing working not knowing… just waiting to get inspired to work on one particular piece, waiting for the next idea to show up… I keep more information now. I think that’s important… Although I’ve got all this information, it hasn’t cluttered. In some sense, it’s made it clearer, because stronger images or possibilities come to the surface. I think IAP helped me with my journal. I bought a number of books on environment and ephemeral art. So it made me think and be more reflective about what I was doing. I actually think IAP enhanced my creative flow because it gives it more depth and involvement. When I look through my journal I can actually see the progression. You can actually see a developmental process. It has changed the way I work.

**Ephemeral knowing: connection with nature and site:** I fell in love with the site… I’m thinking in terms of the vertical trees and the flowing horizontal river… That image stuck in my mind. From that I was imagining stringy bark spheres being suspended from trees… It’s like the thinking process took a background role and somehow I was in the flow and in a sense things just started to fall in place and I’d look at the site and an area would show up and I’d say: “That’s the spot where I’m going to hang a piece. Well, this is going to go there,” and somehow I just got into - well, with the river, into a stream and a flow of my own and as I looked around, areas started suggesting themselves to me where work should be sited. It was hard to leave the site… I was just surprised at my feelings of attachment to the site. And actually I went back the next day, and I’ve been back since, which has been a good thing because I’ve been able to document my work because it’s flooded since and I’ve wanted to see how they look. So in a sense it’s like having children. You want to keep your eye on them.

My sense of inner excitement about the possibilities of environmental and ephemeral art overflow. I find myself observing my surroundings in new ways in that I seek and source the use of possible natural materials from catkins, cones, thistle heads, etcetera.

**An immersive approach to art:** is something that I’ll take on board and it’s something that’s been showing up in my own journal; the various ways of looking and seeing. I think that comes down to… connectedness; which I think is what Tania and I developed after being there five days and meeting local people and doing the work where we’re doing it… Working with weaving and bark, in a sense, it does slow you down. It does slow your thinking process down so that you are immersed in your work. It’s meditative.

**Spiritual connection:** The artwork, the environment - there is a meditative quality there, and that increases the connectedness… Well, you’re not thinking in your mind. You’re not caught up in a head process. You can be on the land with your heart, with your being, and somehow
it opens up so you’re a part of what’s there. So it’s like unity. That’s where the spiritual aspect comes in. And that’s very strong. You remember those moments. Well, that was very much a surprise, because often when I’ve made work I have been able to let go, even if I thought those pieces were fantastic. But I think because the approach here has been so different in that I’ve immersed myself ever since we met and began this project, I’ve immersed myself in the project in such a way that it’s become a big part of my life and when I came to leave on the Saturday, I found it difficult to leave. I spent five full days in the site and often I got there early and placed the bark in the river… I found that each time [workshop] was very different and I was able to see it from a different aspect. The microscopic thing was just amazing. It reminded me very much of the first time I went snorkelling. It’s just a whole new world and it’s very exciting. An issue, or an understanding that’s arisen for me is that generally my art practice in the past has been in the studio and it’s been very much a linear thing where I know what I’m working on and the piece is on the bench and I work on it. Whereas, with this environmental ephemeral work that I’ve been doing at Yarra Junction, I’ve been out on the site five days and it’s like a strong unity has developed with the site. It feels very close to the source, close to nature. It was a very spiritual thing connecting to the land, and to the river and the trees. It was an immersive thing all round.

Empowerment, sustaining creativity and economic/social involvement:

It is the most significant project I’ve worked on. When I look back at what I’ve achieved and learnt, the process, especially in the preparation of the permanent sculpture, from planning to sourcing the rock and then to laser cutting and getting that technical knowledge and dealing with a number of people and to bring it together, was quite an achievement… It really did involve dealing with a lot of people across the spectrum. I enjoyed the process and I look forward to doing more. The Shire has now asked me to be involved in another project for the Commonwealth Games and my feeling is they have approached me because of my experience working on this project. I think I now have the confidence and understanding of how a project begins through funding and bringing people together and looking at the logistics and doing research work into gathering materials and bringing in other people together and then finally working with groups of people to make it happen. I think one of the major strengths is that this project is working with many different people, from planning to manufacturing to installation. As part of my visual journal, the first page is business cards that I’ve collected with all the people that I’ve worked with. And the Shire want me to be involved in a public art forum… They don’t have a process at the moment, so they want me to have more involvement in working out some sort of program. I’ve made some good friends on this project and some good contacts which I can utilize in the future. So my relationship with the Shire will involve me in other things, to be on panels and other projects. A girl came along to my talk at the Warburton Arts Centre because I spoke about moving out of the studio and
joining different groups and doors opening. And she felt that’s what she could do as well. So that’s what she has done, yes, just as I’ve been encouraged to move further along. I think that has empowered her.

I think a lot of things stretched me in this project: I had to speak in public, make presentations, express myself in spoken or written word. So I think being stretched like that gives you confidence to move on. I’m appreciative of that. It means that keeping the journals and all the written material, I have a record of the project so, for future projects I have some sort of basis. I think we’ve made it much easier for the Shire to take on further projects and I think Creative Junction has given them the confidence to do so. They can see the results, what’s possible; there are two permanent sculptures here and people are still talking about the ephemeral week. A lot of people who use this Reserve were speaking about the number of different artworks here, the Aboriginal work and the weaving basket. The works are still here and people can see that. There’s no sign of any sort of vandalism whatsoever. So I think that in itself and even the signage, which is [currently] star pickets, is still here. So I think that in itself says something.

There’s been a lot of local people that have been involved in the project and I think that’s given them an extension. A lot of people form the community really enjoyed being involved in different workshops. A lot of them came to the Opening Ceremony Day as well. And a lot of the people thought this was something so new to Yarra Junction that in a sense gave Yarra Junction something different, sort of unique.

**Connection to Indigenous ways of knowing - Meeting Place:** I was very touched by Joy Wandin Murphy’s confirmation of a relationship that I have here with the land and she could see that... When I heard Joy speak she was welcoming the group who had just come back from a short walk along the reserve and she was speaking about the importance of the land and the trees to the Aboriginal culture and in her talk she was making her blessings welcome to everybody. The way she spoke about the land and particularly the week I spent here on the ephemeral project… I was able to understand what she was speaking about because in that week I was able to immerse myself in just being here and it felt very special… just being here and listening and I felt at one with the environment here. So that’s very much a part of the Aboriginal culture. So I think I had a sense of - an understanding… the place feels very special - it’s a connection that - it’s difficult to explain - it’s something that you feel inside, that you feel close to.

**Meeting place:** A lot of people were saying how they enjoyed seeing the sculpture here and that it was a good thing on the Shire’s part, and that they’d use it as a meeting place and as a sitting place. Well, sitting here now (at the site of the *Meeting Place of the Manna Gum People* sculpture, see Figure 25) and looking past the leaves, it encourages you to look
upwards at the height of the trees and the mountains in the background. It's not just visual. It’s hearing the bell birds and the river, and looking at the grasses and the plantings that are here. Wherever it went, it had to be close to some tall trees so that the leaves from those trees would actually fall into the sculpture and be part of the sculptural landscape, so nature would interact with it as well as people. It settles here so nicely; the scale of the work and how it relates to the manna gum trees and how it’s situated. It blends in and it’s not imposing. It fits in nicely to this environment. I’ve heard people say that’s it’s like a secret place.

There is a depth of understanding portrayed by Savaad’s sculpture *Meeting Place of the Manna Gum People*. Savaad’s work recognizes the spiritual significance of the manna gum to the Wurundjeri people. It promotes a better appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal culture. The way that he has embraced Wurundjeri culture adds another layer to understanding Aboriginal culture. (A Response to the *Meeting Place of the Manna Gum Peoples* Joy Wandin-Murphy, Senior Elder of the Wurundjeri)

When I was looking through the [community] journals there were stories of people walking through here [the Little Yarra Reserve] and how they felt and there were poems and the kids had drawn lots of leaves. It was all about them relating to the site. Those things had to be taken into consideration. So how I felt and how the community felt came together. A lot of those workshops involved working with other people with different expertise and specially the workshop where we were looking at collected materials through the microscopic lenses and using those on the computer… and then going one of the talks by Owen Gooding and hearing him describe the plant community here and how things relate and going for a walk with Bee and picking up leaves and insects and then, taking them back to look at the microscope. It was an amazing world… You were seeing this through other people’s eyes and extending the knowledge. I’m sure what is here now would be very different if I hadn’t listened to the direction that everyone involved in this project were going.
Large metal manna gum leaves stand proud, surrounded by local stone placed in a circular format (see Figure 25). This interactive sculpture was sited near the local swimming spot on the Little Yarra River in the Little Yarra Parklands, Yarra Junction. The sculpture is placed next to the Rail Trial pathway, only meters from the local football oval. In the near distance manna gum trees reach to the sky and drop their leaves around it.

**Savaad learning from Geraldine:** I like to have the time to contemplate things and think; this project has been well structured and well planned with a timeline so I never felt pressure. I think there was the space and time to express the directions that I thought were relevant. Within the two year period, it was so structured that my ideas and shaping of this work was able to evolve. I can see you’ve gained a lot of satisfaction from the project. I’ve enjoyed listening to you talk. And that comes from you being involved and immersed in yourself in the project… Watching the way you work, how you’ve kept your journals, how you photograph and document, how you ask questions, and your involvement in the project. I’ve watched that with interest and I’ve learnt from that. What made me think about it was that Geraldine works and creates her own inspiration without having to wait for it. She’s right in there. And that’s helped me understand the immersive approach. I saw you as a mentor.
Geraldine learning from Savaad: You seem to ponder… being with the medium, the place and the time. I feel you enter a space of creativity that is a very special place… As a teacher, I can be very busy and encourage my students to be creative here and there, but you seem to somehow slow down time and create within it. I feel that I’m learning a lot about that from you, and from Tania. I feel you’ve both have a similar approach. I think a lot of schools don’t have that approach; that they’re very much about activity and end product. Yet you seem to have activity and end product and all the rest, but it’s done with a very different sensibility. One thing I’ve learnt from you is your capacity for listening and looking very deeply at things. It’s really interesting that you listened to Joy Murphy and the community and you created the permanent sculpture with all this coming together. And then in return, Joy Murphy has listened back to your piece. That’s a fantastic connection. When I write about Meeting Place, I’m thinking of using a phrase, ‘place for future contemplation’, because I think your work has this listening metaphor throughout.

3.1.11 Glenn’s Narrative

I would say I’ve got the very first level of the skinniest layer of the onion of knowledge. I’m coming in and still fully aware that it’s just touching on the very, very first level and layers of skin. (Glenn Romanis)

Mountain Ash Leaf Sculptures

The type of learning and teaching: It’s was a matter of getting into a sub-community, being the Secondary College, introducing myself as a practitioner, discussing past works to give a bit of insight into what can be created by community, an introduction into ephemeral art, what it means and what people think about it. From there it was coming up with the design, something significant to Yarra Junction, making it for the event and the installation and hopefully it told the end story.

Artist led design: There were ongoing themes throughout the Creative Junction Project that we teased out as important. Although I had a design, it was relatively fluid and changed from one large leaf to two small leaves and yes, it was very much based in and around what the kids saw their community about. I wanted to make it that they owned it and let it come from their point of view. We had a brainstorming session, what they saw their community being, the pros and cons, what they liked and didn’t like, the geography of the area, just conjuring up some sort of identity for them... It was to do with the bush, the environment, the town being in and around the bush and the timber industry that a lot of their parents have been involved in over time. And, the Yarra River was a big player, so to me - the Yarra River, and being launched on the Little Yarra River, the design of the Little Yarra on the leaves was all part of it - the mountain ash being the resource that was generally used right up until now as far as the logging industry goes (see Figure 27) I’d already envisaged the Junction sculpture
that was based on the logging industry so I wanted to communicate a very similar story on the other side. One was industrial based. The other one was hopefully a little more environmentally based.

**Transformative participation:** Different classes were not able to participate, so I ended up with kids that probably didn’t show too much interest at the start. They were there, whether it was through detention or just being trouble makers… I think for a lot of them, at the start, it was great with getting out of class and it was a loaf session. At the start, I was pretty disappointed. By the end I thought this is the best bunch of kids I could have had. Because it wasn’t the kids that you generally get that have already got that interest. These kids had no interest at all, didn’t care. Then throughout the session I saw that they did care and put time and effort into it. I was told by the teacher that one student hadn’t done a thing for her for the whole year and now look at him. He’s got his head down, knuckling through it. For me, to have one of those kids doing it… [is] more rewarding than having someone that’s setting themselves up to have a career in this. There were two kids who came to the leaf sculpture when it was put in the river. Well, having them there in school holidays is a little bit of a treat. I probably wouldn’t have been there if I was a kid. But it was like, yeah, they were maybe a couple of the kids that initially were running a bit amuck and saw it as a bludge session; but they were the ones down there at the end launching it. The smiles on their faces… You could see that they were really proud with what they’d done and their parents were beaming, and just the discussion - yeah, it was a little, mini, mini, mini step up and not just, I suppose, self-esteem but confidence that they could make something… It’s not just about the piece of art. It’s about being involved in the collaboration. It was by the end of the process where it seemed that… it’s the making that gets the kids involved.
Participants experienced a unique art happening when two mountain artworks floated down the Little Yarra River and slowly broke apart.

**Curriculum intrusion:** This type of learning is foreign to them... Complete utter end of the spectrum. It's not what they're used to and when you've got, as I've said, the secondary art teacher saying they don't see it being part of the curriculum, it just goes to show the vast
differences in head space when it comes to what is generally perceived - and this is a huge
generalization when it comes to art and education in some schools as to what’s actually out
there… They just didn’t see it as being important… even though it was about art and their
place, their identity, the whole. You couldn’t get much closer or truer in my mind.

This is a broad-sweeping generalization, but schools are a community within themselves and
things are generally done this way and that’s the way it’s been done for many years. When
something new outside of the spectrum is put to them, either it’s a little bit of hard work or it
takes someone to be brave or someone to just step up and take on more than what teachers
have already got on their plate which is a copious amount of work. A lot of times it’s seen, as,
well, we’d love to do it, but we just can’t and we just haven’t got the time or we haven’t
allocated the time. So, in my mind it’s a lot about setting up and making sure that - whether
it’s the principal or the teachers are fully aware of what needs to be done. That takes a bit of
time and effort in regards to sometimes one on one personal meetings - because really,
you’ve got to win over the powers that be. If it wasn’t for the SOSE teacher and then a little
later, I suppose, the community liaison person from the Shire, the job could have easily fallen
over. Sometimes in schools, it’s a matter of getting them on board and then once they’re on
board it’s a lot easier, but they’re just so flat chat with other things. It seemed a lot of effort for
them to just even take it on. It’s like if they’ve gone five or six years set up in a specific
programme, curriculum and its working well for them now, some people are quite happy with
living and doing that. And to take something else on, for some, it’s just too difficult. It’s fitting
in time and management, getting other kids out of classes, and all that sort of thing.

**Junction - The Mountain Ash Trail Sculpture**

**Types of learning and teaching:** It was more about me learning and being taught. As
selfish as it probably sounds, I was hoping at the initial stages that it was about older people
within the community passing on stories and knowledge to younger people within the same
industry that will very, very soon be lost. That unfortunately probably didn’t happen but it did
to a smaller degree having Des who is getting into his late 80s now, been part of the industry
for 60 years teaching different processes and technologies and just listening and hearing
those stories was fantastic. It would have been good to have had, not just, I suppose, myself
as the younger generation stepping in and listening and learning, but it would have been
great for different industry mobs up there to be doing the same thing. I was told by certain
millers and people that they would be there because they saw it as being really, really
interesting and they wanted to be involved in it, but they didn’t turn up. I think it could have
been unbelievably successful but it didn’t happen to its full potential. It could have been
communicated by myself a lot better in regards to making sure that the word got out more
than what it did. People are busy and that job was done over two weeks in working hours. Most of the people that would have been interested, work.

**Stories from the old-timers:** But I know people have come to see it. Since that piece was laid (see Figure 27) and even when I was carving in the river - the amount of old-timers I had come past saying: “Yeah, this is great”... “I was part of this”... “I did this”... “I worked here for this amount of time”... It’s already a talking point; not just about the piece but where people fit within that community and what they’ve been involved in within the industry. Well, that’s what I was hoping that the piece was recognizing a lot of the older people and its like, not just acknowledging the processes that were done to achieve what is done by technology today... in my mind - those stories - the elderly people don’t get the opportunity to communicate that too much anymore. We don’t, as a whole community, see that as being too relevant or important, where in my mind it’s something that is essential. I think a lot of this is passed down through oral histories and knowledge and, you know, getting into the historian’s ears. They don’t know how it was done, but there was a person there that did and - yes, the experience of doing it and being told this, and stop whinging about that and, you know, get your hands dirty here... It’s the physical make that is important, the reading about it, gives you understanding of how something is done, but making it means you can do it.

Oh, well, Junction is a meeting place, isn’t it? It’s like - through working with the loggers and working with the students there’s a whole lot of different levels of learning. There are the skills that I gained working with the kids as far as communicating and skills and also the rail that I’ve never known or done before. It’s a prototype for me. So it’s - learning in the public arena. I don’t know whether it’s powerful but it’s just what I do in my practice, making sure that - a community piece or a public piece - is in and about the community. It’s a site-specific installation. It’s like, in my mind, a lot of artists come in and they put their thing onto the community where hopefully what I try and do is give the community what they want with my signature. And I’m hoping that’s what’s happened. And so, for me, it was all educational. There wasn’t one bit about the job that wasn’t.
Figure 27: Junction by Glenn Romanis

This large sculpture represents a meeting point and the old tram lines created by loggers from the area. Like the mountain ash railway tracks that transported the mountain ash timber down the surrounding mountains, this sculptural will decay over an extended period.

I was like an apprentice. That’s why Desi was the foreman. He’s the elder. He’s been around the longest and got the most wisdom. As much as I designed it, I took on the role of the lackey. It was like I knew that there was going to be some pretty hard lessons to be learned. I went to a logging coupe and I had to take on the understanding that I was there to learn and listen. I mean I’ve got my views on sustainability and forests and some of them are probably quite strong, but to debate them in a logging coupe, it’s just probably not the point in time to do it. But, then, you’ve also got to conjure up your own feelings and emotions and make sure that you’re true to yourself, to a degree, and yes, that - a lot of the time - is the biggest fight of all, making sure that what you’re doing is true to what you’re doing.

**Intergenerational knowledge:** It’s pretty difficult because as an artist you’re coming in as a blow-in, someone that people generally don’t know as an individual. When you’re working in a small community, they’re already seeing you as a little bit suspicious - being in a logging coupe, it was more suspicious - and having my ideals, it was even more suspicious. So... there were pros and cons with it. There were things I would have loved to have expressed, but I knew that it would be completely detrimental to anything if they were expressed... It’s

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6 A logging coupe is the localised removal of most or all trees from an area in a single timber harvesting operation.
more about “this is the environment,” whether it’s good, bad. It’s not about pointing fingers and giving reasons. It’s just about - this is it. It’s pretty much just propping it on the table and not saying anything about or commenting anything about the overall thing.

It’s your interpretation of the community. So it’s still your voice coming through about the community. It was important making sure that it sat to the same angle and degree as what the actual river does. You know, if people use it and it’s used for something… Young girls use the rail as practice beams for gymnastics. It’s not there just as a pseudo-historical reference. It’s there to be jumped, climbed, walked over, felt, and ultimately damaged and destroyed.

About being immersed - I mean you can’t gain knowledge in setting up - whether it’s a fortnight of workshops and walking the site a few times, getting up into the backblocks and discussing stuff in that short period of time. But there are vast levels of generational knowledge that make you part of that place. To me, I’m just touching on one very, very small story that makes up a billion stories on that location. So my level of knowledge in that community is close to nil, really.

**True to place:** It’s about making that piece as strong as it possibly can be. If it’s an installation, it’s got to be true to that place and space. If you haven’t researched up on it in one way or another, then what relevance has it got to that place and space? It’s like I don’t know how to do it any other way. It’s about just walking the space and site and I suppose, my own knowledge and background on different things, immersing yourself that way, getting general story from all aspects of the community, whether it’s from your five to six year old kinder kids to 88 year old elders within the community. But really, it’s about just trying to take it in… it’s just about the threads of strength that just keep coming through. And then there are other things, maybe the smallest, most subtle thing that takes your eye. It happens differently every single time… I knew I was doing that the very first day I was driving back. And I remember I said it to you in the car: “I’m going to do this”… I just knew – bang! But yeah, it may happen in a story that Desi says on the job. It may happen a kid in a room says this or that. It just happens in so many, many different ways, but 99% of the time, as soon as it happens, you just know. You just know. It’s a good feeling and you get excited and you just can’t wait to work on it more. You just know…

Sometimes it’s the stories that create the piece. Sometimes it’s the piece, and then you get the stories. But usually I’ve found that the pieces that end up being quite extensive pieces as far as in my journal, are the pieces that I’ve had to really knuckle through because I just haven’t come up with something in my mind that I see as being either appropriate or satisfying.
Mostly I’m creating in my head... And I’ve got jobs that may work for this one whilst I’m working and I won’t touch it again for five or six jobs, but aspects of that job conjure up through this one. My practice, in a weird way, it’s an ongoing journey. I always say I’m not going to call myself an artist until I’ve done my apprenticeship and that’s, you know, right up until I’m 80. So it’s all an ongoing thing. And it’s like, in one way, being fortunate enough to be kept pretty busy in regards to making... I don’t very often, if at all, go back through things. The things that I’ve got that haven’t been explored that I think need to be, are strong enough to stick in my brain.

I don’t want to try to be influenced by other artists. There are artists where it’s bloody difficult not to be influenced by because they’re just, in my mind, brilliant. It’s the area, the space, the place, that’s my reference. It’s got nothing to do with art...

My inspiration is about the place and the space. And if I need to get that from another artist that isn’t involved in that space or place, then it’s lost its whole thing to start with. It’s like - I hopefully create something from what I’ve found there and about there.

Notes from Glenn as they appeared in our final report: Local input was also an informing element in Glenn Romanis’ sculpture. *Always Been Here, Always Will Be* makes reference to a conversation with local people regarding their perception of place and belief in the enduring presence of the natural surrounds of the Yarra Ranges. Glenn says his sculpture symbolises “the sky we all live under and the Yarra Junction that runs through it” (see Figure 28). Presented as a ground piece that makes reference to the Southern Cross and local flora, the sculpture also refers to the concepts of time and place through a unique interplay of natural materials from ancient and modern times. This approach saw Glenn integrate flora fossils from the late Permian Period (from 245 to 275 million years old) (see Figure 29) with petrified wood from the Lilydale area (from 120 to 150 million years old) alongside local granite and cement adhesive. Situated near the recently opened Yarra Junction swimming complex, Glenn’s piece resonates with the bush as a presence that “has been around a long, long time” (Scomazzon, Burke, Malone, & Singh Dodd, 2005, p. 36).
Figure 28: *Always Been Here, Always Will Be* by Glenn Romanis

Figure 29: Detail *Always Been Here, Always Will Be*

This piece integrated flora fossils Glossopteris from the late Permian Period (from 245 to 275 million years old) with petrified wood from Australia (from 120 to 150 million years old) and basalt.

First and foremost Glenn’s sculpture shows the utmost respect that Glenn has for place and acknowledges the spiritual connection from the constellation to the earth. (A Response to *Always Been Here, Always Will Be* by Joy Wandin-Murphy, Senior Elder of the Wurundjeri, in conversation with Geraldine Burke, 2 May 2005)
3.1.12 Contextual Review: Connecting through Environmental Art

A review of the literature on environmental art led to an understanding of how the interrogation of art and nature within this learning context can be understood in terms of place-based pedagogy. This helped plan and inform the work of Creative World 1.

Since the sixties an increasing number of artists have started to use processes of nature and material qualities of nature to create artworks ranging from earth moving sculptures to works made “in cooperation with the environment” (Sonfist, 1983, p. xi). A growing concern for the environment has resulted in artists making “a statement about man’s relation to nature” (Sonfist, 1983, p. xi). The disappearance of nature (particularly of visible nature) has led modern people to an awareness of deep ecology and a sense that pure nature seems to have disappeared (Heim, 1998, pp. 148-149). These sociocultural and environmental currents of the time led the early land artists to the conviction that sculptural gestures have a life away from the institution, out in the world, inflected by a variable and organic location (Wallis & Kastner, 1998, p. 13). Further to this line of thinking, Gooding (2002) suggests that:

Never has there been a time in all human history when the quality of our understanding of our condition in nature – the nature of our historical being in the world – has been more crucial to our survival as a species, and to the survival of all the species of the animal world in the complex network of terrestrial interdependence... Alongside ecologists and natural historians, artists and poets have played no small part in this transformation of consciousness, working in ways that are peculiar to the arts. (p. 14)

Current attitudes towards nature have seen artists go beyond, and challenge, the descriptive and illustrative depiction of nature. The Creative Junction Project was grounded in such an approach and was informed by artists such as Goldsworthy whose work tends to re-contextualize nature as opposed to copying aspects of the natural world. Rather than describing nature, Goldsworthy includes nature as the source material and as part of the work. In fact, Goldsworthy states that he “uses nature, but goes within it... [not beyond it]” (Guichard, 1991). By adding “his touch... a continuum of people in the land” (Goldsworthy, 1996), he provides a renewed insight from which to re-look at nature. The process provides him with a working relationship to nature and a greater sensitivity to the delicate relationship between wind, petal and leaf (Guichard, 1991).

Nature’s ephemeral tendencies are at the very core of his practice and provide him with the means through which to explore a piece... In short, nature is his tool; it is the medium through which he creates, and at the same time it is the means via which he places his works within landscape. (Burke, 2000, p. 150)
These dynamic creative transformations with, and in, nature are understood as symbolic interventions with the land (Gooding, 2002). The creative strategies are enacted through ephemeral action and ephemeral structures. As Gooding states:

In general terms the strategy might be described as an action in the landscape which constitutes the work, whose existence is known to the artist's public by way of a report or a photograph, a marked map or a text (which may be simply descriptive, poetically evocative, or minimally referential), or any combination of these forms of information. Structures that are deliberately ephemeral (as in the work of Chris Drury, Andy Goldsworthy and Peter Hutchinson), water stains and beaten paths (Richard Long), shadows thrown, drawings made in snow or tidal sand, sculptures that disintegrate (Goldsworthy), ice works, mirror works (Bruce McLean). (Gooding, 2002, p. 21)

Creative World 1 valued the individual's connection to the environment as a primary concern (Wallis & Kastner, 1998, p. 11) and relocated the artist and viewer from observer of nature to participant art maker within it. The walking methodologies of artists Hamish Fulton and Richard Long (Hall, 2002) also influenced Creative World 1 whereby participants documented the walks and the findings during the walks in photographic and poetic ways, privileging them as creative experiences. However, in marked contrast to the practice of Fulton and Long, we chose to respectfully harvest the landscape for found objects to make artworks. We chose to make lasting changes to the landscape through the introduction of permanent artworks to the site. In contrast, Long’s artworks in the landscape have a minimal sculptural formality and involve minimal actions while Fulton’s works consists almost entirely of his movement through the landscape.

Wallis and Kastner (1998) helped us conceptualize our understanding of the permanent enduring sculptures in the Little Yarra River Reserve. We specified that the artworks draw on the relationship of existing characteristics of the site and on the land itself as the pivot for the artists’ responses. The three final project sculptures, Meeting Place of the Manna Gum Peoples by Savaad Felich, Junction by Glenn Romanis, and Always Has Been, Always Will Be by Glenn Romanis work within the tradition of honouring the land as they stimulate an awareness of nature itself and an awareness of nature in art. They are sited in chosen locations on which they depend for their power. Although these three sculptures sit on the land, they attempt to integrate with it in a lyrical and poetic manner, through use of natural materials. In contrast, some other environmental art approaches interrupt the site through use of unnatural substances.

Jokela (2008) informs our conceptual understanding of these artworks. He states that artists and audience are jointly involved as creators and recipients of cultural values when undertaking community and environmental art. He reminds us that “environmental and
community art... makes it possible to move beyond an institution-centred conception of art towards the kind of thinking that emphasizes art as a creative event in line with principles of the aesthetics of pragmatism and sociocultural animation, and connects it to the kind of active citizenship called for in critical pedagogy” (p. 220).

The art/nature focus underpinning the Creative Junction Project sought to connect participants to country, and in so doing, aimed to connect participants to sense of self and to each other, through active and tangible engagement with country. As Besacier (2002) suggests:

nature speaks of man because it bears his trace, but also because of man’s desire to work with nature… Nature allows him to ‘find himself’, to qualify his worldly existence. When this is the work of an artist, he allows us not only to partake of this very private experience, but also to break through the indifference we feel when we attempt a dialogue with nature by ourselves. (p. 26)

Emily Brady (2003), the environmental philosopher, suggests that attentiveness to sensory engagement with nature can further aesthetic appreciation for place. She points out that our sense of place can be influenced by an “appreciation of aesthetic qualities through sensory engagement… [which is]… directed to a great degree by qualities perceived” (p. 127). She suggests that “sensuous engagement can be thick or thin… perception begins with vision, and vision can direct the other senses to a broader sensuous engagement” (p. 124). She reveals that:

touch is one of the most intimate ways we explore nature; it is the least distanced and most interactive of all the senses. When we reach out to touch nature; it touches us back, if not unintentionally. Touch gives us the feel and texture of our world, and invites bodily engagement through our face, hands, and feet, and in some cases, our whole body. (p. 125)

Environmental art and community art share similarities with the aims of place-base education, critical pedagogy and IAP. These three approaches to pedagogy draw power from the local lived experiences of the learner and, in doing so, provide strong ongoing connections to places of learning such as those experienced in Creative World 1. They contest standardized approaches to educational experiences and tend to dismiss place as a primary experience (Cary, 1998a; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Gruenewald, 2003). For instance, Sobel’s (1996) ecological approach to place-based education begins by fostering empathy for the familiar that is then extended to the home range and then to social action and reinhabitation. Gruenewald (2003) also proposes that critical pedagogy and place-based education “are mutually supportive educational traditions… [and it is their]… synthesis that blends the two discourses into a critical pedagogy of place” (p. 3). Gruenewald (2003) calls for
an awareness of the “spatial aspects of social experience” so that the “ecologically grounded emphasis of place-based educators… [and the]… socially grounded emphasis of critical pedagogy” (p. 3) become a critical pedagogy of place that evaluates “the appropriateness of our relationships to each other, and to our socio-ecological places” (p. 7). Further, he suggests that “a critical pedagogy of place ultimately encourages teachers and students to re-inhabit their places, that is, to pursue the kind of social action that improves the social and ecological life of places, near and far, now and in the future” (p. 7). In fact it is the reflection and the social action that can emerge from these experiences that prompt participants to become politically aware and actively involved in the ongoing care of these places (Sobel, 1996).

Gruenwald (2003) suggests that “a critical pedagogy of place aims to: (a) identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments (reinhabitation); and (b) identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (decolonization)” (p. 9). In the study, IAP encouraged reinhabitation by helping participants to live well through art, to re-connect to place through walking and respectfully collecting and using natural materials as art objects. The artworks made for the site, tell the story of participants’ socio-ecological connection to the place now and into the future. IAP encouraged decolonization by changing ways of thinking about the Little Yarra Reserve and art itself. Through IAP the site became a place for creativity, a place for community expression across generational knowledge and offered a way of making art that was place-based.

IAP concurs with Orr (2005) that the idea of living well requires more than inhabiting a place. Orr encourages us to dwell in an intimate and nurturing manner with a place. He suggests that “once in a life time we need to give ourselves up to a particular landscape, to dwell on it, wonder about it, imagine it, touch it, listen to it and recollect” (p. 106). Orr (1992) also advocates for an organic and mutually nurturing relationship with a place. He says that good “inhabitance is an art requiring detailed knowledge of a place, the capacity for observation, and a sense of care and rootedness” (p. 130). IAP addresses these aims, but uses art and narrative as the method through which to express in, through and about place, while working creatively together as a community. While acknowledging Gruenwald’s work into critical place-based education, McKenzie (2008) asks us to further consider how “a rich range of pedagogical places are opened up when we consider socio-ecological learning to occur more broadly in the space between the lived and the articulated… [rather than]… considering educative experiences as centred around conceptual critique or embodied place-based experience” (p.369). She suggests that:

In-between practical and official consciousness, the structures of feeling inhabited and those imagined, seem to lay the pedagogical hinges of what we can do with culture.
This sort of framing enables us to grapple with what it means to engage in socio-ecological learning, for example, via friendship, art, literature, irony, poetry, film, new media, cultural difference, local and global spaces, and communities. (p. 362)

IAP aims to create a space for people to grapple with socio-ecological learning, be it through lived experience or through artistic expression. Bachelard (1969) states: “we cover the universe with the drawings we have lived” (p. 12). He reminds us that places offer experiences that are fodder for memory and creative expression. In the study, the permanent sculptures, the site signage and the project postcards offered another pedagogical art through which participants could share their socio-ecological learning.

3.1.13 Critical Narrative

**What is Immersive Art Pedagogy?**

In Creative World 1, IAP involved an approach to art making, teaching and learning where creativity was regarded as a socially dynamic concern. Creative participation was supported across the community and encouraged across age groups and levels of expertise.

IAP is a pedagogy that encourages links between individual art making and the showcasing of artwork as part of the cultural domain. It seeks to build and foster these connections as an ongoing concern. In this context IAP is about immersion in art practice and immersion in the site as a way to build connections of an aesthetic, environmental and social nature.

Through embodied play and material thinking participants in the study gained deep knowledge of their materials. Skill development using local materials was highly valued as were the meanings that emerged from personal and local knowledge.

IAP values the site of learning as a crucial concern. Just as a landscape can be a character in a novel, IAP allows place, and the site of investigation to become a character that is revealed across time, through expressive form and alongside storied investigations of place. By walking, talking and tuning in to place IAP encouraged the study participants to use their sense of touch, smell, and deep looking to be aesthetically engaged. IAP values living art inquiry as a starting point that is understood alongside knowledge of the art domain. IAP values the primary experience that place and found objects offer.

IAP seeks simultaneous concept development across a range of practices and approaches. In the study the experiential data from children’s nature journals, community art workshops and discussions with locals were woven together to inform new artworks and local knowledge. IAP actively encourages connections between people as they make art, fostering a creative community approach. IAP prizes participatory appropriation of skills and local knowledge across participants so that creative agency is fostered.
In Creative World 1 IAP was a way to connect creativity, art pedagogy, local and discipline knowledge/s to sociocultural, environmental and critical ways of knowing. It valued immersion with materials and the context of the place in which it was enacted. It favoured an immersive and playful investigation of objects and materials as a way to foster creative expression. It prized ways of knowing that were creative, connecting, contextual and critical.

Creative World 1 conceptualized place as a creative site that could be explored and revealed by the following phases identified through IAP:

- Walking place - as an aesthetic and reflective way of connecting to place;
- Wondering place - through tactile engagement with natural materials;
- Listening to place and each other - through art and narrative;
- Exploring place - through nature;
- Expressing place - through art and nature;
- Deep learning - in, through and about art and nature;
- Wellbeing through aesthetic engagement with place - through art and nature;
- Valuing of diversity - through art and nature;
- Imaginative possibility and enjoyment - through art and nature; and
- Critical awareness of place - through art and narrative.

**What does Immersive Art Pedagogy Reveal or Contest?**

In Creative World 1 the artistic coordinator’s narrative and photos revealed that a tiered approach to learning enabled participants to (re)visit their art making from different vantage points. This built momentum as children, then families, and then the broader community joined in the Creative Junction Project. This approach wove together multiple viewpoints and art processes across the scope of the Creative Junction Project and was the antithesis to singular art lessons. IAP revealed that walking, talking and harvesting materials from place drove active participation and social engagement. IAP was not contained by a studio or classroom setting or by purchased art materials. My narrative revealed that through IAP we learnt in and with a place, at the micro and mesa level. This contrasts with the traditional approach of observing landscape from a distance. IAP revealed that found objects were powerful agents for creative and accessible connection to local culture, sense of place and current art practices especially pertaining to environmental and sustainable art practice. Skills were rekindled and newly developed in the use of local materials. Glenn’s Junction sculpture and the stringy bark sculptures illustrate this.

IAP revealed that intercultural understanding is possible through the making and sharing of art experiences across Indigenous and non-indigenous participants. This was evident in the Oonah workshop, Savaad’s Meeting Place sculpture and Joy Murphy’s response to Savaad’s
sculpture. IAP revealed that environmental learning can be incorporated as part of the art process and can capture local knowledge of place. This was evident in the study when participants (re)discovered the widgee-bidgee burr that loggers had used in the past for making tea. This was also evident when participants ascertained that the prolific number of bell birds at the site was due to the abundance of tasty lerp on the leaves of trees. Participatory appropriation was evident when, for instance, Savaad shared his community art knowledge with a local girl who wanted to be involved in community art and when a child who attended the microscopic workshop later shared his new skills with other children.

The immersive process revealed a high level of productivity made possible by participating and then re-participating over time. IAP enabled participants to engage through:

- (re)visiting;
- (re)playing;
- (re)sensing;
- (re)looking;
- (re)thinking;
- (re)imagining; and
- (re)creating/meaning.

Material knowledge is understood as a way of being, being with and becoming (gleaned through insight of a/r/tography).

For Tania, being immersed in art meant being in a place, listening to it and tuning in. She rejected busy-ness and the activity-centric approach of school art lessons. She challenged people to slowdown, to be present in the site, and to embody making as a meditative process. She favoured opt-in participation and appreciated that people learn through listening, demonstration, coming back to chat, participating if so inclined, and by teaching others and building confidence over time. Hers was not a didactic approach. By enabling participants to be still and embodied in place, she encouraged them to listen to the birds, walk the site and challenge their own creativity. She valued the diversity of approaches that IAP offered and the way that the community artists and the Shire shared knowledge.

Savaad was new to the concept of IAP. The IAP process worked for him as a way to build a repertoire of art ideas and concepts and for sustaining his practice. He was introduced to new ways of seeing that opened up his life and affirmed his role as an artist. He reported that attending nearly all the Creative Junction workshops made him more flexible with materials. He suggested that IAP slows down the individual leading to a connection with place. At the site he experienced a type of meditative immersion that gave him a sense of wellbeing. It was an enjoyable and spiritual experience for him that left him feeling deeply connected to
the site. Immersion in place through art made him feel more connected to Indigenous ways of knowing. By sustaining his practice, IAP helped his own sculpture build momentum.

As a workshop facilitator, Savaad positioned himself as teacher/learner. He provided materials and introduced concepts but, rather than instructing participants, he watched how people learnt and then helped them as needed. He allowed participants to teach each other and to freely share their learnings. As an artist/teacher he watched others making and learnt from them.

Savaad’s approach was to let techniques evolve through engagement with local materials. For example, by placing bark in the river overnight, he made the bark more pliable and created a technique that suited the site and the materials.

Glenn’s narrative was a reminder that there is always more to know. He says: “I’ve got the very first level of the skinniest layer of the onion of knowledge... [of the Yarra Junction and community]”. And yet as a community artist, he was much more immersed than were many of the other participants. His personal account shows that Indigenous ways of knowing country are deep and vast and cross multiple, layered and generational connections.

Glenn developed rich connections with sub-communities. He used their industrial and environmental stories as impetus for his artist-led but community-inspired artworks. He worked side-by-side the community as he explored their green places and their logging history. For Glenn, art practice was reflective practice and as such, he rarely used his visual journal, other than to clarify ideas.

Glenn revealed how difficult it was to break into the secondary school culture and the art curriculum. He found that secondary teachers’ heavy workloads and adherence to set curriculum deterred them from fully fostering a locally derived art process and project. In addition, he felt that the teachers did not appreciate the potential of the mountain ash project to foster students’ creativity with, and in, their local setting nor the benefits from working alongside a professional artist.

However, Glenn was not critical of individual teachers. He was critical of the education system, particularly the secondary school system which he perceived as being prescriptive and placing undue pressure on teachers.

Glenn felt that the students who participated in the mountain ash artworks had not opted in to the project, but instead had been volunteered by teachers who wanted problematic pupils removed from their classrooms. However, after a disinterested start, those student participants all became engaged, and for some, the experience was transformative. Some later opted to attend the Creative Junction Day and helped launch the sculpture.
Glenn suggested that, for under-achieving students, art can open the door to success. As he said, “making it means you can do it”.

Interestingly seven primary schools took on the Creative Junction nature journal phase with enthusiasm. This highlights the different degrees of freedom for art teachers in the primary and secondary systems and the move away from living inquiry as the essence of art making. Glenn’s commentary revealed a shift away from locally inspired and community orientated curriculum when students reach secondary school level.

For Glenn, the artwork Junction was a meeting point between intergenerational knowledge and the mountain ash that is so important to the Yarra Junction logging town. Glenn used the mountain ash tree to elicit intergenerational stories of place that revealed industrial, green, intergenerational, artistic and environmental connections. He wove these stories and the natural materials of place together through listening, being there, tuning in and experimenting. He listened for “threads of strength” (see p. 116) to emerge from the stories and viewed his artwork as a “talking point” (see p. 114) for passers-by walking in the site. He positioned himself as an artist being taught by local loggers; not the expert, but simply someone who hoped to foster community capacity building through his artwork. He would have liked more support to foster greater community capacity and encourage more people to have participated in the project.

Commentary offered by Indigenous elder Joy Wandin Murphy revealed Glenn’s respect for the land and Savaad’s new understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing place.

The community data reflected a general sense of enjoyment and wellbeing that emanated from participating in the workshops and the ephemeral artworks. One participant described the experience as being spiritual as he had connected to place and the culture of Indigenous people in the area. There was a sense of excitement as participants embodied the experiences of walking outside and using natural materials in unexpected ways. They were able to play, to touch materials and to learn from children, artists and each other. They expressed a respect and curiosity about Indigenous ways of creating art and sought to engage with these experiences. Materials were aesthetically presented and appreciated. Photos and journals were continually added to over time.

3.2 Creative World 2: IAP within a Teacher Education Context

In Creative World 2, I conducted a ten week studio art unit for pre-service primary teachers at Monash University, Faculty of Education. I wanted to understand how IAP would play out in an institutional setting where attendance was mandatory, and to explore how this differed to the relatively informal community setting in Creative World 1.
Many of the students had not previously studied art at university level.

The unit dealt with contemporary approaches to two dimensional art practices and aimed to develop specialist skills and increased confidence across a range of media including, painting, printmaking, mosaic, drawing and textiles. Students were exposed to a range of approaches that aimed to foster their own visual repertoire leading to the development of personally meaningful artwork. The unit addressed the innate integration of art appreciation and the context and meaning of artworks. Through practical demonstration, application, and exposure to the works of a wide range of artists and art methods, students were introduced to a variety of technical, theoretical and design processes involved in the making of artwork.

In Creative World 2 a series of narratives also formed the basis of the experiential data with reference to photos, critical reflections and education kits.

My personal narrative, as lecturer and unit writer for the unit, is explored first. I detail how IAP developed a range of starting points which students used to explore possible artistic directions and to guide their creation and appreciation of artwork.

Following are three narratives by Maria, Sarah and Rickie, students who undertook the studio arts unit and who participated in interviews after their work had been assessed. Rickie’s narrative shows that she enjoyed how the subject linked to her life. She valued the critical reflection and the discussions that IAP enabled. Sarah was enthused by the issue-based starting point and the role that provocative artwork can play in art making, appreciation and teaching. She used these themes to inform her artwork, critical reflection and education kit. Although she valued the dialogic appreciation, she cautioned that the number of possible starting points can be overwhelming. Maria, a water colour artist, had returned to university to study teaching. IAP enabled her to develop a broader art practice. Her choice of subject matter later led to her take action on environmental matters in her community. Although she felt that IAP could be used by all art teachers, she questioned how she could apply IAP as a generalist primary teacher, given her experience of the school system.

A critical narrative explores what IAP entailed in Creative World 2 and what it is revealed and contested.

A final narrative then reviews the insights from the student, teacher and critical narratives using the a/r/tography framework. This narrative refers to the interplay between artist, researcher and teacher, and what they reveal in Creative World 2.

3.2.1 Personal Narrative as Lecturer

I set up the art room to arouse curiosity (see Figure 30). On one table, there were jugs of water placed on mirrors and bottles of mineral water, bi-carbonate of soda and stirring utensils that invited experimentation. On another table there were books and scientific
diagrams that featuring water as a resource: as rain; as sea; as flood; as tsunami; as 70% of the human body. Photos of water caught through reflection and movement were placed on one table while water images by artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, David Hockney and the Impressionists were placed on another. Water motifs from oceanic, ancient and contemporary graphics were displayed on another table. Paint was provided so that colour studies of water could be undertaken.

Figure 30: Art Room Water Theme

Water became a constant theme and was explored and revisited in each lesson, even after other starting points had been introduced. The students, whom I now referred to as artists, researchers and teachers, explored the role of water in their lives. They drew, painted and printed water images. In their visual journals they researched water as a commodity and as an art form. They printed collaborative fabric lengths and designed and painted some of the studio tables and chairs as a group project (see Figure 31). Together we built a repertoire of images and techniques around the theme of water.
Figure 31: Exploration of Water Theme
The furniture art experience was very well received. It developed its own momentum. While one group of students painted, printed and stencilled the table and chairs, another group asked to work on a flower themed table (see Figure 32). When other classes later came into the studio space, they too asked to paint the chairs and tables. In response to this enthusiasm, a furniture-art project emerged across a number of classes. In the end, all the studio tables and more than thirty of the studio chairs being printed and painted by pre-service teachers and visiting school children. The furniture artwork remains a popular part of the studio space.

Figure 32: Flower Themed Table
In the first six weeks of the unit students were exposed to a range of immersive starting points where possible dispositions for art making were explored. As lecturer and subject writer, I wanted the learning and teaching to respond to the participants’ preferred ways of creating and to foster artworks that were personally meaningful to the students. I shared a series of images and quotes that challenged and provoked the students to consider the meaning, making and appreciation of art (see Figure 34). We asked “what is art?” and concurred that art continues to be complex, varied and contextual; and that there are many starting points and diverse reasons for creating art.

Later in the unit, students were encouraged to relate their own art process/product to artworks in the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV).

Contemporary artworks were borrowed the Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) for onsite art appreciation. This was experienced as an Art Reach initiative and helped us understand the links between our individual art making and the role of the teacher/lecturer in exposing students to the cultural domain. Some students had never visited the National Gallery of Victoria or contemporary art exhibitions and so these initiatives enabled them to gain a greater awareness of our cultural domain.

In the next stage of the unit students created personally meaningful artwork using the starting points as a prompt to help them choose a preferred manner in which to create. As a constant, we undertook dialogic appreciation (Jeffers, 2003) of each other’s work in progress. A culture of art appreciation had earlier been developed among the group students had responded to the starting points. Nonetheless, the student artist makers required a certain amount of courage as they first listened to others comment on their artwork in development before they had the opportunity to explain their artwork and the intentions underlying their work. The process required respect for others’ work. Emphasis was placed on developing a community of artistic practice as a means to grow critical and creative support. The process aimed to build artistic confidence. It enabled students to talk to each other and comment on each other’s artwork in an ongoing informal way.

**Linking Art Pedagogy with the Domain, the Individual and the Field**

The immersive starting points were designed to build experience, confidence and awareness with respect to a range of creative dispositions. The starting points prompted personally meaningful artwork. They were also used to appraise artworks from the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). As such, they were used to enable both art practice and art appreciation.

Six starting points were developed, alongside a reflective and reflexive process, to help students find personal volition through:

- Making personally meaningful artwork;
- Writing a critical reflection on a contemporary artwork from the NGV collection; and
- Developing an educational experience for school students based on an artwork from the NGV collection.

When planning this unit I met with staff members from the NGV education team to discuss the starting points addressed in the unit and how they might relate to the NGV collection. Their suggestions helped me apply the starting points to given artworks from the NGV collection. The University Library supported the NGV focus by updating its collection to include books on the NGV collection and picture books that featured artworks from the NGV collection.

**Immersive Starting Points**

**Play-based:** Students made and appreciated artworks that evolved through playful and tactile engagement with unstructured, re-cycled and ready-made images for open-ended artworks. We explored how the chance encounters and flow of consciousness techniques of the Surrealists (see Figure 33) could be used for imaginative art play. We also explored how non-traditional use of media can be a tool through which to address serious concepts as understood through the work of Fiona Hall, Sally Smart and Pat Brassington.

![Figure 33: Play-Based Techniques using Collage](image)

**Theme-based:** We created and explored artworks from the NGV collection that addressed topics such as youth culture (Jon Campbell), the suburbs (Howard Arkley), the city (John Cattapan), water, and the sun. We explored how artworks can be linked by thematic investigation, such as flowers in art and plants and their depiction in landscape paintings.
**Issue-based:** We examined and generated artworks that expressed a socially critical viewpoint on given issues such as beauty, racism, stereotypes, war, belonging, and genetic engineering. We looked at concepts, contexts and questions arising from issue based artworks. When exploring artworks from the NGV collection and beyond, we touched on works by Goya, the Chapman Brothers, Julie Dowling, Gordon Hookey and Patricia Piccinini.

**Emergent approach:** We produced and analysed artwork that evolved from the life world of the artist, where the artist has responded creatively to personally meaningful contexts. We explored artworks by Ah Xian, John Woolsley and again we looked at the work of Julie Dowling to learn that artists can draw inspiration from a range of dispositions.

**Provocation:** We looked at artworks that have caused debate, that make us ask “is this art?” We explored artwork that seeks to question art and current thinking, such as *Piss Christ* by Andres Serrano. This is an aesthetically pleasing work. However, it was removed from the NGV display following negative public reaction. We made artwork with materials and processes that we would not otherwise have thought of but for this starting point.

Figure 34: Tactile Engagement with Teaching Aids
**Aesthetic ways of knowing:** We created and appreciated artworks that responded to our and other artists’ sense of beauty, style and aesthetic elements. We collected images that appealed to our affective and cognitive sensibilities and explored the work of Rothko as a means to further develop our own aesthetic perceptions (Wilks, 2004).

**Reflexive making:** Students planned an approach and developed artwork based on a personally meaningful theme. Fellow students and the lecturer provided critical feedback and creative support.

The final part of the unit was devoted to emerging artwork. My teaching was tailored to the directions students were heading and to their choice of media, concepts and techniques. When helping a student with a particular technique or concept, I would call others over to showcase the creative possibilities associated with that medium or technique. In this way, shared learning occurred across a diverse array of artworks in process. The resultant artworks were diverse in theme, content and meaning. They included: a series of painted panels that explored the hardships and occasional delicacies of women convicts at the Port Arthur penal settlement; a multi-media painting/collage that explored the chaos and destruction of the 2004 Tsunami and its effect on a student’s family and tourism in her village; a mandala that celebrated the primal force of women; a mosaic that depicted a student’s life journey; and an assemblage that explored hands as a pathway to heal and care. Other works explored the flower themed table and further developed the water theme that had been explored earlier in the unit. The artworks, visual journals and education kits were displayed in the faculty’s reception area to showcase the work in progress and finished artwork, and to demonstrate the ways that art can be explored with children, beyond the confines of the art studios.

3.2.2 **Contextual Review: Connecting through Immersion**

In striving for a rich sense of absorption, IAP is influenced by Burbules (2004) who suggests four features when considering the qualities of immersive experiences: interest; involvement; imagination; and interaction. Burbules (2004) states:

- An experience is interesting to us when it is complex enough to allow us to pick out new elements, even with repeated encounters…
- An experience is involving to us when we have a reason to care about what we are experiencing: we pay attention to it because it concerns us in some way…
- An experience engages our imagination when we can interpolate or extrapolate new details and add to the experience through our own contributions…
An experience is interactive when it provides us with opportunities to participate in it, not only perceptually or intellectually but also through embodied action and responses. (pp. 166-167)

Burbules (2004) suggests that these immersive stages, along with the notion of virtual space and time are “especially important for understanding the educational potential of virtuality… [as through them we]… rethink virtuality outside of an exclusively technical domain… to see it as a central educational concept” (p. 162). He believes that it is “the sense of immersion itself… which gives the virtual its phenomenological quality of an ‘as if’ experience… as watching a film, reading a book, listening to music, or being caught up in the reverie of conversation” (p. 163).

The starting points in Creative World 2 were designed to help students become immersed and to then connect to preferred approaches through interest, involvement, imagination and interaction. These starting points may at first seem contradictory to the way IAP values in-between spaces and identities, rather than beginnings and endpoints. However, it is important to realize that these starting points are rhizome-like in that they look forward, back and across intersecting connections and tangents. They are departure points from which one can grow and can be called upon at different stages of the immersive process.

Students trialled an array of starting points, rejecting some and adopting others. At the same time, they considered various approaches and ideas through reflexive practice. Sullivan (2005b) describes this process as a kind of research activity that uses different methods to “work against existing theories and practices and offers the possibilities of seeing phenomena in new ways” (p. 100). Through reflexive practice Sullivan proposes that an emancipatory interest forms that offers opportunities “to enact artistic, social, political, educational, or cultural change” (p. 101). He suggests that reflexivity entails “self-reflexive practice… [which]… describes an inquiry process that is directed by personal interest and creative insight, yet is informed by discipline knowledge and research expertise” (pp. 100-101); that the reflexive practitioner needs to reflect on information gathered so as to “review conceptual practices used and consider other approaches” (p. 101), revealing in the process a plurality of new views for interpretation. Reflexive practice includes dialogue with information so that “debate and discussion… [occur]… as a dialectic between researcher and the researched” (p. 101). Sullivan suggests that questioning content and context is the work of the reflexive practitioner as problematic situations reveal themselves.

IAP developed a playful and tactile approach to the teaching materials such as postcards, handouts, art books and a variety of exploratory art materials. Playful and tactile experiences are an important aspect of IAP. This is acknowledged by Reggio Emilia educators (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Giudici, Krechevsky, & Rinaldi, 2001) who harness tactile
experiences and playful immersion to create an awareness of the affordances of materials and the way they can be used for creative endeavour. This approach enabled me to see how a single material can be "presented and explored across an extended period of time, allowing children... [and adults]... to deepen their understanding of the material and its properties" (Kantor & Whaley, 1998, p. 329).

The immersive approach in Creative World 2 enabled an emergent curriculum to be generated. This unit responded to students’ personally meaningful topics, ideas, preferred approaches and designated media and techniques that had been inspired by the initial starting points. This is similar to the Reggio Emilia approach where the emergent curriculum often comes “from an idea that begins with the teacher, who then takes on the role of careful listener, guiding an activity in the direction that makes most sense” (Schiller, 1995, p. 48). Reggio Emilia teachers foster integrated curriculum that is both “child-centered and emergent, meaning that the teachers may have some broad curriculum goals but may also follow the lead and interests of the children” (Schiller, 1995, p. 46). The Reggio Emilia philosophy of education (Malaguzzi, 1998b; Rinaldi, 2006a; Gardner, Vecchi, Rinaldi, & Paola, 2011) positions the teacher’s role as one that engages teachers and learners in shared investigations. The concept is that the teacher is co-researcher who aims to find the teachable moment, the chance to help the learner develop propositions, make links and explore emergent direction for further exploration.

The Reggio Emilia approach to education, although designed for children, teacher and family contexts, is also relevant to art experiences with pre-service teachers in that it establishes “general education objectives without formulating specific goals in advance for each project or activity” (Wright, 1997, p. 361). Open-ended planning enables exchange and communication among the interactive partners which, in the case of the Reggio Emilia preschools, is between children and their teachers and families. In Creative World 2 the exchange was between the students, the lecturer, the students’ artworks and the gallery’s artworks. This interaction enabled students to explore their artist, researcher and teacher identities. In addition, the pre-service teacher was positioned as a “knowing individual... a protagonist in the act of cognition... [where learning was]... accompanied by reflection and revisiting... in which the protagonists of the learning experience can see the traces of their action, and which enables them to talk about how they are learning” (Rinaldi, 2006b, p. 81). By documenting work in the visual journals and displaying work in progress, each student was given the “opportunity to re-listen, re-see and re-visit (‘re-cognition’), both individually and with others, the events and processes in which she was the co-protagonist, either directly or indirectly” (p. 44).
3.2.3 Rickie’s Narrative

This type of learning and teaching was very engaging with lots of opportunity to contribute to discussions and build on what we already knew. It enhanced my own art experience and made it real for the classroom experience as well. In this class we’ve learnt to engage children, to immerse them in their subject so they can explore it from different angles. Very rarely at university do you experience what they tell us to teach in the classroom... It’s why I enjoyed the subject so much. You’re not in a lecture where you’re being told; you’re able to contribute and question. It opened up a lot of discussion. This class was really different, so I felt I had to do my work differently. I think that’s why my piece turned out the way it did. I loved painting it.

It gave us an idea of how we could teach art. It’s not just looking at one artist or one technique at a time, but creating opportunity to learn different techniques and connect these together. Giving students the opportunity to have a say about what they’re doing and to be critically reflective of their own work and others’ work and developing that skill, which is very important. It gave me an understanding of a different forum to do that. Art is an area that students don’t have a lot of confidence in. I think a lot of students just want to do pretty flowers and love hearts and stuff. But if you challenge it, they’ll push it and they’ll really think about what they’re doing. It [IAP] helped push my potential. And it gave me new techniques... I realized I could teach these techniques to children.

Providing the different workstations and having examples of artists work meant you could focus on one in front of you but you could also discuss with other people the different artists that they were looking at. The art appreciation made me push myself, to find deeper meaning within what we were doing. The starting points broke art down like that explicit pedagogy where you tell them what we’re going to learn about and then you do it. Often as a teacher you just go: “Ok, we’re doing art today” but you don’t tell the children what art we’re doing. You have to focus on what you’re learning about with your learners. The starting point for the water theme gave me an idea of how to develop my own piece. My artwork was the Japanese Lady (see Figure 36) so I looked at a lot of Japanese symbols and all facets of Japanese culture. I looked at night-life with the neon lights and then I looked at more traditional paintings. Compared to previous art experiences, you’re given the opportunity to develop a journey.

It’s a problem though doing new starting points every week at university because it’s restrictive to continue it the next week. Sometimes the starting points would confuse me about my own art piece. I’d be set in the way I wanted to go and then I’d be like, “I don’t know what to do now. I’ve got too many ideas.” Sometimes the starting points interrupted my flow, but then they sort of helped point me in a different direction... I’d be looking and going “I
don't know what to do" but then I'd think about how I wanted it to be and started using that knowledge. So I was adding on to my journey with a little bit of getting lost in the middle and then finding the way again. As a teacher I think you should let students talk it through, mostly letting us talk about our ideas and to know where we want to go because we always know where we want to go but sometimes it takes a while to know, to get there.

The way the class was structured invited questioning and looking deeper into artworks through art appreciation. Art appreciation sessions made it easier to do dialogic appreciation of our own artworks. We understood how to question, what sort of approach to use and what sort of language to use when we were appreciating someone else’s piece. The structure invited us to contribute. In some classroom situations at uni you feel you just have to sit there and listen. I don't like that. It helped you justify why you were doing this and what was important to you and all that sort of thing. Doing dialogic appreciation was a lot more open ended; you’re critically reflecting on art and you can put in more of your values and beliefs in an art piece. I think that was probably the best thing about the class... [With] the Andres Serano artwork, we were all: “Ooohh, look at the beautiful colours”. Then we looked at the title, *Piss Christ*, and it was like - oh! That evoked a lot of different responses and beliefs because if you’re a Christian or if that is your family history, then you saw the piece differently. We were able to draw on our own background knowledge and our own beliefs and values. My artwork sort of built up through discussions with others. Like, this is part of learning, isn’t it? You use what you know first and then you build upon it. It helped do that.

Throughout the unit we were always challenged and always thinking about what we were thinking about. I think the class size had an influence on that. You didn’t feel intimidated because, as a lecturer you weren’t standing there and telling us about a piece. You invited us to say what we thought first and then probed with different questions and challenged us to think deeper about the piece or the artist and the themes behind it... I think that’s what made it better - we developed our own language first and then you as a teacher came in and it was empowering. And I know that’s a technique I’ve tried to put into the classroom. Like, I think I did it with narrative texts. It gives opportunity for people who don’t normally talk to feel they can contribute. It also made me want to try different techniques in my art practice.

When you showed us your visual journal, I think it made you as lecturer look more human. Like, you were teaching from experience, and so when you felt lost doing an artwork, I thought getting lost is a part of the journey in art - that feeling you can’t do it anymore and putting it away is a part of it. You know, you’ll re-comb over it where you’re like: “Oh, wow, now I can start again” because you have that clarity. Like you showing us that made us think that… I will get over this but it might take me a little while to get over it.”
We looked at the artwork of Julie Dowling [the Indigenous artist who explores her history which includes the stolen generation] and that was who I did my education piece on [see Figure 35]. I chose her because I really liked how she drew herself and her heritage within her. And I think I was able to look at that and go: “I could do that for myself”… “I could draw myself” and then have my family or my heritage within me. And I could look at that and look at where they lived and have that as a part of me, like where their culture has influenced me now, and how they travelled to Australia and stuff like that.

**Self Portrait in Our Country - an Artwork by Julie Dowling**

Julie Dowling takes a reflective stance on herself, her ancestry and the relationships between the two. Her piece *In Our Country* represents her emotions towards a history that she knows little about. Her research and passion to find her roots lead her to document her family history in an unconventional format. Her portrait presents herself and her ancestors as a part of her. They may not be there in a physical sense, but their spirits stay with her always.

Dowling uses a mixture of synthetic polymer paint, ochre and plastic on canvas, which allows her to create the detail and contrast with the colours. The partial silhouette her body creates gives a border to the images of her family within. However, the background image and the images within with their similar colour tones allow for the present [background including the artist] and the past [the ancestors within Dowling] to merge and become one. To the viewer this allows for a connection to be made between the past, present and future. Dowling’s self-portrait can be seen as a representation on how reflecting on our past can be important to guide us on our future but it is only a part of us not all of us.

**Figure 35: An Excerpt from Rickie’s Education Kit**

Talking with other students, they also felt challenged by the class. So it was comforting to know that we were meant to feel challenged and it wasn’t meant to feel like another unit; this was something different to what we’d normally done. That’s a good approach. I really enjoyed doing this more than most other art subjects that I’ve done at uni because we were challenged to take what we knew and push it. I think that came from how intense the course was. I remember thinking how can I make my art be something I want to hang on my wall. If the teacher set the topic for this class, I think I would probably have approached it much like I have other subjects at Uni where I’ve just gone, “Ok, I have to do the assignments and I’ll go home”. Whereas, because you’re immersed in this class and because you’re engaged, I took it on, more personally, and saw it as - not something you just had to do to pass - with this, it
felt like, you’re doing this for yourself and you’re doing it because it was fun and because you wanted to challenge yourself to critically reflect on issues and themes that were presented through art.

Now that I’m finished, I’m missing doing art. I am. And I’m thinking painting might have to be a hobby that I do when I’m teaching.

Figure 36: *The Japanese Lady* by Rickie
3.2.4 Contextual Review: 4-C Creativity

In Creative World 2 my planning and evaluating drew on creative, connecting, contextual and critical perspectives which I named the 4-C Approach. Together these perspectives enable me to become a bricoleur (Kincheloe, 2008a) who weaves together a range of influences for planning and analyzing research.

Students from Creative World 2 also performed as bricoleurs. They wove together ideas and inspirations gleaned from their everyday life and were exposed to a multitude of ways in which to think about their art making and appreciation through the starting points. This approach to knowledge enabled multiple viewpoints to coincide and, in the process, opened up new ideas to the students. According to Kincheloe (1999), this post-formal approach draws heavily on the metaphor as it enables “previously disparate concepts in unanticipated ways” (p. 69). The focus becomes the relationship between ideas and the patterns of connection and is non-reductionist and expansive by nature.

As was the case with Creative World 1, in Creative World 2 a meta-knowledge of the creative process informed the curriculum enabling a personal, societal and pedagogical focus. By asking students to explore personally meaningful topics that were relevant to their lives and by exploring artworks from the cultural domain, students interacted with their sociocultural context. The work of Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Kindler (2004a, 2004b) helped me understand that this creative process broadens thinking and encourages aesthetic growth across personal experience, teaching/learning and the cultural domain. This systems view of creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996) shifts the focus to where creativity is enacted rather than concentrating on what creativity is. As Csikszentmihalyi posits, “creativity does not happen inside people’s heads, but in the interactions between a person’s thoughts and a sociocultural context” (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996, p. 23). Eisner also suggests that if a culture is populated by people whose imagination is impoverished there will be “static future. In such a culture there will be little change because there will be little sense of possibility” (2002a, p. 5).

The students’ creative journeys took them into new territories that were sometimes reported to be scary or challenging. However, a supportive environment and ongoing feedback enabled them to persevere through challenging aspects of the process. Beghetto suggests that students’ willingness to take intellectual risks and share novel ideas and insights is risky as it places “students at risk of making mistakes, appearing less competent, or feeling inferior to others” (Beghetto, 2010, p. 458). Beghetto suggests that: “the absence of a supportive classroom environment can lead to risk-avoidant and conforming behaviour… [and that the most influential predictor to support creative self-efficacy is]… to provide informative feedback and that such an approach sustains student’s self-beliefs about their own creativity” (p. 458). He says that creativity is cultivated and sustained in the short and long term by
sharing feedback and developing healthy self-beliefs. This shift towards the relational as part of the creative process is explained by Beghetto.

In the short run, students need to have enough confidence in their ideas to be willing to share them and make them available to feedback. By doing so, students can learn how to clarify, strengthen, and when necessary abandon ideas (in pursuit of more variable ideas). In the long run, healthy self-beliefs can help sustain students as they put forth the sustained effort necessary to develop domain relevant knowledge and skills, seek out supports and resources, and face the obstacles and set-backs inherent in mastering any creative endeavour. (p. 458)

Although there are many indictors for creativity, the Creative World 2 site invested heavily in the need to support students to tolerate ambiguity (Torrance, 1974). This quality which is valued in the arts for its “richness of interpretive possibility… [and is perhaps]… most at risk in the current sector and institutional climate of imposed order” (Harding & Hale, 2007, p. 2) was a focus of Creative World 2. Harding & Hale (2007) suggest that the current institutional climate imposes rigidly enforced learning outcomes that threaten invention and critical questioning for teachers and students alike. They advocate that instead, it is the ability to tolerate ambiguity (Bruner, 1962) that enables students to explore novelty and complexity as part of creative problem-solving and that this involves “an ambiguous period in which the problem is clarified and solutions considered” (2007, p. 2). Students in Creative World 2 were given support to “withstand the uncertainty and chaos that result when the [art] problem is not clearly defined… [and were helped to]… tolerate the discomfort of an ambiguous situation long enough” (2007, p. 3) so as to plan, implement and finalise personally meaningful artworks. In other words, they developed creative habits that will benefit both their teaching and their art practice in future environments.

Students were introduced, via the starting points, to the idea that creativity can be understood from a modernist or postmodern perspective. They learnt through the starting points that creativity can be as much about destruction as it is about creation. According to Grenier (2005), who reviewed the art of the last century, “creativity must be permanently reactivated by a radically reforming principle” (p. 14). Although this is primarily a Modernist standpoint she states that “destruction and creation are part of the same movement… The artist destroys in order to create, but conversely, we can also say that he creates in order to destroy” (p.14). Exploring the starting points enabled students, in a small way, to experience this idea of creation and destruction. Just as they had attended to one starting point another was introduced that discarded or challenged that disposition. They chose to create and then discard given approaches, as desired.
The physical nature of art making is an innate part of art education and is considered to be embodied participation. However, La Jevic and Springgay (2008) point out that the arts are more than moving the body during the art process and that in fact “embodiment is not qualified through the body's physical movement but rather the interconnection between consciousness and materiality (mind and body)” (p. 85). A/r/tography acknowledges the corporeal where the “body’s immersion and intertwining in the world creates meaning. It is a way of living in the world as being-with, of touching the other not to know or consume the other, but as an encounter that mediates, constructs, and transforms subjectivity” (Springgay, 2008d, p. 161). In Creative World 2 the students were guided towards an embodied view of themselves and each other as artists/researchers/teachers in the making. They were involved in a “process of actively folding and unfolding” (Springgay, 2008d, p. 158) the multiple acts of teaching, learning, art making, and researching so that they touched and informed each other. Their embodiment was constituted through lived experience and through everyday life as inspiration for art.

### 3.2.5 Contextual Review: 4-C Connections

Building links between people, identities, art and lived experiences were vital to Creative World 2. IAP fostered relational learning through the development of dialogic appreciation (Jeffers 2003), integrative listening (Thompson, Leintz, Nevers, & Witkowski, 2010), a listening pedagogy (Dahlberg & Moss, 2010), the use of art as a thinking tool (Wilks, 2004) and the development of a community of practice (Irwin, 2008; Wenger, 2000). The nexus between artist, researcher and teacher was explored through links to individual art practice, future pre-service teaching experiences and the cultural domain.

In Creative World 2 the starting points prompted students to create personally meaningful artwork and to appraise artworks from the NGV using this perspective. This enabled their art practice and art appreciation to evolve together as creative acts. Students developed skills in appreciating artwork from the cultural domain and in listening to others undertake appreciation of their own art work. They took on the roles of artist-listener, artist-in-dialogue and appreciator-in-dialogue. The process built creative agency as students listened to others’ suggestions about their work in progress and as they, in turn, took on the role of appreciating other's work. This dialogic approach to art appreciation (Jeffers, 2003) enabled both critical and creative explorations of artwork. Jeffers’ triadic dialogue (1996) advocates for a relational way of building creativity amongst a group. She calls on us to link the viewer, the artist and the artwork in relation to each other and draws on the work of Anderson (1995) who states that a “work of art should be understood for what it is, but more fundamentally, for what it does in a social context” (1995, p. 200).
Although Jeffers uses this approach in relation to artworks in the cultural domain, I chose to use this approach in relation to the students’ artwork in progress. When the students discussed each other’s artwork, they often used metaphors to evaluate or discuss their artwork: your work reminds me of [...] it is like [...]. Jeffers suggests that “through a paradoxical process that condenses and expands meaning, metaphor enables us to generate vivid associations and develop insightful, deeper, and more personal understandings” (2003, p. 7). Her dialogic model for appreciating artworks enabled students to respond to artwork as a group rather than through individual acts so that knowledge was understood and constructed through group discourse and fed from and enriched the class. (Meaning as constructed, contextualized, and connected: An Approach, para. 5). She states:

in a dialogical community, listening must take on an importance equal to that of looking. To construct meanings about art is for the community to engage in critical and empathic listening... The listening community also must be a diverse one in which a spectrum of voices can speak and be heard. Different perspectives, interpretations, and criticisms must be shared and creative conflicts (that lead to new discourse and new knowledge) must be engendered. In dialogue, the diverse community succeeds, both in facilitating learning and in restoring art's connectedness with the real world - the world as navigated by students on and off campus. (Meaning as constructed, contextualized, and connected: An Approach, para. 6)

This dialogic approach to art appreciation has similarities with the pedagogy of listening (Dahlberg & Moss, 2010, p. xvii) advanced by advocates of the Reggio Emilia approach. They suggest that listening is a way of harnessing new knowledge. The pedagogy of listening encourages “careful, respectful, tender listening with solidarity to children’s strategies and ways of thinking so as to open up the learning to established knowledge as well as new ideas and perspectives” (p. xvii). In this approach to learning, new thinking, new ideas and new perspectives are highly valued, though established knowledge is also respected. Such an approach is also valid with pre-service teachers who will go on to work with children.

The type of listening fostered during the dialogic art appreciation sessions was reminiscent of the integrative listening process model advocated by Thompson, Leintz, Nevers and Witkowski (2010) where “five distinct components - receive, comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and respond - work together to some degree in every listening encounter, although emphasis at any given moment may be primarily on one or two of the components, depending on the listening context and purpose” (p. 273).

Wilks’ (2004) work on facilitating critical thinking through art education informed the way art making and art appreciation was linked in Creative World 2. She calls on educators to build
set tasks into their curriculum to develop the following: a tolerance of complexity and ambiguity; the ability to identify problems; the capacity to examine and appreciate multiple perspectives; and a willingness to take risks and accept failure (p. 272). Her call to develop dialogue and awareness through connecting art making, aesthetic perception and evaluative reflection of artworks meant students slowed looking down (Perkins, 1994) so as to consider and question artworks deeply. By making looking broad and adventurous, a fluent review of artworks can be developed which leads onto experiential intelligence enabling richer experience and revealing insight (Perkins, 1994, p. 74).

In Creative World 2 the students, although working on separate tasks, connected through the shared purpose of making and reviewing artworks which in turn fostered a community of practice. Wenger (2000) suggests that “communities of practice deepen their mutual commitment when they take responsibility for a learning agenda, which pushes their practice further” (p. 232). In Creative World 2 the students led the making of their own artwork as a way to push their practice further. But they shared and supported each other’s development through dialogic appreciation. Wenger also points out that “learning from our interactions with other practice is not just an intellectual matter of translation. It is also a matter of opening up our identities to other ways of being in the world” (p. 239).

Irwin’s (2008) work on a/r/tographic communities of practice further informed my understanding of Creative World 2. She says that an a/r/tographic community of practice is “a community of inquirers working as artists, researchers and pedagogues committed to personal engagement within a community of belonging who trouble and address difference (p. 72). Within this conception four beliefs towards a philosophy of community are provided: a way of being in the world; inquiry; negotiating personal commitment within a community of belonging; and a commitment to trouble and address difference (p. 72). Irwin suggests that this commitment to a way of being in the world “embraces ambiguity and improvisation, and entertains uncertainty. Yet there is also a need to articulate what is unsaid, unknown, and/or excessive” (p. 73). Through this space of being, an emphasis is placed on “becoming a practitioner of inquiry” (p. 75) as a state that is always becoming and in the making. The commitment to inquiry involves “learning in, through, with and from the arts and education” (p. 75) and advocating for the merit and worth of such an approach. A commitment to troubling difference also involves a state of action where one is prompted to “reimagine possibilities rather than probabilities” (p. 70). These four attributes played out in various levels of intensity in Creative World 2, as students took on the contiguous identities of artists, pre-service teachers and researchers/art appreciators while working with a range of starting points as prompts for their creative and pedagogical inquiries.
3.2.6 Sarah’s Narrative

The starting points enabled me to go and explore; I wasn’t limited. As far out on a tangent as I’ve gone, it’s still been acceptable, but it’s also reigned me in and given me whole new ways of exploring. If it was something that gelled, it gelled instantly. The provocation starting point really hit with me. And then when I was introduced to Patricia Piccinini, it took it to the next level which was really inspiring. It gave me confidence. I could see, oh hang on, this famous artist has used this starting point, and that’s something I’ve done and if she can do it, I can too. It gave me validation. I wasn’t as out there as Stelarc but it gave me confidence to try something a little outside the square. There’s no way that if someone said to me: “you’re going to hang a piece of wood off a canvas and call that art”… I wouldn’t have ever thought that would be something that I would do.

The starting points were possibly scarier to me. I don’t live my life like that, and perhaps it’s a life lesson. They are not only scary for the student, but scary for the teacher, but the learning process is so much more valuable this way. You get so much more out of it. You wouldn’t be doing it to that degree with younger children, but you could still do it to some degree and give them choice. [By] picking up on background and interests and giving students some choice, you’re getting better engagement… Art is about self-expression and interpreting life. Basically there were these fonts of knowledge which opened my eyes to different aspects of the art world and life in general. It was like - here are some avenues to explore, go and have a look at them, reject whatever you want, choose one or you might like to look at all of them in small detail or in depth. I don’t think I rejected much. I looked at a lot of them and made notes in my visual diary for when I’d like to look at them in more depth. Because you had that attitude like nothing can be wrong; it gave me the confidence to go in whatever direction I wanted. It was sort of back to front compared to what I did when I was in high school which was; this is a skill, go and practice it and then, if you’re lucky you might look at Da Vinci’s work and see that he used that particular technique. Whereas this IAP was looking at different people’s style of work and analysing them and then if there was one that you were interested in or more than one, you’d look into that.

Problems with the starting points: The first time I was introduced to the starting points, in another class, I didn’t get it. I was so bombarded that I didn’t absorb all of it. I think the group size was a detrimental factor. In a smaller group like this one, there was more ability to communicate. But I think perhaps there should be some kind of interview basis to begin with, like a ten minute session. Perhaps if you did that first session on What is Art? and pulled each student aside for ten minutes afterwards and said “Look, we’ve looked at these artists. There is no right answer on what is art and what’s not”. It’s a spectrum that is never ending about what art can be. Then you’re getting one-on-one and you can discuss what is required
of the immersive approach… When you’re doing it in a group, students aren’t necessarily going to interact with you about what is involved.

**The visual journal** is something to come back to when I’m hopefully an art teacher. I might open to a page and go: “OK, this is something that I explored. I’m going to do some more research based on this, like the artist, Gordon Hookey”. I might be teaching a grade five or six art class, look at something he’s done, and from there develop a lesson. Each page gives me the starting point for looking at how I’m going to implement that in a class setting. It is very helpful in terms of looking at different ways to get started; in terms of educational openings. The visual journal has a big section on contemporary culture and technology, interrupted with Jon Campbell and Fiona Hall artworks and information on pedagogy and articles from the class readings - all that sort of stuff, you turn over and it goes into thinking about potential prac pieces. Ideas can sort of reside in my book; I’ve got something to refresh my memory. The whole journey gave me confidence to go back, intertwine stuff, play. I also put in my son’s artwork on Picasso and I chose to do Manga because I’ve got a five year old boy who’s right into those cartoons. It has become something that I’m passionate about, it gave me the opportunity to really follow up on it.

My intention is to continue the visual journal. I’ve got documentation of a Cook Islands mural we did ready to put into it. I can see the value in it as a tool; as a way of showing people my work. Like you did with us; it shows your reflective self, where you felt uncomfortable. It’s humanizing the teacher. If my students only ever see me as successful, then when they get to a rocky road, it’s going to help them relate to you a bit more, I think. I’ve continued it on because I want to have all my resources and my thinking together. It’s almost like a mind map where I’ve just dumped different ways of exploring the same theme but gone off on tangents. It’s been unrestricted.

**Confidence:** When you shared your visual journal it spurred me on. You’re seen as the all-knowing, critical teacher that shouldn’t be losing confidence. I’d lost confidence in the past, and I freaked out, so to see that with you, it was like, “Oh, hang on a minute. It’s more normal”. Because I’d seen you go through it, I was expecting it with my work. It was helpful to have seen that, I was aware - it’s almost like you’re on a roller coaster, “Here we go. We’re not quite there. We’re going to get there”. And then you go on the fast downward. You’re sort of at that brink. And you know, because I was expecting it, there’s a bit of dread. But I was aware of it emotionally at the time. I was documenting it in my head, but I didn’t have the discipline to write it down. I think it could be a hurdle requirement for assessment but that it shouldn’t be assessed because it’s emotional. I think by actually marking that, it’s going to be restrictive and scarier.
I looked at Patricia Piccinnini, I was really consumed by her career and the different evolutionary process of her as an artist, it informed me… As a teacher, I’m not scared. I’m not going to shy away from something controversial. I think that’s really important, especially in the upper levels. But, there’s no reason why you can’t start that with the younger levels in a restricted sense. I mean, hello, how much difference does it make when there’s controversy. You’re going to get children’s attention just like that. And just avoiding it isn’t going to give you a well-rounded objective approach to understanding the art world.

Through my own artwork Untitled: Truth, Beauty and a Picture of You (see Figure 37) I explored the pace of contemporary life, the role of women and commercialisation of society. I embedded my art with a lot of cultural images like mobile phones and technology, take-away, fast food outlets and all that sort of stuff. I had an interest in drawing a Manga woman and painted a scene that is a warped version of what I see when I look outside my front door. I picked up on how, when I first moved in, I had paddocks, sheep and horses to look at. Now if I open up my window I end up smelling McDonalds and KFC. They have moved in over the last couple of years. As I got into it, the darker the background and the more cynical I became about my feelings towards my environment. However, the woman never became dark because she has a facade of always being on top of things, successful and juggling many things. She is almost infallible.

She has moveable pieces, a set of keys, a lanyard that the mobile phone hangs off, an environmental shopping bag and a rope of truth which refers to the title. It links to how women feel that they must portray this successful image and keep everything together for the family. Most women these days have multiple roles; they have to keep it together on all fronts. She’s got a stance about her that looks like she’s running and really getting into whatever she’s doing and that doesn’t change no matter how much you reposition her. She’s always got this smile and is putting on a front of being capable. She’s interactive - you can manipulate her parts to show how you’re feeling. Every time I walk past, I’ll reposition her. My back’s out at the moment so I’m thinking about putting a neck-brace on her. I had a bad day one day so I hung her from her neck by the golden rope of truth. Another day I was having a great time and I attached a little word that said “kapow”! I noticed it was only me that was changing her so I’ve put this sign up asking people to move her- it’s becoming known around campus. People have come up to me and say “Go and see Woman because I’ve moved her”. They seem to be respecting her. I think it’s important for people to engage with the art.
Figure 37: *Untitled: Truth, Beauty and a Picture of You* by Sarah

**Artist statement:** Could you use some of Wonder Woman’s powers to help you fulfil your roles within society? What truths might be secured with your golden lasso if you felt able to talk about them? Could acknowledging truth help build a better tomorrow? Do you feel isolated as you run through everyday life, even when family and close friends surround you? What stimulates you to go on? As one of today’s desperate housewives, you’re so busy caring for the environment, caring for others and caring for the plight of mankind. Who cares for you?

**Dialogic appreciation** was scary but it was exciting scary. There was one girl who asked me about her work. She thought about my comments and incorporated them into her work. It made me feel I had value... So, in a two-stage progression, it’s a confidence building activity for the role of artist and the role of viewer as art appreciator. The experience of undertaking dialogic appreciation formed the basis for my education kit. Doing a critical reflection first informed what I would do as a lesson for *Game Boys Advanced* by Patricia Piccinini.

**Dialogic appreciation extended:** The other class didn’t know that the artwork was mine when they were doing dialogic appreciation. I’m excited by that; they’ve actually engaged
with my art in a way that I expected but taken it beyond what I thought. It gives me enthusiasm to keep going and maybe one day I’ll do other projects. I’m trying to provoke and that’s why I wanted it to be interactive; for people to feel like they were part of it, not alone. It’s supposed to challenge them to think further about issues. If the dialogic approach is seen to be confidence building which I think it is, then that’s going to help the students. In fact, you could do it more - like, if there was the time in the curriculum, which there never is, you could actually build it in to be more dialogic, it would then give you more confidence.

If I was an art teacher, I would actually take the students through the starting points. They would proceed through that journey, and then reflect upon it like I did when I wrote the education kit (see Figure 38). I’ve emulated that in a Cook Islands teaching experience in terms of looking at students’ art. We used art appreciation tools to unpick our artworks. I’d never actually done that as a teacher, but I felt confident to do it. They got a lot out of it even though they didn’t have much art appreciation experience behind them.
Advice PRIOR to introducing Piccinini’s work to students:
Be aware that some of Patricia Piccinini’s other images may offend. Whilst these images would not be appropriate for the primary classroom, a student may come across them if conducting their own research. Strategies (such as a letter home or even parent approval slip) may need to be put into place to prevent negative outcomes according to your particular school’s (or other environment’s) position. However, students must be given opportunities to develop skills to address, interpret and discuss confronting or controversial issues so as to develop analysis skills.

Psychogeography
Piccinini draws upon advertising images of the 1930s and beyond - her model, Sophie Lee, holds her ‘lump’ like a magazine advertisement model might hold a product such as washing powder.

However, Piccinini seems to consciously avoid positioning the viewer in terms of her own personal opinion - rather, she prompts the viewer to consider... ‘What if...?’

Game Boys Advanced
The revelation students are likely to experience when exploring a work such as Game Boys Advanced is key to this activity. Moving through the distinct stages outlined is critical to highlighting and reflecting upon this process. After each stage, students must be allowed time to respond on the worksheet provided.

First Glimpse
Display the image from a distance for a short time then remove it from view. Students should be encouraged to work alone and quietly, so as not to influence other people’s responses (peer discussion will be encouraged later). Discuss student’s written responses.

Closer Exploration
Allow the students to closely examine the image. Allow 5 minutes for visual exploration, encouraging students to “Let your eyes work for you (Wilkes, p. 77).” (Observe student’s expressions which may reflect enlightenment and engagement.) Students should respond to the image on the worksheet provided.

Examine Compositional Elements
Students discuss their responses in pairs or small groups, then analyse:
- Line
- Tone
- Texture
- Colour
- Shape
- Form

Further analysis could focus upon:
- Motion
- Tension
- Feelings

Refer to Picture Talk. How Picture Work (Bang, 2000) for methods of analysis and useful examples. It is critical to have explored such techniques with class members prior to completing the above exercise, however this could be fostered by a teacher in a whole class format as an introduction to such exploration if this is a new concept for the students.

Figure 38: An Excerpt from Sarah’s Education Kit
Reflective and reflexive practice: It’s really important. I was already doing that because, I’m an older student and I reflect on a lot of things and adjust my planning or things that I’m doing. But definitely in the art field, the dialogic approach allowed me to reflect in terms of what other people were seeing and doing and feeling. That informed my art. It was double; informed by me and by my peers, which I’d never done before really.

Empowerment: I enjoy going to art exhibitions now... I’m not even studying art this semester, but every Friday I’m looking through The Age to see what exhibitions are on. I pick up Art Almanac and... say: “Oh, yeah, I want to go to that exhibition”. I guess the critical awareness that I developed was more in terms of the immersive approach and exploring controversy in art through the education kit that stemmed from that. I think it sort of gave me the opportunity to really look in depth at my interest areas. Prior to coming to uni, art lessons were all very restrictive and very skills-based, but that was secondary art. Isn’t art in general an alternate ways of expressing and interacting with life, understanding life through art?

I hope that you found pleasure in seeing me get really into it, putting a lot of hours in the art room... I wanted to, not really because of the project, because my project ended up being far more encompassing than it needed to be. I could have done a lot less work and still come out with a good result at the end. But... I wanted to do it. So hopefully you would have got confidence in your teaching of this style, like in the immersive culture. And also, because I know people in the subject, my peers, hadn’t been taught in this approach in the art room before and along the way I’d say, “Look, I know you feel crap right now. This is really hard. But if you hang on, it becomes really positive at the end”. And so perhaps it would have given you a bit of understanding as a process as well. I really found you quite inspiring, coming in with your projects beyond the subject and seeing how they could apply within our work. It was as if you were bringing an immersive approach from your world in art. So I think it worked both ways. As a teacher, I could kind of harness that because I could see the momentum in your approach... It was really quite exciting.

3.2.7 Contextual Review: 4-C Context

This section explores the literature that relates to the contextual aspects of Creative World 2. It discusses situated learning through a studio-based context and how art pedagogy has developed to accommodate the aims of IAP. It discusses how students’ identities across the roles of artists, researchers and teachers and the site in which IAP took place, influenced the process.

Creative World 2 was experienced through a studio-based mode of teaching and learning as opposed to the more traditional university model of lecture and tutorial/laboratory. Seely Brown (2005) suggests that studio-based learning enables students to see what others are making, to learn from each other’s thinking as it informs their work, to pick up skills from each
other through productive inquiry and to call content into use as a situated and actionable activity. The studio-based learning approach in Creative World 2 drew from the spirit of Lave and Wenger’s situated learning (1991) where students engage in real projects in acts of co-participation. This was evident when students created artworks for display and art education kits for school use while at the same time learning to be artists, teachers and researchers through a “set of sensibilities, beliefs and idiosyncrasies of this particular community (of practice)” (Seely Brown, 2005, p. 7). The IAP approach in Creative World 2 enabled students to learn by being artists, researchers and teachers rather than learning about artists, researchers and teachers. The site of learning also enabled situated and experiential learning in, through and about art (UNESCO, 2010) in ways that would not have been as fluid in a large lecture theatre without access to art materials.

The number of students in the unit also affected the learning context. Pate-Bain, Achilles, Boyd-Zaharias and McKenna’s (1992) state that common benefits cited by school teachers in small classes include being better able to individualize instruction and being able to use more supplemental texts and enrichment activities (p. 254). The studio art unit benefited from the small class size (18 students), enabling me as lecturer to attend to individual’s ideas and areas of growth on an as needed basis.

Creative World 2 reflected a shift from modernist to postmodern art pedagogy. This fits with Ashton’s (2008) call to art teachers to make a shift from modernist art pedagogy to a postmodern approach. Influenced by the productive pedagogies of Luke et al. (1999), she suggests five major shifts that are needed to make art education more relevant to our times, namely: a shift from an aesthetic focus to a critical focus; a shift from individualistic and expressive to social and critical foci; a shift from fine art to visual culture; a shift from media based activities to conceptual concerns about cultural meaning; and a shift from the hierarchy of the art cannon to the opportunity of wider visual texts (p. 96). These shifts, each of which is considered a continuum, were evident in Creative World 2. The exception was with art appreciation which could have benefited from more of an emphasis on visual culture as well as fine art.

Creative World 2 reflects a mix of approaches from the domain of art education which, in turn, further reflects the postmodern turn in art pedagogy. Aspects of Community Based Art Education (CBAE) (London, 1994), the Studio Habits of Mind (Hetland, Sheridan, Veenema, & Winner, 2007), Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) (Eisner, 1987) and Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE) (Freedman, 1997) were evident in Creative World 2. For instance, although the studio art unit recognised art as a discreet subject, it did not seek to explore art through DBAE per se. Instead of focusing on the four prescribed disciplines of art as prescribed by DBAE, production, criticism, history, and aesthetics (Dobbs, 1998), IAP focused on students’ lived experience as the catalyst for production and as a prompt to
explore artworks from the locally-accessible cultural domain, the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). This approach resonates with aspects of CBAE (London, 1994) which values local and lived experience as a catalyst for art, but does not give strong focus to the cultural domain. IAP places more importance on dialogic appreciation than official art critique. In the study, the notion of being artists, researchers and teachers was the primary focus ahead of deferring to other people’s artworks, critiques of artwork and art education kits. This is not to say that students ignored the work of others. Rather, they situated themselves as makers, thinkers and appreciators before and alongside official accounts of art, art education and art criticism so as to foster their own agency alongside content knowledge. Aspects of VCAE were developed when students interrogated artworks such as Piss Christ by exploring the image’s history and the social issues and aesthetics. However, unlike VCAE, the investigated artworks were from NGV, not from advertising or media. In hindsight, a critical exploration of images from popular culture alongside the NGV artworks may have fostered more developed critical evaluation skills of relevance to both popular culture images (Duncum, 2001) as well as artworks.

The studio space in which IAP took place was conceptualized as being a social and physical place of learning. As with Reggio Emilia schools, rich displays and documentation were used in Creative World 2. The studio-space and surrounds were conceived as the third teacher (Gandini, 1998). By displaying students’ artwork and their education kits, artefacts and teaching aids, the learning space was an aesthetically appealing place to document the process and product of the learning. A cross-fertilization of roles was experienced by the students and I as together we took on the identities of artists, researchers and teachers. Together we formed an a/r/tographic (Irwin et al., 2006; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) community of practice (Irwin, 2008) as we worked towards a shared set of arts-based goals.

3.2.8 Contextual Review: 4-C Critical Perspectives

In Creative World 2 the curriculum was designed to foster a sense of creative agency. Rather than solely deferring to artworks form the cultural domain as the first point of call, students focused on preferred dispositions towards art making and the development of personally meaningful topics and artworks together with relevant links to the cultural domain. Cary (1998a) reminds us that traditionally art pedagogy “supports the familiar concept of culture as a hierarchy, with the upper strata as the best and most correct” (p. 52) He posits that this way of thinking marginalizes students who are at the bottom of the hierarchy and notes that traditional art pedagogy “equates artistic taste with the preferences the higher echelons express, and it inculcates these preferences as perfected fact. Then it urges students to demonstrate good taste by preferring authorized art and to develop talent for producing facsimiles” (p. 52). IAP sought to combat this deferral to authorized art by deconstructing the
hierarchy associated with high art and by giving equal importance to student art. This was designed to “counter processes of dominations” (Cary, 1998a, p. 13) embedded in everyday art pedagogy, for example, when the art curriculum does not allow students to creatively explore their own life experiences and instead determines the use of officially sanctified artworks and styles. While artworks from the cultural domain have a place in art pedagogy, they need to be in balance with, and not dominate, students’ creative endeavours.

In Creative World 2 IAP enabled students to create artwork inspired by sociocultural contexts relevant to their lives. They developed these contexts through art appreciation skills and socially-critical prompts. Anstey and Bull’s (2000) work provided a set of questions that were adapted for the students to enable them to explore the attitudes, values, identity, gender and ideologies reflected in their artwork. A greater alertness to the critical and creative nature of their art ensued and led the students to imaginative interpretations of their ideas. This approach was inspired by Purpel and McLaurin’s view that “the essence of education can be seen as critical, in that its purpose is to help us see, hear, and experience the world more clearly, more completely, and with understanding… Another vital aspect of the educational process is the development of creativity and imagination, which enable us not only to understand but to build, make, create, and re-create our world” (2004, pp. 40-41).

Greene also reminds us that the arts can be a way of building “wide-awareness” (2008, para. 8) as a form of empathy and agency. She says: “without the ability to think about yourself, to reflect on your life, there’s really no awareness, no consciousness… [and that imagination is]… where the effort to achieve freedom begins - freedom as the opening of spaces in which choices can be made and action undertaken. Thoughtfulness, imagination, encounters with the arts and sciences from the grounds of lived life: this is the beginning and the opening to what might be” (Greene, 2012, para. 2). Greene’s comments reflect Giroux’s view “that pedagogy can be imagined as a condition of hope and that every present is incomplete” (Giroux, 2004b, p. 39).

3.2.9 Maria’s Narrative

**Enjoyment:** I enjoyed the class because there were a rich lot of resources to inspire you: the range of different books; the materials provided; natural objects; and the slide shows that showed different artists’ work. I’ve always enjoyed looking at other artists’ work. I find them really inspirational. I guess, at the very beginning, I thought: “she’s just providing all this stuff for us to be inspired with”, which I’ve experienced before with other teachers. But I did at the end think it was more than… the whole of the group put forward their ideas about the material that was presented to us so that was making us feel more immersed in it. It wasn’t just that the items were presented. It was that we actually talked about it and put forward our ideas and we played off one another at certain points.
I always found our classes were very... hands on, but it wasn’t just that. It was also using your mind. To sift through ways you could use it and not necessarily being focused on an outcome I thought was really great as well. I guess in a lot of my art, I’m always focused on the outcome. And I really didn’t do that in these cases. I just sort of went along for the ride. And each day... I would add a little bit more to the story without having preconceived ideas. It was obviously through the things that were provided to get inspiration from... the articles on water and the different ways different people have portrayed water. And the different comments that are made about that topic in the papers and what have you. And then I weighed that up against my experience of water and so it was never just about what was put in front of us. It was always then controlled against what I knew of water and my experience with water.

It gave me a basis from which I could think about my own work and my own ideas and use it as a springboard, either the techniques or just things that would occur, that you’d make relationships with. I definitely learnt that the picture is more than just looking pretty at the end of the day. If you can put some of your feelings and emotions into it, you end up with something that says far more than just a pretty picture. And I learnt that talking about your art with other people is a fantastic way to get inspiration. I think the immersive approach plays out in the fact that I actually used naturally found objects. I used what's happening in the environment with trees dying because of the salinity problem. I used water and its movement and then I tried to use parts of what actually happens with the land. All these elements went together as an expression of the land.

I could see that IAP might be overwhelming for some students. It could be intimidating for somebody who thinks they are not an artist and they can’t do it; they would step back a bit. I think assessment has a lot to do with that. If you didn’t have “this is going to be assessed”, then you’d get away from that. But... people think “we’re going to get marked on this; I have to come up with something really good” [and this] would limit them from just one big experiment...

**Visual journal:** I personally would prefer to just get a big sheet of paper and play as opposed to doing something in a little book. There were times where I used the visual journal and just had a bit of a play and then went away and did something big. And in that big thing I came up with something. And then I’d say “I'll have to put that in my book” and I’d go back to my book and I’d do it in my book. And then I’d do something else in my book and I’d go away and do big things, play around with that, and come up with something in that big thing and then put that in my book. I went backwards and forwards from one to the other. But when I came to a standstill I’d muck around in there a bit, try and come up with something and go and do it bigger. I think the inspiration I got out of the classroom was more important than my visual diary. I’ve always struggled with a visual diary. I mean I liked this creative one much
better than I liked the ones where we had to come up with lesson ideas and all that sort of thing. And I will certainly try to keep it up because I… like the idea of going backwards and forwards from it. A visual box or a container would be better because some of the things I use for inspiration… are not flat. I think the visual journal is more like a stepping stone.

It would only take something very small in the journal to set me off to want to do something much freer. When I was printing and just rolling over stencilled water shapes. I was rolling them onto my painting and as I was standing there admiring it with the roller in my hand. I noticed the image was still on the roller, exactly the same. And so I was able to re-roll the ink that was left and the patches where the ink wasn’t came out in reverse. So it was playing and being observant… Normally you’d just look at the roller and think “it’s only half covered in ink, now”. I guess at that point I was thinking “I have to fill this visual diary. I’ve got to get some ideas. And I’d be willing to use anything and try anything”… That was really what motivated me. It was: “I have to come up with something”. There was pressure there, oh definitely. I think I said I was using all sorts of things because the paper towel that I was using to wipe back or to get different techniques. I was looking at that crunched up and then blotting that thinking, “there’s something else”… It was just a case of - I really needed to come up with some other ideas. And so I was willing to try anything. But I think it was the fact that I was being pushed. You wouldn't do it if you weren't pushed to come up with some ideas.

The different ways that people have produced their visual diaries actually shows the wide variety of ideas and what the different people connected with in the class.

**Dialogic appreciation:** Everybody was in the same boat. We all had our own artwork here. From that point of view, we all knew how each other was feeling. We were all tentative and - we probably all knew that we needed support - as opposed to being pulled down. When they looked at my art, I could see by their comments whether I was achieving what I thought I was achieving… It was like a confirmation that I was on the right track and that people appreciated what I was doing. It added clarity. It gave you inspiration to push it further and to try to complete your initial ideas. It gives you inspiration to keep playing and keep moving with it. You know, the things they could read into the picture, you were able to then say, “Well, I can link that”. You just synthesize it in your brain in a way that isn't really thought, that - you’re not thinking out loud. It’s just there mellowing. And it’s like you let it sit there for the next day or the next week. You work it in with what your ideas were. I actually found it positive and I needed it. I needed it a couple of weeks earlier.

**Social connectedness:** Within the class… we all felt we could talk about the topics… we could all relate to them and we found that we had a different connection to what was presented. It was good to hear that other people saw it differently. But it also, obviously gave connection to look wider out in the community and say, “Well, there it is there, just what
we’ve been talking about in class is there” and to feel that you were a part of it or connected to it in some way. Oh, well, I’ve certainly made friends with all of them. You know, we all talk out of class and we didn’t really know each other before that, so I guess it’s given us a connection.

The critical reflection piece: When I walked around the art gallery and saw Brett Whiteley’s work, I knew I could use the way he painted to inspire… my work. And so I spent quite some time standing in front of his one picture that they’ve got at the National Gallery and looked at the art elements that led me to find meaning in the picture and to recognize it as being water and Sydney Harbour. It helped me understand how to use the art elements in a picture… I’d never thought about art elements. I never really thought about those things when I constructed a picture before. I would always just make a picture so it looked beautiful. But in this case I actually analysed the elements that go in to make a picture work, or a painting work (see Figure 40). So, I did find that a big help.

I Paint in Order to See: Brett Whiteley – A Critical Reflection

Whiteley painted what was visible and pleasing to his eye, in this context he produced many paintings that incorporated the view from his Lavender Bay home in Sydney. The National Gallery of Victoria owns Evening Coming On Sydney Harbour (1975) which is one of a series of paintings where he could use his trademark sweeping lines on the backdrop of the harbour. Sydney Harbour provided the perfect expanse of space and colour where he could experiment with line.

I was taken by this canvas because of its size and vivid blue colour used in contrast with bright white, a simple composition he used many times. My initial questions about this canvas were: How did he construct this composition? Did he start with a black or white canvas? I feel as though there is something under the blue to give it its depth. I was asking these questions because in my own water composition it appeared to lack this depth and I had not used any black. It is always hard to start a new composition and I find it easier if I put down a watercolour wash and see what I can draw out of the colour, even if the variation is ever so slight. “Art is contemplation”- Rodin. Perhaps in the future I should use darker tones. I could also see Whiteley had been messy in his application of the blue because it was not evenly applied but thick and dribbling in parts. This means he was not precious but spontaneous about commencing this canvas. Like him, my composition began spontaneously but once I had reached a certain point where I felt good about the outcome, I became precious and was frightened I would destroy some of the qualities I had spontaneously produced.

When I considered the steps I had taken to draw water, I had made it about drawing
lines that represented water whereas Whiteley has chosen colour to express water. My lines represented the waters movement and reflective qualities; Whiteley’s blue captures waters expanse and depth. The vivid blue suggests a brilliant sunny day yet he has not painted all the reflections he would have observed. He has portrayed water movement with a single white line as a water ripple around a pillar of Sydney Harbour Bridge, wakes left by a speedboat and as a boat mast reflection in the water. Whereas I was trying to capture everything about water, my knowledge of waters properties, rather than focusing in on one of its qualities. I then wondered did Whiteley steal Stretton’s meandering line of water in The Purple Noon’s Transparent Might (1896) is that where he got his black shadow shapes from in the blue water?

My view of Whiteley’s work is one of admiration for a man that can paint fluid sensations in a single line and bring energy to water. His work is sensual and created as if by feel, not thought.

**Figure 39: Maria’s Critical Reflection**

I would never have come up with the whole concept if it hadn’t have been for things that I’d experienced… Those talks and those issues that we covered were really important because it let you realize that art is not just a pretty picture, that it is telling a story, that there is a lot more to it. And I think everybody in the class came away realizing that. My final piece was more ideas led than before. I had been trying to get this picture off the ground for about two years with the drought. It was two years ago when I went to Lake Eyre. I’d always wanted to do something about it. I’d just never quite gotten there. Initially it was the idea of water, but then I turned that around into drought. That was after I’d spent a lot of time trying to draw water and realizing how difficult it was to get that elusive feel that water has. The ideas that inspired my art were those that I’d experienced. From discovering how water flows and how water looks on the surface, I began to look at the effects of no water on the environment and the effects of when humans catch water in dams and the influence that has on the landscape. And so it led me off into a totally different direction concerning drought and how that plays out in our daily lives.

Providing materials is a type of reflective practice. I don’t think you can just put them there and say “there they are, use them”… If it’s talked about and put in context… and everybody gets to relate to it, providing they can relate to them… that it would be an important part of my teaching.
I called this work *Elusive Water* (see Figure 40 left hand side) because it is not easy to draw or paint water. It’s something that is ever changing. Also, it has become a commodity we need more of and it appears, less falls from our skies. *River of Life* (see Figure 40 right hand side) reflects on this and our present lack of rain as well as a visit to Lake Eyre, where I became acutely aware of how much worse things could be. Travelling by bus over three days to Lake Eyre, I was able to witness how much drier the earth could become and used this to inspire my work. This piece reflects on what water means to life in many different ways.

Using found objects, different bits of plant and bug, I also drew in the different things that I found lying in the salt encrusted beds of Lake Eyre to express the desert and lack of water. Shellac gives a yellow colour like that dry, salty, barren area… I used the shellac yellow for the drought and I used blue ink rubbed over it to just give a feeling of water with a smear of blue. I know how precious water is from the way I grew up when our town water would run out and we had to bathe in a bucket and clean our teeth with a glass of water and that sort of thing. And I can always remember, being able to swim from one side of the river to the other, but when it was a drought summer you could walk across the river. So those personal experiences are brought into this artwork.

Without IAP I think my artworks would have been more staid. They wouldn’t have been incorporating so many different aspects… My picture at the end - it didn’t just incorporate water. It was incorporating lots of other aspects of the world around us. So I think that was one of the main issues that came out of your teaching, for me. Ordinarily I would have either done a print or a water colour painting as my normal response. And so it was a big step for me to decide “OK, I’m going to carve into cardboard”. It wasn’t normal. I mean I’ve made collages before to print from and I guess that’s where my initial idea came from. I glued lots of things on cardboard and lacquered them and then inked them up to print from. And so that...
was my basis for deciding that I wanted to carve into cardboard. I really didn’t know whether it was going to be successful or not. I didn’t know if it was going to even look like a piece of art at the end... I felt comfortable… using techniques that weren’t normal.

I started to comb the newspapers for drought related issues. I have collected a whole lot of newspaper articles on the Murray Basin and how they’ve gotten rid of all the swamps around north-eastern Victoria and turned them into dams and water catchment areas. And now there are a lot of people putting forward ideas to actually break down the walls and to take them back to being swamps. These swamps are actually filter systems and they actually keep the salinity down. So, I learnt a lot about water and drought and the way we’ve treated water and what it’s doing to the landscape.

The way you taught… you were saying express yourself and get a feel for it, to put feeling into a topic. So as soon as I thought of shellac - the yellow colours made me think of the drought and the landscape. Over lots of years I’ve dried all sorts of plants and pressed them, they had washed out colour. They were like they were from the drought landscape. And so then I was thinking about that in contrast with water… It must have empowered me because I took that step of joining in with the Blue Wedges, to get signatures against the dredging of the bay. So I did feel strongly enough to actually go out and do something.

I saw you as the teacher. Now, is that giving you power? I guess I didn’t see you as a co-learner because I look up to you... I think “she’s been there, been doing this for so long” you know. I should have seen you as a co-worker if I’m doing the Reggio thing. But no, I didn’t feel you like that... because I know you’re experienced and I know you’re an artist. And so that becomes impossible under those circumstances. But I didn’t feel threatened by you and I didn’t feel that I had something to live up to or any of those things. I felt totally comfortable. I wouldn’t have been afraid to say “you could do it this way” or “how about this?” I felt quite ok to say things openly.

I’d love to do the sorts of teaching you’ve done to provide all sorts of materials and to have them look at it and relate it. I know that you’re definitely positive and you love your work and your teaching… That comes through… by the amount of effort you put into a lesson... That was totally inspirational. Although, one of the things is, there’s always so much. There’s too much that you feel totally bombarded. I guess as long as you don’t have to use all of it and you can just take from it the best bits, it’s great.

**How can I help students realize that it’s like going to a lolly shop - you can choose?** Well, maybe just by saying that. I don’t think you ever said that. At the very beginning, in the first two lessons, I know we were all coming out of here thinking “God, how does she expect us to do all that?”… and “how can we do all that and take it in?” Now, I realize you didn’t have to. You could just use the ones that you found a connection with.
So I needed to be clearer? Well, yes. I think just letting us know that these are all just here to feed off any one of them… you can follow one, two, three or four of them but you don’t have to use all of them…. For me, you want to sample all of them and you’d want to make sure that you hadn’t missed anything because it might be useful. So that then became a dilemma. So maybe whether you say you can use one, two or three of them makes no difference if you’ve got so many of them. You’re still going to feel as though you didn’t get enough time with any of them.

So I need to discuss editorial choices for the students? Yes. I always thought that you were pleased with our work and it obviously must have given you hints that you were on the right track because… we were all able to produce something. I’d have to say as a student and as an artist, I was definitely influenced by you but as a teacher, I’m a bit iffy about the whole education course on teaching because… in any of our classes we’ve not really been taught how to teach, you know, to stand up there in front of kids and to teach. Now, I know I can use what I’ve been shown by you for ways of engaging children. But when it actually comes to standing up in front of the class and doing it yourself, I don’t think we’ve been given that opportunity. We’ve done teaching rounds. And, of course, when I go out on teaching rounds I don’t teach like you’ve been teaching because that’s not what they do out there. And you have to do what they want you to do. They say “here’s the topic for today and this is what you have to do” and of course that teacher in that classroom is never going to accept that you’ve done it right if you haven’t done it in the way that they do it.

When you are a teacher, would you teach in this kind of way?

If I could be just an art teacher, I would definitely teach in this way. But I suspect I’m going to be an overall teacher and I can’t see how at this point I could use it with English and Maths. I can see the correlation where I can use artwork to talk about literature and English and words and all of that… I can’t see how I can… use it without practice at this point. I’m hoping next year when we’ve got one day out that I’ll get time to attempt to do that. But it really is going to be dependent on the teacher I’m with. If I’m with a teacher that doesn’t use immersive approaches, then the chances of me being able to, are lessened. I like the idea of providing lots of different stations with different things to look at and experience… your section where you had all different books about the topic and you had glasses of water and different little experiments with things with water or whatever. So that sort of idea, I really do like that, and would like to use it. One thing that holds me back with thinking about it at this point in time is that the assessment that they want you to do of children… The last practicum I did the teacher was just totally assessment driven. Everything she did was to come up with an assessment of the child. To this point I don’t see how I can use the immersive approach and be able to assess a child and their level of learning. You know, I haven’t been able to
find a connection with that in what we’ve done. But I also think you learn deeply because if you’re immersed you’re enjoying it, so therefore it goes into your subconscious.

It made me want to join with the community, have my say and help with the problems that we have with water and drought. Beforehand it was only really as a little tiny seed. Well, I’ll tell you what, I joined the Sorrento action group against the dredging of the bay... I got 500 signatures to stop the dredging of the bay... I’ve made contact with the Green Society on the Mornington Peninsula... a group that look after the nature on the Peninsula and plant trees and that sort of thing.

I think there’ll probably be more than me that will go out and do other artwork.

3.2.10 Critical Narrative

**What is IAP in Creative World 2?**

In Creative World 2, IAP focused on a series of starting points that led to a metacognitive awareness of art making and appreciation dispositions. These were conceived as tools through which to connect to the artist/researcher/teacher self. Material knowledge and personally meaningful concepts were valued and developed. By exploring these starting points, IAP consciously moved students from creative capacity building to guided studio practice, art appreciation and lesson planning.

Dialogic appreciation (Jeffers, 2003) of artworks was a means to (re)connect to artwork and each other. A “pedagogy of listening” (Rinaldi, 2006c) was developed along with a growing awareness of relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 2002). The narratives disclosed that dialogic appreciation enabled participants to sustain and build confidence in their art making, leading to further reflexive making. The narratives speak to a community of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) through art. Whereas in Creative World 1, place was understood as the catalyst for creative connections. Reflection was an important activity, either individually and/or as a group. We reflected on which starting points appealed to our confidence and subject matter. Students then chose a preferred approach and developed a personally meaningful theme. Fellow students and the lecturer provided feedback for creative support while critical friends from the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) education section reviewed the starting points and helped to select examples of artworks from the NGV collection that could be explored in tandem with the starting points.

Participants were encouraged to build creative agency through personally meaningful expression. One participant was motivated to take action on environmental issues as a consequence of her art research. Lived inquiry was connected to the art domain through personal art making, art appreciation and the preparation of art experiences for future occasions. The aim was to lessen the gap between the art domain, future teachers and their
future students. Individual students were able to explore the cultural domain as a means to inspire teaching, art appreciation and art making. In this way they were positioned as being individual art makers as well as members of the field; teachers with the power to open the cultural domain up to their students, through their own developing knowledge of art collections.

**What did IAP Reveal or Contest?**

Creative World 2 helped me understand that creativity, critical art pedagogy, sociocultural and place-based theories are central to the process of IAP. This led me to develop an approach to exploring the data which I term the 4-C approach, whereby, creative, connecting, contextual and critical perspectives are variously called upon to illuminate and interrogate aspects of the experiential data. This position values diverse perspectives, emergence, vigour, unique insights and trans-disciplinary connections as openings into the data, in contrast to a mono-theoretical perspective where one viewpoint is privileged. The 4-C term is a catch phrase that plays on the idea of predicting the processes that are needed to plan for IAP experiences, and forecasting what IAP might reveal when such perspectives are applied. In Creative World 3, the 4-C perspective prompts the development of the emerging model for IAP.

**Creative Perspectives**

IAP revealed that sensory engagement with materials and tactile engagement with images was a constant source of inspiration. Participants reported enjoyment in, and engagement with, this process. PowerPoint presentations, postcards, books, flyers and postcards were created. There were hands-on yet cognitively engaging activities. Participants were challenged to extend their depth of inquiry through art making, art appreciation and dialogic appreciation, to be alive to the cross-fertilisation between these different elements. The emphasis was on the experiential, on finding a disposition that suits each participant. Participants were free to explore dispositions, artists and ideas. The emphasis was on guided assistance rather than instruction. Participants experimented with different dispositions and techniques, building a repertoire in their visual journals as part of their assessment. The visual journals were used in developing artworks and exploring ideas about making, research and teaching. Participants were assisted to find their stylistic preferences and to challenge their conception of what art is by exploring a range of IAP starting points. The narratives revealed that participants’ artworks emphasised personal experience together with awareness of the art domain. Their critical reflections and education kits also helped link them to the art domain. This approach is in line with Csikszentmihalyi’s systems view of creativity (Csiksentmihalyi, 1996) where the individual (student artist) links with the field.
Experiential Data and Evolving Literature Review

(future art teachers) and the art domain (the NGV artworks). It also fits with Kindler’s (2004b) view that a systems view of creativity enhances development in art. Participants reported that their artwork was more adventurous, outside of the square and more deeply considered than in the past. As one participant said: “you use what you know first and then you build upon it”.

The starting points broke down the art process in a way that participants had not previously explored. Using the starting points approach, students explored their preferred creative process. This was markedly different to a more traditional approach where skills and technique and/or art history drive artistic direction. Participants reported a sense of discomfort with the starting point approach as they found the number of potential starting points overwhelming as this presented a multitude of ideas, processes and possibilities for consideration. Starting points were seen as openings but, at the same time, constraints. As one participant said: “they are illuminating but disruptive… So I was kind of like adding on to my journey with a little bit of getting lost in the middle and then finding the way again”.

As stated, some students had been overwhelmed by the starting points. Through reflexive consideration, I realised that a clearer explanation of the starting points was needed and that the opt-in nature of involvement needed to be better communicated. As lecturer I needed to deconstruct the starting points more overtly and to offer a meta-explanation that included the following points: that creativity can be challenging and threatening; that productivity involves being stretched to take risks; that choice can be overwhelming; and that the creative process can be both pleasurable and/or painful. That is, to enunciate that the creative process is about opening ourselves up to ambiguity and not knowing what the end result will be. One participant commented that the starting points “are not only scary for the student, but scary for the teacher” but that despite, this they lead to rich learning. I thus determined to undertake a more overt journey with the students that acknowledged and discussed how tolerating ambiguity is part of the creative process (Harding & Hale, 2007; Irwin, 2008; Torrance, 1974; Wilks, 2004) and to point out that opting for a neat pre-ordained art lesson by the teacher does not necessarily help students develop the robustness to keep creating of their own accord. As another participant commented: “as a teacher I you should let students talk it through, mostly letting us talk about our ideas and know where we want to go… we always know where we want to go but sometimes it takes a while to know, to get there.” Dialogic appreciation helped this process, but more dialogue would have helped debrief the complex emotional journey involved in the creative process, as normal, empowering and as a challenge.

The starting points were introduced as separate concerns. A more intuitive and fluid way of working would be to treat them as stepping stones that lead to more dispositional approaches. However, there was insufficient time to explore each starting point in depth so students could have opted into given starting points, rather than experiencing each of them.
One student maintained that assessment seemed to clash with the experimental intentions of IAP. Allowing students the choice to weight their assessment points more towards the visual journal and less on finished artwork, might resolve this dilemma as students would not then feel disadvantaged by engaging in greater experimentation during the art making process. This realization prompted me to create a model as a guide for IAP, so that it is a more overtly understood as an approach and as a potential assessment tool.

It was an omission not to include place as a starting point, especially as place was such an important aspect of Creative World 1. In future IAP classes I intend to explore place as another key starting point.

Connecting Perspectives

IAP revealed that connections were made through and across personal artwork, art appreciation, dialogic appreciation and the writing of critical reflections and education kits.

By integrating art appreciation with art practice participants were able to explore their own art making in conjunction with artwork from the NGV. Exploring the context and meaning of artworks from the cultural domain enabled deeper thought about their own work. As one participant said “the art appreciation made me push myself, to find deeper meaning within what we were doing”. Participants concurred that this approach was enjoyable and engaging. Dialogic appreciation of each other’s work gave students the opportunity to discuss and appreciate artworks in progress. This inspired and added momentum to each participant’s output and built a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). They also discussed and shared information about the different artists that they were exploring. The dialogic process enabled them to link experiential art appreciation with experiential artwork. Participants reported that the dialogic process, although threatening at times, had inspired and sustained their work. One participant she meditated on the feedback she had received. Another was excited to know that students from another class undertook a dialogic appreciation of her artwork and had made pertinent and perceptive comments about her work, even though they had not known her intentions.

The visual journal revealed connections across practice, theory and praxis. This journal was envisioned by participants and lecturer as a teaching resource for future use. It became a bricolage of artworks in process, with articles on art pedagogy and art appreciation, print outs and quotes about artists and techniques. Physical and conceptual links across the roles of artist, researcher and teacher/learner were evident in the visual journals. Students explored the links between these roles. One participant reported that she would continue the visual journal process into her teaching. Another preferred the idea of a visual box, in that inspirational artworks are not always two dimensional and can be restrictive to the creative
process. The visual journal was a link between the process and product of the participant’s art making.

The critical reflection and education kit connected students’ developing art appreciation skills to an educational experience for primary school children. It contextualised art appreciation as an active and dynamic undertaking of relevance to contemporary issues and themes. It valued personal responses to artworks and art appreciation techniques and, in so doing, transformed students’ learning by linking personal art making to responding personally to artwork in the domain to then teaching about a given artwork for a primary art class.

IAP contests the idea that art is just about art making. One participant commented that secondary school art classes were skills-focussed and as such, few students felt they had the potential to succeed in art. In contrast, IAP emphasises preferred creative dispositions through the starting points, as a way to link art practice with personally meaningful experiences, the art domain and teaching/learning through art. IAP positions the artist participant as part of a creative community who inspires and is inspired by others, and challenges the notion of the single student undertaking individual artwork as a solo journey.

**Contextual Perspectives**

At the university, I was appointed to the role of unit coordinator for visual art subjects within the primary art education core and elective subjects. Not all university educators have the opportunity to both write and teach a given subject, so I acknowledge that my role was a privileged one. As I was able to write the subject, I had the opportunity to incorporate students' interests with art content and learning in the curriculum.

The university’s interest in research-led teaching made it possible for me to engage the NGV art education team in the study.

The Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) agreed to lend major contemporary artworks for art reach activities. This included four artworks by the Australian contemporary artists, Patricia Piccinnini and Leah King Smith.

The University Library agreed to purchase nominated art books and picture books from the NGV to support the unit’s content.

The university resource budget enabled me to purchase books on contemporary art practice and art materials.

My collection of newspaper cuttings, postcards, invitations and other teaching aids over the years was also a useful resource.
This extensive support from so many different sources meant that students were exposed to a range of diverse artworks and starting points.

Two key resourcing obstacles were to plan sufficiently ahead to meet university budgetary deadlines and restrictions on purchasing practices (for example, the need to demonstrate safety before art materials could be acquired). In essence, both obstacles were primarily to do with timing, as opposed to financial, constraints.

Adequate resourcing certainly facilitates accessibility and richness of experience in IAP activities. However, it is possible to implement IAP activities on a low budget. Cost effective sources include internet art sites, borrowed art works from local councils and other organisations, and the use of found materials.

Rather than resources per se, probably the biggest barrier to IAP initiatives in secondary schools are institutional factors such as fixed curricula, teacher overload, the focus on assessment, and a lack of appreciation of the value of IAP as an art education tool. As one participant stated, IAP was not possible in schools as there was “no space for it”. She had found teachers to be highly assessment-driven in their curriculum choices. However, with the advent of the new Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) the primary and primary arts curricula are now seeking to link the arts to intercultural understanding, information and communications technology and sustainability. IAP could provide a valuable way to address these transdisciplinary ways of knowing in, through and about the arts and could also be employed as an assessment tool. This was discussed further at p. 152.

**Critical Perspectives**

As lecturer, I contacted gatekeepers to the domain enabling access to NGV, the University Library and MUMA resources.

Participants explored, developed and completed personally meaningful artwork. The What is Art? session opened participants to a diverse range of art approaches, providing a base from which to explore preferred approaches. They reported a desire to sustain their art making beyond the subject. One participant acquired the habit of attending exhibitions. All reported a deeper critical awareness of art from the IAP experience. One participant reported:

> because you’re immersed in this class and because you’re engaged, I took it on, more personally, and saw it as - not something you just had to do to pass - with this, it felt like, you’re doing this for yourself and you’re doing it because it was fun and because you wanted to challenge yourself to critically reflect on issues and themes that were presented through art.
Participants reported IAP helped them look in depth at interest areas and to express these through art. One participant joined an environmental action group as a consequence of her artistic investigations. Participants made a double move (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005) as they connected their art making to life experiences, the art domain and the teaching/learning process. Participants included art styles they were passionate about, including some of their children’s favourites. They chose to work individually or collaboratively and felt empowered to undertake reflexive art making as prompted by dialogic appreciation. They were encouraged to develop their artistic mark and to deeply reflect on artworks.

Participants stated that IAP gave them ideas on how to teach art. One participant had applied her IAP experience to her teaching practicum in the Cook Islands and then determined to incorporate it in other primary level teaching activities.

However, not all students appreciated the potential application of IAP in their future teaching careers. This made me realise that as well as modelling IAP as lecturer, I also need to share the metacognitive aspects of teaching/learning more overtly with pre-service teachers.

Creative World 2 revealed that assessment was weighted towards the final art product and not the visual journal. In hindsight it would have been preferable if students had been able to select how they wanted marks to be proportioned between their art making processes and their final artwork. This would allow those so inclined to concentrate more on the starting points and visual journal, than on the final artwork. This would demonstrate that art process and product have equal merit and that IAP values the development of a visual repertoire as an ongoing resource.

IAP contests the teaching of a linear approach to the history of art, preferring to create a bricolage of art experiences based around a topic, theme or issue. Art styles and historical understandings are found through the art dispositions. IAP also allows teaching to follow students’ interests. In Creative World 2 IAP switched from teacher-led art sessions to student-inspired content that was then supported and co-explored by the teacher as the subject progressed. This is contrary to teacher led and inspired art curriculum to which students respond as required by the pre-set curriculum.

Art as provocation folders were developed for classes that featured provocative or challenging artwork. This was introduced in the What is Art? session at the commencement of the unit.

In Creative World 2, IAP linked art making, art and dialogic appreciation and the planning of art education experiences as connected concerns. IAP contests art education experiences that concentrate solely on art making. Instead IAP prefers to link poesis, theoria and praxis (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) positioning the pre-service teacher as an artist/researcher/teacher.
How did IAP Reconnect Artist, Researcher and Teacher in Creative World 2?

In Creative World 2, IAP (re)connected our multiple roles across the learning experience. In line with a/r/tographic influences, IAP aimed “to integrate theoria, praxis, and poesis” or theory/research, teaching/learning, and art/making (Irwin, 2004, p. 28) so that artist/researcher/teacher were both interconnected and singular identities.

As individual identities, participants were positioned as artists, researchers and teachers as follows:

- **Artists** when they developed their own starting points and stylistic choices, and when they created visual journals and artworks;
- **Researchers** when they explored set readings on art pedagogy, art making and art appreciation, when they undertook visual research for their artworks and when they applied art appreciation skills to artworks; and
- **Teachers** when they prepared art education experiences for future students and when the lecturer planned, wrote and enacted the unit.

As (re)connected identities, participants welcomed relational ways of knowing across and in between their roles and others’ roles. The in-between space of our multiple roles troubled our awareness and knowing as we embodied “theory-as-practice-as-process-as-complication” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xi). For example:

- My artist-self informed my teacher-self as I shared my visual journal with students. We discussed how, as artist, I had lost confidence undertaking an artwork but had then found ways to overcome this. As lecturer/teacher, I shared this experience to help students realise that authentic creative experiences need problem solving. We then discussed creativity and how researchers such as Harding and Hale (2007) suggest that the capacity to tolerate ambiguity, complexity and novelty, is “essential in the sense that creative problem solving involves an ambiguous period in which the problem is clarified and solutions considered” (p. 2). We discussed becoming a community of learners that support each other through the creative process and how research, procedures, techniques and approaches could help us, should we lose direction while making artworks. Participants reported that this sharing helped normalise the creative experience, especially when they felt moments of uncertainty.

- Student-artists became art appreciators as they applied aesthetic perception (Wilks, 2004) to artworks. Participants reported how these activities helped further build and sustain their art making.

- Students used knowledge gleaned through art making and art appreciation to plan art education experiences for primary school use. They intertwined their roles as artist, researcher and teacher to draw on aspects of each way of knowing.
• After overhearing one student’s account of how she had supported other students through periods of low confidence, I determined to be more in touch with the emotional rollercoaster that some participants feel during the creative process and to let them know that the journey can lead to greater creative confidence as the process is undertaken.

• The unit was structured so that at first it was teacher-driven. As one participant said: “starting points allow the teacher to learn about the learners.” Later in the unit, students led the learning through their preferred ways of working. The lecturer then became a facilitator for students’ learning needs. This saw a growth in roles as the students moved from being receivers to makers of new knowledge through their artwork.

• Participants reported that the unit gave them ideas about how to teach art and that the reflective nature of dialogic appreciation was something that they would take up in their teaching.

• One participant saw me as an artist and teacher but not as a co-learner. Upon reflection I should have more overtly shared what I learnt from the class, how I valued the dialogic and art appreciation sessions, how these processes created a social environment that made for a culture of respect across the group and how, at times, I too needed help and support. That is, demystifying my role/s would help students realize they too can effectively take on the contiguous identity of artist/researcher/teacher.

3.2.11 Developing a Model for IAP

The findings from Creative Worlds 1 and 2 led to an emerging theoretical framework which I present as an evolving model for IAP. The model drove the methodological stance for the Photo Book (Creative World 3) and was also driven by the experiential data and readings the earlier work prompted. The model then enabled a more well-formed methodology.

The IAP model was developed for a purpose. It informs the artwork and art processes in the Photo Book and is therefore methodological in that it helps explore what IAP entails, reveals and contests. The model has also helped me understand the art processes involved in creating artworks and hence, how to create my artworks.

Through self-examination, I used this model as a device to help me examine growth across the inter-connected strengths of my pedagogy and art practice and to identify areas that need further attention. For instance, by using the model as a framework to explore developing ideas I discovered the importance of place/space and sustainability within IAP. Using my model as a guiding lens, I was able to see whether the intentions I have for my art practice, art teaching and research sustain the theory of IAP. The model helped me identify
places of strong growth, pertinent moments of learning, unique insights, and informing moments and transformations. The model has helped me explore the relational and simultaneous concept development that occurs within IAP. That is, the elements that make up the model relate to each other, and when considered as linked concepts, can help build growth in creativity, pedagogy, discipline knowledge and local knowledge. These links become even more pertinent when considered within a sociocultural and critical approach.

**An Overview of the Developing IAP Model**

The IAP model came about through the development and analysis of simultaneous concept formations that were made apparent through the application of IAP. The model gives us the opportunity to discover and highlight relationships between developing concepts to discover and revisit emerging themes, issues, viewpoints and media as interrelated concerns within the creative process. The model offers a powerful pedagogical tool for developing a sense of continuum within the creative process. The cross referencing and revisiting of concepts and expressions sustain the creative process.

By locating the notion of creativity as central to the art experience, the model highlights the idea that we need to build a self-conscious awareness of our personal creativity. In turn, our personal creativity grows, is fed by and feeds societal and pedagogical creativity. I then incorporated the theoretical foundation of creativity an overlapping pedagogical disposition that explores the interrelated contexts of immersive art practice, skill development and personally meaningful approaches. In so doing, I explored informing theories that support experiential, sensory, playful and personal art experience: the development of art skills and aesthetic sensibility; context-driven art practices that lead to a sense of one’s own expressive potential; and the value of relational contexts made evident through sociocultural perspectives.
**Exploring Connections through a Developing Model for IAP**

**Connecting through creativity:** The model starts with creativity as central to the art experience. Presented as a triangle (see Figure 41), creativity is the core of IAP. Creativity is understood as personal, societal and developmental. From the flow experience of the individual to sociocultural connections across the inter-related sites of the individual, field and domain, this view of creativity is informed by Csikszentmihalyi's (1988;1996;1999) systems model of creativity. Through it we are encouraged to explore the where of creativity.

![Figure 41: A Systems View of Creativity](image-url)
Connecting art education with a systems view of creativity: The outer triangle (see Figure 42) suggests that the creative system is in flux, and that the concept of creativity changes with growth in the domain, the field and the individual. Influenced by Kindler's (2004a; 2007) systems view of creativity, it suggests a developmental dimension alongside artistry, acknowledging cultural change, individual growth and developments in the field. It suggests that a dynamic pedagogical interplay between the artistic domain and the gatekeepers of the domain enhances creativity in art education experiences.

Figure 42: IAP Model Connecting Systems View of Creativity with Art Education
**Connecting creativity with immersive, meaningful and skill based approaches:** The model then builds a connecting series of triangles (see Figure 43) that represent the pedagogical disposition of IAP. Featuring immersive process and product; meaning making/reflexive practice and art skills, the model aims to address simultaneous concept formation and the relationships between these concepts as a means to highlight findings.

![Figure 43: IAP Model Connecting Pedagogical Dispositions with Dynamic Approach to Creativity](image)

**Connecting through immersive art practice:** The model then connects creativity with practice through fostering immersive process and product (see Figure 44). This sees the exploration of tactile, sensory, observational, playful, experiential approaches to art processes and product. It also encompasses types of immersion, through interesting, involving, imaginative or interactive (Burbules, 2004) experiences or through flow, materiality, curiosity or roving.

![Figure 44: IAP Model Connecting Immersive Process and Product with Dynamic Approach to Creativity](image)
Connecting through personally meaningful concepts: Connections with context are enabled through IAP’s preference for: lived experience; local knowledge; reflective and reflexive practice; revisitation; and personally meaningful projects (see Figure 45). A critical sense of personal volition and power through art resonates with sociocultural ways of knowing. Integration of subject matter with themes from participants’ community lives and the inclusion of everyday concepts (experiences) with discipline knowledge build learning (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005)

![Figure 45: IAP Model Connecting Context with Dynamic Approach to Creativity](image)

Connecting through art skills and aesthetic ways of knowing: The model explores the development of art skills (see Figure 46) through personal style and insights derived from the IAP process. It acknowledges technical and aesthetic skills as a means to build competence and acknowledges that art has its own unique morphology, its own means of knowing.

![Figure 46: IAP Model Connecting Art Skills and Aesthetic Awareness to Creative Dynamic](image)
Connecting through simultaneous concept formation: To suggest a sense of dynamic continuum, an arrow now circulates the diagram (see Figure 47). This is to suggest that the simultaneous concept formation made possible by IAP and the relationships that emerge between these concepts can (re)connect emerging themes, issues, viewpoints and media as a means for sustaining the creative process. If used as a reflective tool for practice, the IAP allows for cross referencing and revisiting of concepts and expressions, and can be used as a way to continually sustain the creative process.

Figure 47: IAP Model Connecting Informing Concepts as Dynamic Continuum

Connecting to the site in which IAP is enacted: The dotted external line which forms a frame around the IAP model (see Figure 48) serves as a reference to the idea that each time IAP is enacted, it reveals itself according to the site in which it is played out. It acknowledges the context of each site. A critical awareness of site questions and reviews the dominant forces at work in the institutions in which the creative worlds take place, providing insight into the relationship of power and knowledge within each context. Presented in a state of harmony and balance, the model is a device that helps examine growth across the interconnected strengths of my art pedagogy and practice as well as the areas that need further attention. I then examine these findings and refine and extend IAP in order to sustain the creative process.
Figure 48: IAP Model showing how Context for each Site informs Relationship of Power and Knowledge within Sites

**Sustaining and Exploring the Creative Process through the Evolving IAP Model**

Viewed in its current state (as in Figure 48) the developing model for IAP is in a state of harmony and balance. This model stresses the importance of simultaneous concept formation as an innate part of making learning rich and meaningful when undertaking art experiences. However, strengths in areas can change, with growth in some areas being more apparent than in other areas. I used this model as a device in Creative World 3 to help me examine growth through the inter-connected strengths of my art practice, how it impacts on teaching and research and as a guide to show me which areas needed further attention. For instance sometimes, as an art educator, I may encourage a creative use of everyday concepts alongside skill development but omit to connect this learning context with the cultural domain. Or sometimes, a student may explore creative risk-taking and experimentation alongside aesthetic perception but not develop social/critical context. By using the model as a framework through which to illuminate strengths, weaknesses and inclinations, I can then examine these findings and refine and extend practice in order to sustain the creative process.

By using the model to highlight pertinent art experiences, the students/participants and I became more aware of the possibilities that simultaneous concept formations make apparent through IAP. This allowed us the opportunity to discover and highlight relationships between
developing concepts and to discover and revisit emerging themes, issues, viewpoints and media in the creative process. The evolving model offers a powerful pedagogical tool for developing a sense of continuum within the creative process. The cross-referencing and revisiting of concepts and expressions can continually sustain the creative process.

**Putting the Evolving Model into Practice**

In this chapter I have explored the experiential data and the contextual literature review from Creative Worlds 1 and 2 and how they led to an evolving model for IAP. Creative World 3 (the Photo Book and Project aspect of the study) then takes on the processes that evolved out of Creative Worlds 1 and 2 and explores my personal artwork, the evolving IAP model, the narrative layers and the Photo Book.

In Chapter 4 I analyse Creative World 3 using the evolving IAP model as a tool to inform discussion and identify insights. In the process, I hold up the developing IAP model to immersive art practice via the artworks and a series of layered narratives. In the process I ask what does the model reveal or contest, and how does it (re)connect artist, researcher and teacher? The findings are understood through a series of some 120 artworks that were influenced by IAP. These artworks were inspired by IAP starting points and the creative connections that formed as part of the IAP model.
4. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

4.1 Creative World 3: Discussion and Findings

Art comes from the excess, in the world, in objects, in living things, that enables them to be more than they are, to give more than themselves, their material qualities, their possible uses, than is self-evident. Art is the consequence of that excess, that energy or force, that puts life at risk for the sake of intensification, for the sake of sensation itself - not simply for pleasure or for sexuality, as psychoanalysis suggests - but for what can be magnified, intensified, for what is more, through which creation, risk, innovation are undertaken for their own sake, for how and what they intensify. (Grosz, 2008a, p. 63)

4.1.1 Exploring IAP through Personal Artistic Practice

Creative World 3 explored Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) through my personal artistic practice. It involved the making of artworks that responded to the IAP model which were then woven into a photo book format. The format was then adapted to incorporate extended narratives. The objective was to create a rich interplay between artworks, the model and the reflexive narratives so that the reader/viewer can build a greater understanding of IAP and what it reveals and contests. Although the artwork is created by me as artist, the narratives also speak to the inter-subjective roles of artist, researcher and teacher. For that reason I name this book an A/R/T Photo Book because, although my artist role is primary, it is contiguous with my researcher and teacher roles.

I analysed Creative World 3 using the IAP model as a tool to inform the findings and discussion. In the process I held up the developing IAP model (explained in Chapter 3) to immersive art practice via the artworks and narratives and asked: What does the model reveal and/or contest? How does it (re)connect artist, researcher and teacher?

The findings are understood through a series of some 120 artworks that were influenced by IAP. These artworks were inspired by the previously discussed IAP starting points and the creative connections that had been formed as part of the IAP model.

The IAP starting points included: play based; theme based; issue based; provocation; emergent approach; aesthetic ways of knowing; and reflection and reflexive making.
Creative connections made evident through the IAP model were as follows:

- Creativity as a central aspect of the IAP experience;
- A pedagogical approach that explored and intertwined interrelated contexts of: immersive art process and product; skill development and aesthetic sensibility; personally meaningful approaches through reflexive thinking/making;
- Simultaneous concept development informed by critical and sociocultural ways of knowing;
- Values context-driven art practices as a means to develop creative confidence; and
- Acknowledges context of each site.

See Figure 49 for a visual representation of these concepts.

A series of layered narratives speak back to the artwork and the IAP process. They enabled me to address the impact of IAP through different lenses to bring forth a crystalized view of the data (Richardson, 1997a, p. 92).

4.1.2 IAP Explored through Artworks, the Model, Narratives and the Photo Book

![IAP Model Informs Art Practice and Analysis of Artworks](image)

**Figure 49: IAP Model Informs Art Practice and Analysis of Artworks**

The IAP model, discussed in Chapter 2, was held up to the artworks as they developed. The model served as a point of reference while I creating the artworks and inspired the process behind my art practice. Figure 49 present the model as it was envisioned during Creative World 3. Rather than exhibiting the artworks from Creative World 3 I chose to present them
into a photo book program so that they can be experienced alongside the reflexive and critical narratives, as well as the IAP model during its various stages of development. By publishing the works in this way, the A/R/T Photo Book can be made available via the internet to future students and teachers.

In the Photo Book the artworks and accompanying narratives were arranged around informing themes that developed through artistic practice. These themes are understood as non-chronological. Figure 49 presents the themes as contiguously connected across the book this so the reader/viewer can flip forward and backwards through the Photo Book as they wish.

The artworks reflect the immersive process. There are solar prints of found snake skin, photos of beach installations, cast and embossed objects in plaster and clay, mud paint and berry- bush dye. I drew and stained surfaces with saffron, ochre, sand and henna. I painted with acrylic on a series of small canvases while completing a series of large painted works that relate in scale. Many of the canvases reflect my aesthetic preference for the golden ratio (1:6180339887….) with the proportions of the canvases being in relation to the human body of maker and viewer. Collage with brightly coloured papers and markers on transparencies mixed with digital scanning and digital editing to serialise or extend the works between analogue and digital, and back again if needed. Shards of found glass and wire are formed into mini sculptures. An ostrich egg formed a drawing surface for another artwork. Microscopic photographs including a medical image of the inside of my eyes found their way into the Photo Book. The choice of media was driven by immersion in place, embodied art investigations and my quest to revisit images across media - as a way of being immersed.
4.2 An Overview of the A/R/T Photo Book

![Diagram of Immersive Art Pedagogy]

Figure 50: Photo Book Sections are Contiguous and Revolve around IAP

**Introduction to the A/R/T Photo Book:** The reader/viewer is introduced to IAP through a brief overview of the Creative Worlds 1 and 2. The findings and insights that informed IAP, the developing model and the layered narratives are discussed. An introduction to a/r/tography is presented so the reader/viewer can understand how this impacts the roles of artist, researcher and teacher.

**Section 1 Art and Story:** A series of paintings and mini narratives were created to tell the story of a mother. Her story emerges through living inquiry. Conversations, active listening, walking through her home and tendered garden, along with the playful development of images and ideas, enabled me as artist to weave together images and story.

**Section 2 (Re)connecting Self and Place:** Creative connections to place were established through experiencing art, nature and everyday materials. As artist, I experienced a sense of (re)connecting to the beach and the bush through IAP. My art captures moments in time. I immersed myself in a range of media to revisit developing ideas and images. The process involved walking, talking, finding, selecting, creating images and storying. My visual journal is
featured to show how a repertoire of creative possibilities formed across playful inquiry. The artworks explored sites of connection including the finding of a bird place. Tactile experiences and playful immersion fostered connections with materials, the senses, art history and provided ways to develop my art skills. I re-engaged with place across time by touching, being touched, and embodying art experiences. There was a sense of playful learning as I moved about in the space of possibilities. Figure 50 shows that this section is dynamically connected to the previous and following sections. Art and story were picked up from Section 1 and further developed in Section 2. In Section 3 I trouble the directions evident in Section 2 to explore a wider sense of place and space.

**Section 3 Disquiet versus Comfort:** A growing disquiet invaded my work as I wrestled with the pull of cosy, lived experiences of beautiful places and a growing awareness of troubled places and happenings in the world. I grappled with my role as artist and considered where to place my focus: as issue-based work; beautiful work; meaningful work; aesthetically pleasing work; or work about place/space. A niggling voice prompted me to consider art as un-concealment; as a means to reveal the visible-in-visible of our lived experiences, even if they are experienced through media. I looked to the Iraq war and the positioning of a convicted drug dealer to explore intercultural encounters and being other through art. As the art moved between place and space I moved towards a meta-cultural perspective; towards the in-between of place and space.

**Section 4 Art Adventures in Other-Places:** This section reveals my art adventures in dry places. Throughout I sought immersion through art as a way to connect with sites I had not previously experienced. A sojourn at the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens led to an immersive investigation of drought resistant species where I focussed on tactile involvement with plants from the dry-zone and revisited images through different artistic media. The artwork shifted from tactile to observational to imagined to rhythmical and then into the abstract essence of the experience. Throughout there was a sense of play, curiosity and discovery. This informal learning led to listening, connecting and harnessing found objects and plants. In the process my planned intentions gave way to artistic emergence. A trip to the dry heart of Australia, with artworks made at Uluru, Kings Canyon and the Western McDonnell Ranges led to the troubling of my IAP intentions. A heatwave, my fair skin, my whiteness and my city life-world put me at a remove from the land. However, I tuned in and explored creative possibilities as best I could - in shadow-places, through passenger-seat drawing or collecting objects for micro-play and photography while ensconced in cool interiors. I learnt about (dis)connecting to place, water as (dis)empowerment, the rhythms of nature, tuning into the words of others and the deep connection of Indigenous people to country. The process awakened me to the politics of my artistic practice, as I re-imagine IAP as a contiguous mixture of art and
Discussion and Findings

environment and movement and place and art miles. There was a growing and changing relationship to place and space throughout the Photo Book.

Section 5 Between Place and Space: My artwork took me on a journey towards the contact zone, the in-between as a place of transformation. Using the artwork Tea Towel for Country I called to memory a kidnap victim from Iraq alongside notions of Australianness. I thought about my place in relation to your place, and considered the liminal and in-between states of knowing that occur when a third space is opened up through IAP. I realised that it is possible to introduce notions of complexity and sustainability into art education through the place/space theme. The context of where art is to be placed, used or seen was also positioned as a political action.

Section 6 Relational Places: Finding washed up shards of glass on a local beach led to the making of an installation that evolved over time. A catch-up-art-walk with a friend led to a chance artwork that recorded our day making art together. In this section I join with others in the making of art experiences. Notions of being with and becoming self through our making are broached and a developing socio-ecological understanding of place is touched on as I explore how art is a vehicle for integrating sustainable practice.

Section 7 (Re)processing and (Re)producing: The digital story was understood as a means to (re)process and (re)produce the process and product of arts-based research. In essence I used digital storytelling as a creative analysis tool. Throughout I developed a new artistic repertoire and a new voice through different media.

Section 8 Creating/Sustainability and Sustaining/Creativity: In this section I explored place as a relational act. I investigated the way various picture books explore place through art and text. I then explored a post-fire workshop at Wilsons Promontory National Park and the impact of bushfires in my home state of Victoria. Prompted by IAP, I (re)connected, (re)created and (re)thought a fire-affected place, becoming mindful of given sites. Another frame was now added to the IAP model which serves to remind us that each time IAP is enacted it needs to consider the overarching theme of creating/sustainability and sustaining/creativity. Figure 60 connects this section to the previous reflexive intentions at Section 7. It connects back to the notion of art and story (featured in Section 1) and can be read with the insights gleaned from previous sections.

Conclusion: An overview of the findings and insights that emerged through IAP are presented in the Photo Book. It addresses the study’s central questions as they relate to Creative World 3. A more expansive critical narrative is then featured at Chapter 5 as final analysis of the Photo Book.
4.2.1 The Narrative Layers Explored

It is in the making and the telling that IAP emerges and grows. It is forever in a state of becoming. The various narrative layers in the study capture these stages of growth.

At heart I am a bricoleur (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008). I pieced and sewed together knowledge assembled from different methods of inquiry so that there was a cross-fertilisation of ideas between art practice, education, critical theory, arts-based and place-based theories. This process welcomed emergent stories to form that offered a “complex, quilt-like bricolage, a reflective collage or montage - a set of fluid, interconnected images and representations” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 8). In creating these overlapping stories, I was reminded of how, as artist, I construct digital images in programs such as Photoshop; where various layers are highlighted, hidden or re-stacked according to the required outcome and where some areas are blended in semi-transparent fills in to create a new way of reading aspects of the entire picture.

Figure 51 details how each layer of the Photo Book responded to the IAP model and the artwork.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>An emerging model for IAP is developed as a consequence of Creative World 1 and Creative World 2 and is proposed as inspiration for future IAP contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artwork</td>
<td>Responds to: Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive Layers</td>
<td>Responds to: Positioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Artist's narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>4-C narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Rendering narrative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 51: Photo Book Layers Respond to Artwork and IAP Model
**4th** | **Artist, Researcher, Teacher narrative** | **Artwork + 1st + 2nd + 3rd narrative layers** | This layer of narrative was developed in response to the cross-fertilization of roles and the in-between spaces of artist, researcher and teacher, as understood through a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Irwin et al., 2006).

**5th** | **Critical narrative** | **Artwork + 1st + 2nd + 3rd + 4th narrative layers** | This layer speaks back to the artwork, the model and the previous layers. It tells the story of what IAP constituted, revealed and contested in Creative World 3 and the developing model. It also examines whether IAP reconnects artist/researcher/teacher.

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**Figure 51 (cont’d): Photo Book Layers Respond to Artwork and IAP Model**

When reviewing layered narratives, I interpreted as I wrote, in line with Richardson’s (2000; 2001) notion that writing is a form of inquiry and a way of making sense of the world. The narratives are emergent, unfolding and sometimes open-ended. They helped me find my voice in the research study and led me to discoveries that I would not otherwise have discovered. The narratives enabled me to explore different approaches as a simultaneous concern and to lead IAP towards future growth. As Laurel Richardson suggests, writing is "a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about a topic... form and content are inseparable" (2000, p. 93). In addition she states that "I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something that I did not know before I wrote it" (2001, p. 35).
Figure 52: Photo Book Layers build on Narrative Layers, IAP Model and Artwork

IAP was explored through the model which then inspired the artwork. The 4-C narratives were derived from the model in that they reflected the major theories informing the IAP approach. The final critical narratives drew on IAP but were now enhanced by the added insights gleaned from a/r/tography (through the rendering and artist/researcher/teacher narratives). Figure 52 shows how each layer grows momentum form the previous layer. The mix of blue and orange colour is deliberate. Blue indicates a more aesthetic form of reflection whereas orange indicates a more reflexive form of thinking.

**Narrative Layer 1: Artist Narrative**

The artist narratives were written at the time of making when still embodied in the artwork or when at the creative site, or afterwards in contemplation of the artwork and process. Written in cafes, in the studio, at the Royal Botanic Gardens or at the kitchen table, they are scribed on notelets and the backs of canvases (see Figure 53), and in the visual journal (see Figure 53). The narratives made after the making were pieced together in artists journals, word documents and in the Photo Book.
The artist narratives aimed to capture the essence of the maker, evolving as they did through art making and the act of writing itself. They are deliberately non-linear, avoid conventional essay format, and respond instead to the serendipitous nature of art making. They wrestle with the ideas and concepts of given artworks as well as with my immersion as artist/tr/t. They respond to situation, the event of being and making across place/s and through time. They give agency to the rollercoaster ride of the maker and sometimes take up on informing theories. Often they take on a poetic tone, as a means to suggest the imaginative space experienced when immersed in art making.

Figure 53: Artist Narrative and Documented Images

**Narrative Layer 2: The 4-C Narrative**

The 4-C narratives speak directly to the major concepts of the IAP model. They refer to four perspectives: creative; connecting; contextual; and critical. The term 4-C plays on the idea of looking back to understand what has happened in order to be alert to forward possibilities.

**The creative perspective** looks to interconnections across individual, field and domain. It seeks states of immersion as a means to reveal the creative experience and draws out aesthetic considerations through the art experience.

**The connecting perspective** seeks out relational and social aspects made apparent through the artwork and art process.
The contextual perspective explores the way site, event, situation, time, place and people influence the process.

The critical perspective draws on aspects of power and agency as revealed by the art process and the art experience. In addition, a critical awareness of site questions and reviews the dominant forces at work in the institutions in which the creative worlds take place, providing insight into the relationship of power and knowledge within each context.

The 4-C narratives connect to the IAP model in the following ways:

- **The creative perspective** reflects the central concern of the model which advocates a personal, societal and developmental view of creativity. In the model, creativity is represented as dynamic and interconnects with a range of simultaneous concepts that spur practical creative activity through: immersive art process and product; context as personal meaning making/reflexive practice; and art skills and aesthetic development.

- **The connecting perspective** relates to the model in that it teases out the sociocultural and relational learning made apparent by IAP, through connection to subject matter of an artwork, or across roles.

- **The contextual perspective** relates to the model as it acknowledges that each creative world is a place in the making that calls forth different approaches according to the circumstances of the site.

- **The critical perspective** relates to the model as it explores (the artist/researcher/teacher's sense of) creative agency and the context in which meaning making occurs through art experiences.

**Narrative Layer 3: Renderings Narrative**

To be engaged in the practice of a/r/tography means to inquire in the world through an ongoing process of art making in any art form and writing not separate or illustrative of each other but interconnected and woven through each other to create additional and/or enhanced meanings. A/r/tographical works are often rendered through the methodological concepts of contiguity, living inquiry, openings, metaphor/metonymy, reverberations and excess which are enacted and presented/performe when a relational aesthetic inquiry condition is envisioned as embodied understandings and exchanges between art and text, and between and among the broadly conceived identities of artist/researcher/teacher. A/r/tography is inherently about self as artist/researcher/teacher yet it is also social when groups or communities of a/r/tographers come together to engage in shared inquiries, act as critical friends, articulate an evolution of research questions, and present their collective evocative/provocative works to others (Irwin, 2005, para.1).
My approach to the renderings and a/r/t narratives was informed by a number of a/r/tographers and in particular, Springgay, Irwin and de Cosson (e.g. Springgay, 2008d; Irwin & Chalmers, 2007; Irwin et al., 2006; Springgay, Irwin & Kind, 2005; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004). The renderings narrative helped me develop deep insights into the art experiences on offer. Informed by the six a/r/tographic renderings (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) I re-present IAP through living inquiry, openings, metaphor/metonym, reverberations, excess and contiguity. This provided a range of viewpoints, often poetic and future orientated, through which to reflect on the art-based experiences at hand. They also informed on how my roles as artist, researcher and teacher intersect. Table 9 lists the questions that I posed to interrogate the research data through renderings based narratives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A/r/tographic Renderings</th>
<th>Questions Inspired by the A/r/tographic Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living inquiry</td>
<td>Does embodied learning deepen the inquiry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How/do the following lived experiences deepen the learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• exploring;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• arts making;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• creating narratives/documenting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• appreciating;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reflecting, and responding to research; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openings</td>
<td>What conversations are opened up through the IAP investigation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What relationships (between people, materials, place, roles and other aspects of the experience) are opened up through IAP?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is seen and known through IAP?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is not seen or known?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphor Metonym</td>
<td>The IAP experience is like…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The IAP experience is as if…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can the artwork/experience be described via poetic and imaginative terms?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this help us understand the activity in new ways?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Questions Applying to the Six A/r/tographic Renderings
Table 9 (cont’d): Questions Applying to the Six A/r/tographic Renderings

**Reverberations**  
Have my understandings of art been shifted at all through the IAP experience?  
Can the learning echo into other spheres of teaching practice, art practice, research? Other areas beyond visual art?

**Excess**  
Was the experience transformative in any way?  
Did the experience provoke an understanding of art? Of teaching? Of art education? What is left over, wasteful or not seen in the experience?

**Contiguity**  
How can the crossover of my/participants’ roles as artist/researchers/teachers open new understandings through IAP?  
How can the simultaneous use of materials, images, language, situation, space and time help develop meaningful experience?  
How can the crossover of my/participants’ roles as artist/researchers/teachers open new understandings through these art experiences?

**Narrative Layer 4: A/r/t Narrative**

The a/r/tographic rendering of contiguity examines the in-between spaces of one idea touching another (lying adjacent to, or in presence of another). The inquiry of in-between spaces disrupts dualistic thinking and encourages the interconnectivity of social and cultural differences, opposites, and unknowns (Winters, Belliveau, & Sherritt, 2009, p. 174).

To explore the impact that a contiguous view of a/r/t offers, I examined the roles of a/r/t as both divided and contiguous, so that the difference between these roles, as separate concerns and in relation to each other, were identified. For a/r/tographers the slash (/) between enables more than one reading; it divides and joins concepts so that multiple meanings are possible. In this layer I explore the contiguous roles of artist/researcher/teacher as provoked by my artist work. In turn, the lens of a/r/t provides adjacent roles to brush up against the art experiences, renderings, places, situations, concepts, and time/s that inform my art and graphy (writing). It is important to realise that all these elements are treated as a simultaneous concern when an a/r/tographic view is taken on board. The in-between spaces of artist/researcher/teacher as well as a/r/tography and place/space/time/materials/situation/event/experience are understood in relation to each other. Springgay (2008c) reminds us that the in-between “is a process of invention rather than interpretation, where concepts are marked by social engagements and encounters” (Springgay, 2008c, para. 2).
Figure 54: Interconnected Roles of Artist/Researcher/Teacher

A/r/tography welcomes a poetic, arts-based means of exploring image and textual data. In line with this approach, and in order to connect and (re)connect the creative potential of artist/researcher/teacher (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Irwin, 2004), I developed a series of artist diagrams that integrate my approach to the a/r/t aspect of a/r/tography through the metaphor of water (discussed later in this section). However, as the a/r/t identities are contiguous with many other aspects of a/r/tography, I used diagrams to explore the a/r/t roles in conjunction with the data from the creative worlds.

As a coastal Australian, I have spent many summer days at the beach and have also experienced extended periods of drought. Thus, water is a constant in my life. As a symbolic device water enables me to pursue the notion of immersion as experienced by living inquiry (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005) within art/s based experiences. When in water we opt to dive in, swim, tread water, twist and turn, float, gasp and splash. Immersed in art experiences, we can similarly opt in, flow, struggle, look and (re)look, embrace time, shock or be shocked, while simultaneously developing a sense of creative confidence as we learn in, through and about art (UNESCO, 2010) as event, process or product. Water, like art, is complex being full of dynamic movement. Even when glassy still, it ebbs and flows, laps and crashes across changing shorelines and borders. Water reflects and responds to the world around it, constantly changing its shape, depth and colour, yet retaining its essential identity.
Without water the land withers and is de-saturated of colour;

Without art I feel empty and de-energised;

With water everything grows and is nourished anew; and

Through art I feel eager to explore, in sync with the world.

(My visual journal notes, 2010)

Using a Venn diagram\(^7\) (see Figure 54) I developed symbolic reference to water through the use of colour and pattern. The artist is symbolic of water, flow, immersion and the collage from which it is constructed. The teacher is symbolic of the intermingling layers of water, movement and reflections. The researcher is symbolic of fresh air bubbles rising up to the surface, building momentum, and casting off possibilities.

The in-between spaces of each role overlap to reveal intersecting shape, pattern and colour (see Figures 54 and 55). They symbolize the possibility of cross-fertilized roles and of hybrid approaches. It is these in-between spaces, where each role intersects, overlaps and informs the other that further insights and perspectives are revealed. These liminal and transformational spaces (Turner, 1969) allowed me to interrogate how artist, researcher and teacher contest, reveal, dominate or submit to each other through IAP. I ask how the intersecting dynamics of each role inspire, illuminate, shape, lack relevance to or extend ways of knowing through the art experiences within my study. These zones give me permission to pose the following questions:

- How does the self as teacher inform, contest and reveal artist?
- Can self as researcher learn from the messy chaos and emotional journeys that come with the creative process of artist?
- How does self as artist de-emphasis the final product and re-claim a greater mindfulness of the art making process, much as self as teacher might value process and product in simulacra?

By opening up these interstitial spaces, bridges were created across roles and processes.

The in-between is bound up with understanding the relations between identities rather than in terms of describing identities, intensions, or acts of individuals or groups. (Springgay, 2008d, p. 160)

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\(^7\)This a/r/t diagram emerged as a consequence of exploring a/r/tography with early childhood pre-service students and fellow Lecturer Dr Clare Hall. Initially I used a table with interconnected rows to indicate the in-between spaces of artist/researcher/teacher. Hall re-conceptualised the table as a Venn diagram. I then saw the dynamic between the roles in a more integrated way. I decided to bring my artist self to the Venn diagram by developing personal symbols for water and states of being. The diagram is a stepping stone towards the more all-encompassing notion of contiguity, where the in-between roles of artist/researcher/teacher interconnect across art, writing, time, materials, place and event.
**Towards the Threshold: Diving In**

![Deconstructed View of the A/r/t Venn Diagram](image)

The in-between spaces of each role overlap to reveal intersecting shape, pattern and colour. They symbolize the possibility of cross-fertilized roles and hybrid approaches. Various water states are depicted with the splash featured as the central image within the diagram (see Figure 55). It is these in-between spaces, where each role intersects, overlaps and informs the other that reveal further insights and perspectives. These liminal and transformational spaces (Turner, 1969) allowed me to interrogate how the artist/researcher/teacher contests, reveals, dominates or submits to each other through IAP. I asked how the intersecting dynamic of each role inspires, illuminates, shapes, lacks relevance to, or extends ways of knowing through the art experiences within my study.

**Figure 55: Deconstructed View of the A/r/t Venn Diagram**

The in-between spaces of each role overlap to reveal intersecting shape, pattern and colour. They symbolize the possibility of cross-fertilized roles and hybrid approaches. Various water states are depicted with the splash featured as the central image within the diagram (see Figure 55). It is these in-between spaces, where each role intersects, overlaps and informs the other that reveal further insights and perspectives. These liminal and transformational spaces (Turner, 1969) allowed me to interrogate how the artist/researcher/teacher contests, reveals, dominates or submits to each other through IAP. I asked how the intersecting dynamic of each role inspires, illuminates, shapes, lacks relevance to, or extends ways of knowing through the art experiences within my study.
By opening up these interstitial spaces, bridges were created across roles and processes. The Venn diagram helped me explore the being and being with artist, researcher and teacher. I then developed other Venn diagrams for the study participants to use to explore being and being with each other through a given art event or experience. This enabled me to investigate the artist/researcher/teacher role of participant students, community artists and pre-service teachers alongside my own role/s. I then explored how our combined insights informed, contested and grew each other.

**Making a Splash: (Re)connecting the In-Between Spaces of Artist, Researcher and Teacher**

As an analysis tool, a/r/tography tends to open the data up to future possibilities rather than leading to final conclusions. This fits well with the ongoing and growth intentions of IAP which is also a dynamic, ongoing process. It also enables me to move towards a philosophy of practice which I imagine through the central splash image in my Venn diagram.

Figure 56 presents a symbolic representation of the splash which is imagined as the kind of splash made when one decides to dive headlong into an adventurous but perhaps risky pursuit.

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**Figure 56: Symbolic Representation of A/r/t ‘Splash’**

The splash which forms the central dynamic image within the diagram represents the sum total of the roles of artist, researcher and teacher and aims to reveal the essence of my developing philosophy of practice as understood through the application of a/r/tography to IAP. This is achieved by exploring and applying the a/r/tographic renderings: contiguity; openings; excess; metaphor/metonym; living inquiry; and reverberations (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004) to the previous layer of questions and contestations that emerged. From this
standpoint I am able to speak about the meaning of IAP and the roles that play out within its’ experience. I am able to ponder what I would change or keep the same in relation to the institutional system, art pedagogy, the students/participants, the university art department, the cultural, social, ecological and political contexts that come into play with the experiences at hand. I am able to ask what inventive processes could be put in place; what changes could be made. The insights afforded by this process, in turn, revealed my developing philosophy of practice, as understood through the arts-based process of IAP. By making a splash I am diving in, naming and embodying my approach to immersive art practice, and simultaneously (re)connecting to the roles of artist, researcher and teacher.

Towards a Philosophy of Practice

A/r/tography materializes the in-between and thus effectively invites researchers and teachers to move beyond static dualisms which pit theory against practice, self against other, and mind against body towards a living, breathing, becoming - inquiry. (Springgay, 2008b, p. 39)

A/r/tography helps us re-imagine and harness the multifaceted aspects of artist, researcher and teacher as summative and enhancing. As a way of being, a/r/tography allows us to see that: we do not have to be singular and exceptional to unconceal findings that are of relevance to art education; that the deficit feeling of being a teacher whose art practice is less active when immersed in teaching, or the artist who may struggle with research is acknowledged and extremely relevant; and that equally, reclaiming the artist self in the teaching world or reimagining the possibilities of student as teacher within the art classroom are empowering insights brought about by everyday investigations. A/r/tography enables us to re-introduce the imaginary into our teacher identity, as a place of reciprocity, such that the teacher who concentrates on the student feeds back to the artist and vice versa. A/r/tography allows space for and gives agency to the voices of the artist/researcher/teacher as our life permits. As a relational consideration, a/r/tography enables us to explore being and being with self and others, so that we are less inclined to other aspects of the self, especially that of the artist self in educational settings. A/r/tography helps us see the in-between as a space of possibility, and strength; the yet to discover.

It is vital that we recognise that the role of a/r/t works in relationship with a/r/tography as well as place/space/time/materials/situation/event/experience in order to create dynamic impact and pertinent insights. This is symbolised in Figure 57 where the combination of these elements work together to provide a dynamic splash.
Figure 57: Dynamic Splash Symbolising Contiguity between A/r/t and Place, Space, Time, Materials, Situation, Event and Experience

Narratives

The Photo Book examines my own explorations into IAP. A series of narratives are presented with the artworks to expose the data to many perspectives. This enables a thorough interrogation of the data. Critical counter narratives then speak to notions of personal agency, empowerment, hope and transformation as experienced through IAP.

Each section of the Photo Book includes a critical narrative that addresses the three major questions of the study. The critical narratives emanate from the preceding layered narratives which in turn respond to the model and the artwork. At the conclusion of the A/R/T Photo Book is an overview of the final critical narrative that pulls together pertinent points from the entire Creative World 3. This summarizes and suggests how IAP has addressed the three major questions of the study.

A final critical narrative is presented at Chapter 5. This discusses the three research questions in relation to Creative World 3.
4.2.2 Conclusion

Together, the elements of the A/R/T Photo Book provide a multifaceted response to IAP. In line with Richardson’s (2000) view of the “crystalline form” (p. 934), I extend the concept of data triangulation to include multi perspectives on the mixed genre text. I take on the view that there is “no one correct telling” and tell the story of the data from “different points of view” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, pp. 7-8), welcoming a bricolage of possible approaches. In the following sections of this chapter, eight critical narratives that emerged as a consequence of the Photo Book are presented.

4.3 Critical Narratives in Response to the Photo Book

Each of the following critical narratives corresponds to a section in the Photo Book.

The reader/viewer should first engage with the relevant Photo Book section before reading the related narrative in the Exegesis or ideally peruse both documents concurrently.

The critical narratives speak back to the artworks, the layered narratives, the main tenants of the IAP model and the viewing lens of artist/researcher/teacher as explored in the Photo Book. Each narrative picks up on those aspects of IAP that relate best to that section of the Project. The contextual review is interspersed between the narratives (and in sections of the Photo Book) to highlight theories of importance to the growth and the evolving nature of IAP.

4.3.1 Section 1: Art and Story

Creativity: Working as an artist with a family through art/story-making was a creative and relational experience. Listening to stories, asking questions, learning about the family's home life and environment created the opportunity for intertextual connections. Story feeds the choice of image, and artworks intertwine with story. I travel between two ways of knowing. In contrast, many school art lessons require students to work in isolation on an artwork. Students are not often involved in social experiences with others as a means to inspire artwork. The idea of working with a particular group as a social experience, for example elderly people, local shopkeepers, wildlife volunteers, who share their stories with students, who then make art and story in response, would enable students to undertake living inquiry as part of their art learning. I intend to share this art/story-making method with others and to develop it in school contexts. We have over simplified the creative experience for school students, denying them involvement in living inquiry. More complex art experiences are possible where interviewing, listening and exploring other environments are part of the art process.
Meaning making and reflective practice: Image and text work together to form a third space where new poetic forms of meaning reside. As Goett (2008) suggests, art and narrative are:

inextricably linked in spirit and method, as their lines - told, drawn or spun - loop and twist around each other in continuously shifting patterns; both bring into consciousness the multiple and manifold diversity of potential links to be made and imagined in investigations of the fabric of life. (Some thoughts on narrative, art and science: an introduction, para. 3)

Skill development: "Traditional art instruction emphasises the improvement of specific production techniques as its goal" (Cary, 1998a, p. 29). Although I am developing technical skills across art and text, my work is focusing mainly on life and community and is "contextualized in human value" (Cary, 1998a, p. 28). My focus is on art as "praxis" rather than art as "techné" (Cary, 1998a, p. 28).

Immersive process and product: The artworks in this section were created via the processes of finding and seeking. Through finding, I discovered objects and images that spoke of the family’s story. They form the inspiration for the artworks. By seeking, I pursued questions and topics revealed by the family, which inspired the content of short narratives that sit alongside the artworks. In summary, art is finding and story is seeking.

Simultaneous concept development: Being able to roam freely between listening, talking, asking questions, making, writing and exploring the environment and objects of place meant that ideas, images and art skills developed as a simultaneous concern. Many elements were involved beyond image making. The social nature of the process was enjoyable.

Site/context: The family trusted me and gave me total artistic freedom. The project felt important to all of us. To be asked to work in this way was a serious undertaking. Ironically such freedom led to my lacking confidence at some stages in the project. I overcame this by tackling the art/story process from many different angles to keep the momentum going and build a repertoire from which to choose the best works. Critical friends also offered advice.

This view of the artistic process as an emotional one where confidence grows and wanes needs to be shared with students. I plan to share my visual journal with future students, to show how I work through confidence issues as they present in given projects and to discuss how truly creative experiences evoke emotional journeys, as opposed to pre-made art lessons that diminish this aspect of the learning process. We propagate a fallacy if we run art classes that are neatly rounded off in successful outcomes every session. Our art students need to learn how to persevere when art making gets tough. We need to develop a community of practice around art making. As with my own situation, where critical friends offered a word or two of support, art education needs to take on a community of practice
approach in which we picture teacher and students as a group “who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen (our) their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4)

4.3.2 Section 2: (Re)connecting Self and Place

**Immersive art practice** involves sensory and experiential engagement with art materials as a means of connecting to objects and topics of interest to create open-ended possibilities and emergent learning. In this section the “as-if possibilities” provided by art experiences (Brice Heath & Wolf, 2004) were clearly evident through immersive engagement with both art materials and objects as curiosities. They talk to us about our culture, our place and the art that has surrounded us for the past century; and also predispose us to “knowledge of materiality as a means to reveal meaning” (Daston, 2004, p. 17) or even challenge associated meanings (as evident in Surrealist art). With IAP, found objects become agents connecting local culture, sense of place and current art practices. The found object offers us creative access to aesthetic awareness because of its value as an immersive pedagogical device for learning in, through and about art. This aligns with the UNESCO International Goals for the Development of Arts Education which calls for “systems of lifelong and intergenerational learning in, about and through arts education” (UNESCO, 2010, p. 4).

Using found objects leads to states of creative flow. Skills develop in response to the site and its materials, anticipated perhaps, but not pre-determined; the skills pertain to a particular place, knowledge that can be harnessed for community-based art-making. The artist’s practice with found objects of place creates meaning, links with the living culture; the artwork is both less and more important.

**IAP as a process** sits well with Community Based Art Education (London, 1994) with emphasis on the intrinsic qualities of the learner who learns from the “inside out” using internal, local, lived experiences to find commonalities with others (Bates, 2000, pp. 11-12). However IAP also engages with Discipline Based Art Education (Eisner, 1987) by finding connections back into the art domain. IAP also echoes into the area of place-based pedagogy (Gruenewald, 2003; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) in that it advocates for the local as a primary source of learning, whether through environment, culture, history or sense of place. This is not to say that place-based learning is limited only to the local, but rather, the local is the starting point before engaging with broader contexts.

IAP contests the primacy of deadlines and outcomes in favour of playful experiences and adventures and advocates that roving be a priority in art experiences, so that play and learning are united through the IAP experience.
**A/r/t:** As I take on the multi-subjective identities of artist/researcher/teacher “in the making,” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 29) my roles mesh together; it is difficult to separate them. My role as artist/r/t helps me value the primacy of time, play and place as rich ingredients for the artist participant, the teacher/facilitator and the researcher. I am also connecting into what Gablik (1991) refers to as the re-enchantment of art. IAP connects me to a deep sense of place, provokes interest in the environment, place and the relational. I am starting to become aware of concepts of ecological literacy. Gruenewald (2003) suggests that “reinhabitation involves learning to live well socially and ecologically in places that have been disrupted and injured… [and that]… decolonization involves learning to recognize disruption and injury and to address their causes” (p. 9). He advocates that we “unlearn… [much of what the]… dominant culture and schooling teaches… [and learn]… more socially just and ecologically sustainable ways of being in the world” (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 9).

I am pondering IAP’s role in this mindset. How can I foster IAP to reinhabit and decolonize place? Or is this way off track in terms of art education?

**4.3.3 Section 3: Disquiet versus Comfort**

This section explores the visible-in-visible of everyday life as the notion of “unconcealment” (Heidegger, 1977, p. 30) emerges. When I was in primary school the last man was hung in Victoria. We prayed for him at school. I remember the last day for Nguyen: the moments passing; the countdown; following his story as his life unravelled; not knowing him, but knowing his fate. I wondered how his mother could possibly bear this. I have no respect for drug dealing but I respect life. Perhaps that is why I felt compelled to paint his portrait; a portrait that could also have been the portrait of many others. But where was the real Caleb? It was like a case of mistaken identity. It’s as if we own and disown lives according to our flag and our floral emblems.

There are many possibilities for intercultural portraits of people like Nguyen. I read that art is the contact zone for deeper understanding (Pratt, 1992). I think in this case, the process of making these pieces has opened up my thinking to the intercultural space, between a set of identities and places; towards a complexity at which art can subtly chip away.

I am keen to curate an exhibition on this theme as a way to bring attention to death row citizens in various countries, or asylum seekers in foreign lands. It could be a means through which Amnesty International or refugee groups build up a profile of ideas, dialogue and questions for the public to consider. Imagine if we could rethink these ideas through art, as a meeting ground for discussion? There is so much more to say about amnesty, death row, et cetera. There is so much more to know about, to explore. My explorations into Nguyen's case takes me across art, politics, the ways in which countries approach drug dealing and
crime, my role as a teacher, working in Australia and Singapore, teaching, reading the paper, conversations, fears, and hopes; a very mixed set of influences at play.

Only through art can we get outside of ourselves and know another's view of the universe which is not the same as ours and see landscapes which would otherwise have remained unknown to us like the landscapes of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing a single world, our own, we see it multiply until we have before us as many worlds as there are original artists. (Proust, 1981, p. 932)

Creativity is experienced through the exploration of my place/your place - a third place: visible-invisible; seen/heard-silenced and under the carpet; revealing and not revealing; seeing and not seeing; focused remembering alongside vague memory; and freedom to roam/alongside/the dispossessed. The creative activity in this section is complex, problematic and enticing. As I work, the subject matter raises more questions than it answers.

Immersive art product and process now travels from being tactile and embodied to being conceptually immersed at the intersection of contesting ideas.

Meaning making and reflective practice: Third space artwork seems to throw up its own meaning; the bumping up together of contesting ideas/concepts seems to create its own poetic and ambiguous questions, rather than solid answers.

Art skills and aesthetics: As I work I ponder big questions about what art is truly about: Should meaning outweigh beauty? Should agency outweigh the decorative call? The process of making in this way awakens aesthetic pondering. As well, inspired by the work of Bourriard (2002), I consider the notion of relational aesthetics. As I create, I wonder whether my artwork, as aesthetic production, could “permit (us) to enter into a dialogue? Could (we) exist, and how, in the space it defines?” (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 209). I am hoping that the encounter between my own experiences and that of a war torn or death row prisoner, as depicted in my artwork, could possibly enact a “collective elaboration of meaning” (2002, p. 15). I am reminded of the philosopher Maxine Greene’s call to being other through the arts. She says: “encounters with the arts can awaken us to alternative possibilities of existing, of being human, of relating to others, of being other” and she argues that the arts have “centrality in the curriculum” (Greene, 1993, p. 214).

These artworks are different to previous works in that they are influenced by mediated imagery from popular culture, such as photos, newspaper images, and television. When I work this way I tend to work in series, rather than just one artwork, to find the many possible ways to juxtapose and rethink the intercultural space. Layering and juxtaposition are used as a way to show intersecting ideas.
Simultaneous concept development is at the fore. Everything is related to and relational with each other.

The site of my artwork is an intercultural encounter, across place and spaces that impact my world.

Context is understood through place and space, third space; reality and poesis. IAP acknowledges the intercultural as a site for creative investigation. IAP finds inspiration from the third space between concepts, identities, cultures and places. My various roles as mother, artist, researcher and educator impact on my artworks. This interplay of roles impacts on my work like never before. As a mother of young children I have let disturbing images of place seep away from my memory. I have changed the television channel, recalling instead aesthetic and palatable notions of place. I have questioned my making of artwork about war, road rage or Maralinga, unlike my practice before becoming a parent.

As artist, I am driven to explore the third space made possible through an intertwining of worlds and viewpoints. As educator, I encourage a critical awareness of self and others within art expression and actively seek to promote this approach as students develop artwork of personal importance. Revealing art and place are congruent aims. When I continue the IAP art making process, the following concepts offer a path through which to navigate artist/researcher/teacher perspectives. I need to take up on notions of place/space intersections as third place and places of possibility made evident through the process of art. It is from Kramsch (1993) and Crozet et al. (1999) that I understand the notion of a dynamic view of culture, cultural competence and intercultural behaviour. This further enables me to understand my work through their interpretation of the third space. My artwork in this section recognizes and mediates views of place/space, where different cultural events are juxtaposed and mediated for viewers to ponder.

The artist Paul Klee calls us to understand art as not merely the reproduction of what can already be seen, but “that which makes visible” (1961, p. 76). I think of this as I consider the third space in art and how, according to Heidegger, “art is a means of unconcealment, a coming to presence, a starting something on its way to arrival… a place where truth happens” (1977, p. 30) that can be grasped through expressive form. Maxine Greene also encourages us to explore the ‘as if’ potential of art experiences. She says that:

we too often forget that the primary purpose of education is to free persons to make sense of their actual lived situations - not only cognitively, but perceptually, imaginatively, affectively - to attend mindfully to their own lives, to take their own initiatives in interpreting them and finding out where the deficiencies are and trying to transform them. And discovering somehow that there is no end to it, that there is always more to see, to learn to feel. (Greene, 2001b, p. 206)
Greene’s work helps me realize that I not only have agency through IAP to express deeply felt and complex life world events that explore the third space, but that artwork is actually important in making sense of our ongoing lives. As Dewey (1927) reminds us, “the function of art has always been to break through the crust of conventionalized and routine consciousness” (1927, p. 183). I need to foster this sense of critical agency as artist/researcher/teacher and take up Dewey’s challenge.

4.3.4 Section 4: Art Adventures in Other-Places

This critical narrative dissects this large section by linking key themes to the IAP model. It gives an overview of the findings thus far by exposing what IAP entails, reveals and contests and how it connects the roles of a/r/t. It also suggests possibilities for future IAP growth.

As we perform, paint, write music or poetry or fiction, we are conveying complex ideas and often these ideas are the complex parts of ourselves we are coming to understand as we are creating. In the doing, in the creating, we are becoming. We are transforming ourselves. (Irwin, 2007, p. xx)

Creativity as flow: As an artist, my creative freedom is immense compared to that of the pre-service teachers with whom I work. I have the freedom to create in informal learning sites, feel the sun on my back, work in beautiful surrounds, or retreat to air conditioning if the weather is stifling. I also have imaginative freedom; I can take a topic where I want, let it grow, dismiss it or put it aside. An image or an idea can be developed as I choose. By building an ongoing repertoire I experience a further sense of enjoyment. In the making, in the tactile experience, I am becoming self (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 4) and am (dis)connecting to place, object, and idea through art. And yet times of great creative doubt also develop and need resolving. This means messy, complex, weaving in-and-through the art process, to find creative solutions. Access to dialogic art appreciation with others helps spur on and sustain my practice. Many lack this opportunity to engage with artistic feedback.

Individual: As individual artist I am informed by the art and art/education domain (but am equally influenced by the lived experience rather than the domain) and aim to contribute to it through artworks and the building of IAP. However rather than starting with the art domain as inspiration, as in DBAE, in this section of the Photo Book I am responding directly to the lived experience of place and environment as a priority. I am aware of the art domain, but I am deliberately accessing place as a starting point and might later ignite the art domain influence.

Field: As teacher I am a gatekeeper who opens up to new ideas exposed by IAP, ideas I can implement in future teaching. In addition Monash University and the Botanic Gardens Project
Manager were the gatekeepers who opened up opportunities for me. Without this support of the field, I would not have experienced this work, thus my contribution.

**Domain**: It is my aspiration as artist to make an impact on the domain of art education, to inform teaching practice through the inspirations that art making reveals.

As a/r/teacher I will sanction some of the findings that come about through my artist/r/t involvement in IAP and expose these ideas/methods to future students. In this regard I can contribute to the domain of art education through implementing IAP and by contributing journal articles to the domain of art education.

**Developmental view of creativity**: By taking an a/r/t perspective, my roles connect and self-generate future teaching/learning ideas. The interplay between self as artist and self as teacher is becoming more evident, creating a greater dynamic between my artistry and my teaching as a conduit to the domain.

**Immersive process and product**: Investigation of artefacts from place sparked, tactile and sensory knowledge of seeds and their sustainable nature in the desert, playful possibilities from the real to the imagined and an awareness of the power of water across people, place and privilege. Being in a place with objects/images of place, in real time and not mediated by secondary experience feels invigorating for my art practice. In some previous artworks I opted for the postmodern tendency of contrasting mediated, mass-media images (Heartney, 2001) with first-maker images, which adds another layer to the art making experience.

But for now, my mostly first-maker perspective empowers me with a sense of also making knowledge. The found object is a powerful tool for prompting connections to place and identity and links me back into the art domain and the role of the found object in art history.

**Meaning making/reflexive practice**: IAP’s preference for lived experience was here undertaken by exploring ‘other’ places beyond my everyday world; seeking rich local knowledge. The process enabled me to trouble my (dis)connect to other places and so afforded a sense of personal volition to make works in and about these sites. I have built a way of working that speaks of my (dis)connect as a conceptual concern and now have the creative confidence to make artwork from a perspective that represents this context. My (dis)connection to place is a theme across these artworks and emerged through lived experience, art making in place, reflective and reflexive narratives and revisitation of practice to build up a theme. My socio-ecological knowledge of water has also grown and has linked into my art discipline knowledge. Relational learning, through meeting people as I work, or through listening about and reading about lived experiences has added to the meaning-making process.
Art skills: Art methods and technical skills were developed to adapt and build confidence to create in various sites, weather conditions, times and events through: passenger-car drawing; shadow art; heat wave/desert art; and art in a botanical garden). An aesthetic was developed that combines a vision of a place with reflection and reflexive ideas about that place through art making and narrative inquiry. Preference for the first-maker perspective was preferred over mediated art making.

Simultaneous concept formation: IAP enabled a sense of contiguity between art practice, place inspired and environmental knowledge, the real and the imagined, the subject matter and the political issues around it. The relationship between these informing concepts supported new ideas and built a repertoire of images for future works. When IAP takes on an emergent position, simultaneous concepts can be freely developed without barriers between ideas. A topic can travel between ideas and process in a more complex way than if we just draw a flower or an object as one might in an exercise-driven art experience.

Context of site/place: IAP acknowledges the relationship of power and knowledge in each context in which it plays out. Through the sites explored I acknowledge that my privilege speaks through my artworks as both insight and limitation and is a (dis)connecting concern. As a university lecturer funding enabled me to undertake study leave, thus the opportunity to travel and spend time making art in the outback. The freedom the Botanic Gardens Program Manager gave me to create art was made possible sign-posting previous successes in the art and education field, and ensuring I would respect the environmental rules. Status and privilege afforded me a position of trust.

As an artist I have the freedom to undertake informal learning across sites as my interests dictate, and am far less encumbered by the institutionalised classroom space that a student in a school or one of my pre-service teachers might experience. My privilege as a white suburban Australian made my connection to place limited in various sites as evidenced by my fair skin, the heat and a need for the comfort of air-conditioning and shaded retreat.

My artwork also reveals a critical awareness of the role of water as a source of (dis)empowerment. IAP has enabled me to build knowledge of water-wise plants enabling an understanding and recognition of what and how we can grow plants in our dry climate and drought conditions. IAP has enabled me to explore water as memory, as experienced by the black lichen on the rock; to tap into the seeds that wait for rain over years of dry conditions; and to realise that water is a source of recreational privilege afforded and restricted to people according to their status. IAP has also alerted me to the state of the sacred waterhole at Uluru and the impact that tourists, who are encouraged not to climb the rock as a mark of respect to Indigenous people have on the waterhole. IAP has made me aware of the sad irony that some of the Indigenous children at Uluru have been known to swim in sewerage
ponds (McGeough, 2009) due to the heat and lack of access to a swimming pool, while visiting tourists often go back to their accommodation for a cooling dip. It is incredible to think that a sacred water hole can be left unusable due to tourist interaction with a site.

The experience in these sites saw my art making take me to a contact zone (Pratt, 1992) between political and environmental knowledge; to a meeting place between discomfort and the as if of imaginative possibilities.

**Openings apparent through a/r/tographic perspectives:** The a/r/t and renderings narratives reveal a way of thinking that tunes in easily with the poetic voice of my artist narratives and feels similar to the mind state I am in when making art. The in-between space of my roles as a/r/t reveals and propels future teaching/learning possibilities derived from my practice as artist. As new ideas come up through art practice, my artist-self nudges my teacher-self to include more emphasis on experiential processes that open up connections to place (for example site, event, environment, imagined); materials (for example art materials, the body as material knowledge, materials of place/culture); the self (as artist/as researcher/as teacher, as being and becoming through practice; as embodied), and each other (through (dis)connecting and being with). This approach is making me aware of both the sociocultural and socio-ecological thinking at play in IAP and is informing a rethink of the IAP model, in order to include the role of the socio-ecological in art making.

Gablik’s work (1991) also informs my approach due to her critical re-thinking of art contexts within postmodern times. She advocates a relational, social and ecological re-positioning of art as a means to counter the isolationist and disengaged aesthetic views of modernist art. Further, she suggests that the questions that are needed in our time are not to do with “style or content, but issues of social and environmental responsibility, and of multiculturalism, or “parallel” cultures, rather than a dominant monoculturalism” (p. 2).

IAP claims that:

- The dominant visual art discourse in art curriculum neglects the role of the body as embedded in a site;
- Creativity is not a neat and tidy process;
- The art teacher is not necessarily the expert;
- The artist/teacher must share their own moments of artistic frustration and problem solving with students;
- That art is not merely techné;
- Art exercises must challenge us to address and overcome creative confidence issues; and
- Assignments that favour end product over process and ideas development are poorly conceived.
IAP suggests that:

- The artworks and critical ideas that emerge as a consequence of art making are the primary emphasis that inform technical know-how;
- Art can be construed as event;
- Art needs to be reconsidered as a physical activity informed by the place of making;
- Place is not separate to the artist self;
- We need more dialogic appreciation, a/r/tographic and critical discussions in our art classes to build greater depth in artworks and ideas;
- Art making lives beyond the classroom or studio space;
- Art does not need to be separated out into a studio space or a precious space, separate from the event;
- Making in place is part of IAP as opposed to making about place;
- Art lessons should be complex and not reductionist; long projects across time allow deep investigation;
- Momentary notes in visual diaries may be more beneficial than writing essays;
- We can be as influenced by pre-school artworks and place, as we can be by the domain of art; and
- The Western cannon of art is of value but is not the only informing force for art making.

**Possibilities for future IAP growth:** If used as a reflective tool for practice, IAP allows for cross referencing and revisiting of concepts and expressions, and can be used as a way to continually sustain the creative process. New starting points for IAP need to be tried such as: tuning into place, event, embodiment/movement, art and wellbeing; linking art and movement (pedometer through place when making art); linking art making and art miles as a way to consider sustainability (fuel and energy costs through place and space and art).

The IAP starting points also need to explain how segues are made between approaches, as stepping stones for example: from theme-based to place-inspired to imaginative and poetic; from play-based to digital to abstracted; from emergent event to socially critical investigations.

Thus far, IAP has revealed the following:

- New ways to consider the teaching of landscape art - from en plein air, or landscape as view, to ‘art-in-place’;
- New ways to look at art appreciation as determined by the way the artist makes in a given site/environment and how this affects the artwork;
- The need to develop art methods for specific environments and weather conditions;
- That artworks put aside for later, are valid sources for further work;
Discussion and Findings

- That divergent and on-track artworks should be captured as part of the assessment process;
- That perhaps there is no such thing as a final artwork - that re-visiting builds repertoires of developing works rather than finished artworks;
- That what is omitted is as important as what is included;
- That art is a segue to political knowledge;
- That place-event-movement-time-art-sustainability of the creative act lead to a socio-ecological awareness through art, not just a sociocultural view;
- That discarding or waiting till later are part of the art process;
- That socio-ecological considerations need to be addressed in art lessons, so that they are innate to the IAP art teaching and learning experience;
- That we should challenge the hegemonic views on what art teachers must cover;
- That ideas generation is a critical part of art education; and
- That contact zones provide rich subject matter.

4.3.5 Section 5: Between Place and Space

Creativity: In this section my creative confidence is growing as I understand conceptual links more deeply - playing with concepts as well as materials, developing a greater theoretical awareness. I am relating more easily to those contemporary artworks that call on conceptual notions as part of their essence. In addition I am reclaiming my kitchen and domestic space as a place for art and dialogic conversations around artworks.

As Ingold (2010) suggests:

a work of art, I insist, is not an object but a thing, and as Klee argued, the role of the artist is not to reproduce a preconceived idea, novel or not, but to join with and follow the forces and flows of material that bring the form of the work into being... whereas the creativity of the work lies in the forward movement that gives rise to things reproducing involves a procedure of iteration, following involves itineration... The artist - as also the artisan - is an itinerant, and his work is consubstantial with the trajectory of his or her own life. (Improvisation and abduction, para.1)

Immersive art product and process: Initially this artwork contests previous attempts at immersion as I was reticent to take on the images that streamed into my living space. However, I found it impossible to close off from world events and gradually allowed myself to explore this contact zone through art. Now I am able to view the tea towel artwork as an ongoing event especially as (y)our world changes around it. Through the art process I realize that (y)our places are not fixed. Gupta and Ferguson (2001) state that:
in this culture-play of diaspora, familiar lines between "here" and "there", center and periphery, colony and metropole become blurred… In this sense, it is not only the displaced who experience a displacement… For even people remaining in familiar and ancestral places find the nature of their relation to place ineluctably changed, and the illusion of a natural and essential connection between the place and the culture broken. (2001, p. 38)

**Meaning making and reflective practice:** Meaning is not always fixed either. Using the artwork as tea towel allows for ongoing meaning as it is encountered over time, allowing for “a meshwork of interwoven trails… [and]… interwoven threads” (Ingold, 2007, p. 90). As Ingold (2007) suggests in regard to art, life and research: “what matters is not the final destination, but all the interesting things that occur along the line” (p. 170). So, although the artwork is physically complete, it is still open to forward interpretation, across time, place and event.

**Art skills and aesthetics:** As I weave together a myriad of images, I realize that my aesthetic inclination is moving towards an aesthetic of sustainability. According to Kagan (2011), this requires “a sensibility to complexity… [a lack of contentment with]… fixed and holistic harmonies… [and an inclination towards] revealing harmonies-in-oppositions” (p. 464). For Kagan, such an approach signals a move away from the “simplifying clarity of modernism… [and the]… transdisciplinary confusion and rootlessness of postmodernism” (p. 464). My artwork aims to foster a “sensibility to patterns that connect… [the] characterized aesthetic experience as responsiveness to the meta-pattern uniting the living world, rather than an arrested perception, stumbling upon the relative differences and being limited, bounded by those differences” (Kagan, 2011, p. 464).

Simultaneous concept development is experienced through “harmonies in opposition” (Kagan, 2011, p. 464). (Y)our (s)p(l)ace; the in-between of ideas and the way that they can open up to creative possibilities and future interpretations.

The site of this artwork is (y)our (s)p(l)ace. The site where the artwork is viewed is an event, enabling reconsideration across time. The tea towel, if mass produced, could have ongoing sites in which it is read/viewed.

Context is understood through an amalgam of ideas that sit alongside each other such as the everyday, the war zone, domestic place/streamed images of war torn places seen/unseen, tourist images/local knowing, and everyday/icons. The challenge is to see these not as binary opposites but as experiences in tandem with each other, as “patterns of connection” (Bateson, 1972).

IAP reveals sensitivity to connections. It embraces complexity as an aesthetic choice. IAP allows me to ‘be with’ a range of concepts in a non-binary state of being, to trouble and
transform my thinking through the conjunction of these ideas, even if they are ambiguous or confusing. IAP enables me to respond to the now of world events, if I choose, by engaging with the in-between of (y)our (s)p(l)ace as part of the creative process. IAP also acknowledges contextual and situational aspects of the artwork/process, and suggests psychic space is a concept worthy of artistic consideration. The emerging theme of your place alongside a greater sense of being a connected self (Gablik, 1991) mutually inform each other in the making of artwork, teaching and research. As Gablik suggests:

we are together in the same global amphitheatre. The psychic and social structures in which we live have become too profoundly antiecolological, unhealthy and destructive. There is a need for new forms emphasizing our essential interconnectedness rather than our separateness, forms evoking the feeling of belonging to a larger whole rather than expressing the isolated, alienated self (1991, pp. 5-6).

IAP contests reductionist approaches to art that are disconnected from life experiences. IAP positions, after Kagan (2011), that modernist sensibility is unsustainable.

A/r/t (re)connects my identity as artist/researcher/teacher which are meshing together to create a contiguous way of knowing. I no longer feel the need to break down each component of my identities, to see how they specifically inform each other. Rather a united story is forming that springs from my hybrid identities as a/r/t and mother.

4.3.6 Section 6: Relational Places

Towards a socio-ecological understanding: IAP contests that art materials have to be the focus for art experiences. Everyday detritus can be of equal merit. In this section IAP reveals that creativity can be experienced through collaborative projects that emerge as we immerse ourselves across time and place in objects from our environment. In this instance, creativity seemed to have its own dynamic. It was catching! We kept adding to the artwork, and changing it, and developed a repertoire of joining and sculptural skills along the way. It was intermittent but continuous; an on-going immersive process and evolving product. In this way IAP contested the need for closure, for end-product, for a finished artwork. Even now our artwork is open to renewal. Our meaning making came about through group reflections. We responded creatively to a situation that reflected our lifestyle, time of year, and our questions through and about art

IAP is bringing so much together. We developed art skills and aesthetic perception through local immersion. We enhanced our colour-knowledge by matching blue and green shards of glass. We advanced our construction techniques by finding creative solutions using wire, blu-tak and balance of the found-object forms. I see how IAP merges with social, relational and environmental matters, and reflects a larger socio-ecological concern. Perhaps the IAP
model needs an outer layer to prompt a metacognitive awareness of how we can create sustainably and sustain our creative repertoire through the IAP process. IAP should include event and situation as starting points to make movement, weather, time, place, being, and being with others part of conscious practice.

IAP develops a socio-ecological understanding of place and identity by encouraging a relational view of creativity, and critical evaluation.

IAP contests the constant use of studio space, even though it is a privilege to have access to such a space. Creative roving across the beach, the kitchen table and the kitchen shelf saw us make, pull apart, and remake across time and place. The artwork was constant and variable, frivolous and treasured; a portable social event nourished by factors not present in a studio space. As an IAP artist/researcher/teacher I am learning to understand the connected, cross-fertilising states of:

- being;
- being with;
- being about; and
- becoming.

**Of being:** By tuning in to the lived experience, the artist catches the world as it changes, as it moves her. This is knowledge-making space; capturing and nurturing present possibilities as events move forward. It is on the cusp of tomorrow, an exciting space that calls me in. As Bourriard (2002) suggests: “the artist dwells in the circumstances the present offers him, so as to turn the setting of his life (his links with the physical and conceptual world) into a lasting world… He catches the world on the move: he is a tenant of culture” (pp. 13-14). For Sashima and Irwin this is a liminal state informed by living inquiry, “a heightened state of being. that is sensually and sensitively charged” (2006, p. 4).

**Of being with:** A/r/tography helps me understand the possibilities and power of relational and creative connections across roles because it encourages an ethics of being and being with (Springgay, 2008d). The complexities of self, across and between the roles of artist/researcher/teacher, and alongside co-makers, students, community, can be reclaimed as a place of imaginative possibility and strength; a place of creative agency. A/r/tography allows the hybrid space, the expansive other within. Importantly it does not ‘other’ the artist self, which often happens in schools and universities. Artists are often consumed by their teaching to the point where they put aside their artist identity. An a/r/tographic disposition embodies an ethics of being with by understanding the relations between identities rather than describing identities, intensions, or acts of individuals or groups (Springgay, 2008d, p. 160). According to Springgay “the a/r/tographic disposition of being-with and the in-between … enables the possibilities of an ethics of embodiment” (Springgay, 2008d, p. 154).
Gablik (1998) suggests:

as many artists shift their work arena from the studio to the more public contexts of political, social, and environmental life, we are all being called, in our understanding of what art is, to move beyond the mode of disinterested contemplation to something that is more participatory and engaged. (1998, para. 2)

Although our beach-debris, home-based installation is a humble collaboration, the artwork shows we have not opted for a disembodied stance. Instead we made everyday life a source of knowledge for creative agency. It was empowering and revealed the value of art instruction “grounded in immediate human experience and value rather than abstracted as a sequence of design problem” (Cary, 1998a, p. 28).

Of becoming: IAP opts for a relational, social and ecological re-positioning of art, as per Gablik (1991) to counter the isolationist and disengaged aesthetic views of modernist art. IAP seeks to awaken the power of metaphor and the power of imagination as a means to transform our thinking. Greene (1995) suggests imagination has the power to transform thinking and make us awake to each other. Further, Irwin (2007) suggests:

as we perform, paint, write music or poetry or fiction, we are conveying complex ideas and often these ideas are the complex parts of ourselves we are coming to understand as we are creating. In the doing, in the creating, we are becoming. We are transforming ourselves. (Irwin, 2007, p. xx)

IAP resists closure knowing that “there is always more to see, to learn, to feel (Greene, 2001c, p. 206). This is at the heart of IAP - the complex weaving of ideas, in the making, nurturing layers of possibilities.

Of being about: UNESCO’s Goals for the Development of Arts Education advocates for “systems of lifelong and intergenerational learning in, about and through arts education” (UNESCO, 2010, p. 4). IAP acknowledges this call and takes up the challenge.

4.3.7 Section 7: From Process & Product to (Re)processing & (Re)producing

Digital storytelling is the focus of this section and through it I realize that IAP encourages deep and imaginative exploration of given and emergent topics, themes, art tools, materials and processes. Fully experiencing the merits of working in, through and about art (UNESCO, 2010) opens us up to experiential, sensory, playful, sociocultural, socio-ecological and critical knowledge. In addition I realize that:

digital storytelling works at the intersection of the emotional and epistemological aspects of learning, bridging story and theory, intellect and effect… As emotions are reclaimed cognitively, they enable students to write themselves into existing discourses
and to contribute personal perspectives to an academic community. (Oppermann & Coventry, 2012, para. 1)

Engaging the emotional layers of IAP revealed connections to existing theories (the in-between space, the creative site) and new understandings of the essential elements of IAP.

### 4.3.8 Section 8: Creating/Sustainability and Sustaining/Creativity

My critical narrative looks to the future. I want my experience to benefit future IAP practitioners who engage with fire-ravaged sites. How can the following starting points build mindfulness of damage, responses and change? How would you go about re-connecting, re-creating & re-thinking place, using the following starting points?

The following questions arose:

- How could we (re)conceptualize our art and walking practice to suit a damaged or renewable site?
- What art elements and principals, media and methods help us research in, through and about our chosen place?
- What Government, environmental or Indigenous protocols should we be aware of when investigating our site?
- How could we collect storylines of place in order to communicate our experiences to others?
- How could we support this place through our creative and sustainable actions?

**Towards a socio-ecological continuum through IAP:** Ongoing analysis has revealed an overarching objective for IAP which I name Creating/Sustainability and Sustaining/Creativity (C/S & S/C) to denote IAP can be a learning continuum between creativity and sustainability. Aspects of creativity and sustainability inform and transform the other when explored in a given place such as the fire site at Wilsons Promontory. C/S & S/C plays with hybrid concepts and could tackle the issue of sustainability and creativity through art/education. I understand the concept of sustainably as being a way of “framing the future of humanity in terms of its balanced evolution, linking social and ecological issues, rather than framing it in terms of a linear development-course with the economy as its main focus” (Kagan, 2011, p. 10).

In aiming for this balance I look to the way Indigenous connections to place reflect sustaining relationships between people and country (Bird Rose, 1996). I also take on what Australian researchers such as Somerville, et al. (2011) suggest are the dynamics of systematic sustainability. Namely, that deep thinking should be related to place to develop long-term notions of sustainability, and that there is a need to generate curriculum and pedagogies in Australian schools that capture the formal, non-formal and informal learning arising from
innovative local initiatives, as developed by green groups and others, towards ways of being and knowing place (Somerville, Davies, Power, Gannon, & de Carteret, 2011)

Somerville (2011) comments that:

> These pedagogies begin with designing place as curriculum and creating desire lines for others to enter into deep place learning through sensory engagement. They necessarily include learning within communities of others, of plants and animals, of peoples and the qualities of places, learning to build community and collective knowledge... The new emerges through thinking in circles and cycles of interconnection between local, regional and global places, always keeping our love and attachments to particular local places alive. By keeping both the intimate and the immense in focus, the place-makers work to shape the future by generating creative conversations of risk, complexity, and imagination. (p. 171)

I believe C/S & S/C can be used in visual art and environmental education as a tool for developing awareness of the big and deep issues of sustainability. The 2002 Manifest for the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (STEPS Centre, 2010) advocates for integrating culture and sustainability. Of particular note is the Agenda 21 for Culture (Pascual, 2012) which advocates that culture is the fourth pillar of sustainable development.

If sustainability is to be attractive and fascinating, if it is to appeal to the senses and convey meaning, then beauty becomes an elementary component of a future that has a future, a way of life to which all people are entitled. For the Agenda 21 to be successful it is critical to integrate participants with the ability to bring ideas, vision and existential experiences alive in socially recognisable symbols, rituals and practices. (Kagan, 2011, p. 151)

I now realise that IAP sustains creative volition and creative connections. It nourishes, supports and empowers participants to go on creating, beyond a given project; as well as create sustainable pedagogical practice and environmental awareness. As a conceptual tool C/S & S/C can be applied to planning and appraising IAP place-based activities. It has helped me understand how we can connect art to the guiding principles of socio-ecological education: “i) lived experience; ii) place; iii) experiential pedagogies; iv) agency and participation” (Brown & Cutter-MacKenzie, in press). By rethinking curriculum as “currere... [so that]... curriculum-as-lived... emphasizes the doing, being, making, creating, and living qualities of learning experiences” (Irwin & Chalmers, 2007, p. 179) we are more able to include local contexts and knowledge worlds into the art experience. As this form of lived inquiry unfolds across various creative sites of learning, we are able to enact C/S & S/C.
Figure 58: IAP Conceptualised as In-Between Space for Creating Sustainability and Sustaining Creativity

The diagram shows how I see C/S & S/C in IAP. Notice how my approach acknowledges the relationships between place/s, material, personal and interpersonal layers of our social ecologies in a learning continuum that stimulates interplay between sustaining creativity and creating sustainability.

IAP is an experiential process that connects and interconnects the lived experience of all elements shown in the diagram including the body as material knowledge and artist/as researcher/as teacher being and becoming through practice. Aware of the Talloires Declaration’s commitment to sustainable future in higher education (Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, 2001), my IAP practice creates sustainability in place-based creative experiences by educating for ecological citizenship. Simple actions such as saving water in the way we wash brushes⁸ foster environmental literacy, as does forging greater awareness of cultural connections to the environment.

My IAP practice also sustains creativity because it sees everyday life as a source of knowledge that supports creative agency as a form of empowerment (Cary, 1998a). With IAP, art instruction is “grounded in immediate human experience and value rather than

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⁸ As Victoria has suffered many years of drought and water supplies have at times been low, we are mindful of water wastage and wise use of water. Water restrictions have become a part of our living experience.
abstracted as a sequence of design problems” (Cary, 1998a, p. 28). Like Gablik (1991), I aim for a relational, social and ecological re-positioning of art as a means to counter the isolationist and disengaged aesthetic views of modernist art. I seek to transform our thinking by rousing the power of metaphor and the power of imagination through IAP.

As a/r/t I have (re)connected across socio-ecological and artistic concerns developing a dialogue between art and notions of sustainability. The process has led to discovering environment and place as a source of creative agency, and to the development of innovative green practices in, through and about the arts. By creating a belief in artistic volition, by empowering participants to sustain and extend their creativity beyond the immediate project/class/experience IAP suggests ways for participants to develop locally derived IAP for changed sites as a form of living curriculum.

4.3.9 Conclusion and further directions

Creative World 3 has prompted further growth for the IAP model. Although the IAP model is not a formula but a flexible set of propositions, I realise that it now needs to cater for socio-ecological concerns. This is further explored in Chapter 5, where another frame is added to the IAP model to remind us that each time IAP is enacted, it needs to consider the overarching theme of ‘creating sustainability and sustaining creativity’.

As the critical narratives have been presented from each creative world, Chapter 5 provides an overview of all the findings from each drawing together a final response to the study questions.
5. REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter reflects on and summarises the findings from Creative Worlds 1, 2 and 3 by holding up the Immersive Art Pedagogy (IAP) model to each site of investigation. The limitations of the model, its potential future applications, and suggestions for further research are discussed.

It is recommended that the notion of sustaining creativity and creating sustainability be used as a means to extend the IAP model in future contexts.

5.1 Research Questions

The questions that drove the research were as follows:

- What is Immersive Art Pedagogy?
- What does Immersive Art Pedagogy reveal or contest?
- How does Immersive Art Pedagogy (re)connect artist, researcher and teacher?

Although IAP plays out differently in each creative world there are major similarities and some differences according to the context in which it is enacted. As IAP is a dynamic process it undertakes reflexive growth as each new site is investigated, thus its repertoire of processes is constantly changing in relation to the context of each site in which it is enacted.

The following sections addressed the three research questions in turn, using the learnings and findings from each creative world.

5.1.1 What is Immersive Art Pedagogy?

In Creative World 1

In Creative World 1, IAP acknowledged a systems view of creativity that connected art pedagogy, local and discipline knowledge/s, sociocultural, environmental and critical ways of knowing. It valued immersion with materials and the context of the place in which it is enacted. It favoured an immersive and playful investigation of objects and materials as a way to foster creative expression. It prized ways of knowing that are creative, connecting, contextual and critical.

Creative World 1 conceptualized place as a creative site that could be explored and revealed by the following approach identified through IAP:

- walking place - as an aesthetic and reflective way of connecting to place;
- wondering place - through tactile engagement with natural materials;
Reflection and Conclusion

- listening to place and each other - through art and narrative;
- exploring place - through nature;
- expressing place - through art and nature;
- deep learning - in, through and about art and nature;
- wellbeing through aesthetic engagement with place - through art and nature;
- valuing of diversity - through art and nature;
- imaginative possibility and enjoyment - through art and nature; and
- critical awareness of place - through art and narrative.

In Creative World 2

In Creative World 2, IAP adapted to a studio arts class for pre-service primary teachers. As with Creative World 1, a series of immersive workshops exposed participants to diverse viewpoints and artistic approaches. Students experimented with a range of starting points to find their preferred disposition for the development of personally meaningful work. The emphasis was on how, as artists, they could find a way to build their confidence and extend into personally meaningful artworks. IAP sought to empower students to develop a personal sense of creativity and consciously moved students from creative capacity building (the starting points) to guided studio practice. This was akin to the artistic program for the Creative Junction Project in Creative World 1.

In Creative World 2 emphasis was placed on connecting art making with appreciation and lesson planning, so that students (pre-service teachers) could build the capacity to link personal artwork and insights gleaned from art appreciation with artworks that were locally available, and to then relate that learning to proposed school art experiences. IAP responded to artworks from the National Gallery of Victoria collection in order to find artworks that reflected the use of given starting points. Creative World 2 aimed to build artistic development between the students as art makers, as art appreciators of the cultural domain, and as future teachers who will have the power to open the cultural domain to their students.

In Creative World 2, IAP employed dialogic appreciation, whereby students listened and responded to each other’s work. This approach sustained and built creative confidence while fostering a community of practice. In Creative World 1, place was understood as the catalyst for creative connections. In Creative World 2, IAP encouraged students to build a sense of creative agency through personally meaningful expression. This motivated one student to take action on environmental issues as a consequence of her art research.

The starting points used in Creative World 2 were inspired by the workshops conducted in Creative World 1. Students were introduced to a series of starting points (listed below). Each student then chose the starting point that best suited their individual lived experience, material thinking and the art domain. The starting points were understood as:
Reflection and Conclusion

- play based;
- theme based;
- issue based;
- emergent approaches;
- provocation based; and
- aesthetic ways of knowing.

These starting points were then used to prompt:

- reflection on artwork; and
- reflexive making

**In Creative World 3**

Creative World 3 extended the starting points introduced in Creative World 2 to foster further ways of knowing. The following constructs were used to further develop and extend the starting points:

- place-based;
- places of discomfort/contact zones;
- the meeting of place/space: our/your place/space is equivalent to (y)our (s)p(l)ace;
- process and product leading to (re)processing and (re)producing;
- events and situations;
- movement as part of the art process; and
- relational learning and wellbeing.

The resultant ways of knowing were then applied to:

- narrative reflections; and
- reflexive commentary.

In Creative World 3 IAP enabled the exploration of art and narrative as dual concerns and valued the documentation of image and text as well as process and product.

IAP prompted emerging ideas within and beyond art discipline knowledge. IAP enabled personal creativity to oscillate between states of flow and contesting ideas, prompting aesthetic and critical awareness of given topics. IAP challenged me to undertake creative problem solving and posed questions of an aesthetic nature. Through exploration of materials and topics, my creative confidence grew. The UNESCO (2010) challenge to learn in, through and about art was clearly evident, as was the notion of learning with art. That is, IAP enabled me to make art while being present with place and in connection with others. There was an emphasis on relational learning, that is, being present to the art experience.
and being with others in the making of works, albeit through an expansion of empathy rather than physical presence per se.

The approach to art and narrative making was non-sequential. This allowed me greater imaginative freedom than was the case for students in Creative World 2. Artworks were able to shift direction and unfinished and finished works were equally valued as part of the creative process. As a consequence there was greater freedom to rove across art media and concepts, enabling artworks to develop at the intersection of place and space. The concept of the in-between was acknowledged as a place of learning and as a transformational space; a place of meaning making. This was evident when notions of place/space were explored as singular, then dual concerns, and when contesting worlds rubbed up against each other; defiant and defining at the zone of contact. The connections fostered across culture, place and space led to (y)our (s)p(l)ace investigations. At this intersection, IAP prompted the artist self to explore ways of being, being with, and becoming through, the art process.

In Creative World 3, IAP valued revisitation as a way of knowing and as a way of re-thinking the art process. This was evident when the process and product of art making was extended into (re)processing and (re)producing using a digital story and the photo book format.

In Creative World 3, IAP acknowledged that embodiment in the event, situation and place of art making was part of the learning process and that embodiment was critical to the development of art skills, factual and conceptual inquiry, and material thinking.

IAP was not limited to the classroom or studio. It occurred across sites, place and time within formally attributed art occasions and informal or relational settings. IAP acknowledged that the setting and circumstance in which an artwork was made, influenced the meaning and the methods of the artwork.

In Creative World 3, IAP acknowledged that although the focus was on the artist, this role was contiguous across artist, researcher and teacher as understood through a/r/tography. IAP positioned the artist/r/t as bricoleur and as a maker of meaning through art and story. The stories were formed around narratives that spoke to the artworks. These included:

- artist’s narratives;
- 4-C narratives (creative, critical, connecting and contextual awareness);
- renderings narratives;
- a/r/t narratives; and
- critical narratives.

Sustainability and creativity became a dual concern in Creative World 3. The notion of creating sustainability through developing an awareness of environment and sustainable
practice was understood in conjunction with the desire to sustain creativity by developing creative confidence through personally meaningful artworks.

This enabled IAP to extend to a broader conceptualisation of aesthetics as being a relational aesthetic and an aesthetic of sustainability and complexity.

5.1.2 What does Immersive Art Pedagogy Reveal or Contest?

**In Creative World 1**

In Creative World 1, IAP revealed a series of creative connections as central to its process. These creative connections interconnected with each other and informed the development of the IAP model. The creative connections were as follows:

- creativity as an individual, societal and pedagogical concern;
- immersive process and product;
- context, meaning making and reflexive practice;
- development of art skills and aesthetic awareness;
- simultaneous concept development; and
- site as a contextual consideration.

The creative connections provide the categories through which I summarize what IAP revealed and contested in Creative Worlds 1 and 3.

In Creative World 2 and 3 a 4-C perspective (creative, connecting, critical and contextual perspectives) was used to categorize the findings. The 4-C approach was, in turn, inspired by the IAP model.

![Figure 59: Key Components of the IAP Model](image-url)
Through creativity

In Creative World 1, IAP exposed a process that linked personal, societal and developmental approaches to creativity. Viewpoints, art processes, concepts and themes were revisited across time, people and place to build creative momentum. For instance, children’s artworks inspired adults and general community to become involved in the Creative Junction Project and to build a repertoire of creative works together with project artists and workshop conveners. IAP exposed how (re)visitation looks back on art experiences and also inspires forward possibilities and emergent artworks. This process generated an immense output of artwork, adding to the community’s creative repertoire and capacity.

IAP revealed how slowing down and being in tune with art and place can evoke a meditative quality to the art experience. IAP demonstrated that the location in which art is made can be understood as a creative site through which elements of identity, living history and personally meaningful stories can be revealed.

In Creative World 1, IAP challenged our adherence to the Western canon of art and Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) as the preferred ways of working in art experiences.

IAP challenges us to work from lived experience as the point of departure and to then extend out to the cultural domain. Therefore in the study participants were positioned primarily as artists within their own lived context rather than as students of other artists. They were not separated from their own knowledge as is often the case in traditional art education settings.

IAP challenges us to make art outdoors and to acknowledge the role of embodiment, tactility, place and relational approaches to art, rather than adhering solely to individualistic art experiences based on modernist principles. IAP challenges the theory/practice divide by looking to art and artists’ place and experiential data in conjunction with educational theory. The process, product, documentation and event of IAP are considered inter-related, unlike more traditional views of art education where the focus is art product (and sometimes, art process).

Through art skills and aesthetic awareness

In Creative World 1, art skills were rekindled or newly developed through art practices with local materials. Being in the place of making, listening, and tuning into place enabled participants to slow down and experience a type of meditative immersion and sense of wellbeing. Development of art skills and aesthetic sensibility worked hand in hand. Participants appreciated the natural surroundings, the opportunity to develop new skills using found objects (such as string bark and mountain ash), and the artworks that ensued from this experience.
For instance, in the process of developing a river installation sculpture, one participant learnt to weave and sew mountain ash leaves and to carve and shape mountain ash wood. In the process, he explored industrial, green, intergenerational, artistic and environmental connections through the making of artworks.

IAP showed how the repeated use of the visual journals can lead to rich reflective practice through art and narrative.

In Creative World 1, IAP showed that the roles of artist, researcher and workshop conveners (teachers) were not fixed, but interconnected. This allowed learners to become co-teachers and workshop artists to learn from observing participants.

Through the work of one participant, IAP revealed that intercultural understanding is possible through the making and sharing of art experiences across Indigenous and non-indigenous participants.

In Creative World 1, IAP rejected the busy-ness and the activity-centric approach of some school art programs.

IAP values being present to the experience of art and environment and engaging with people and their stories as part of the skill development process. IAP shifts focus from individual art practice to making art with others and from planned outcomes to emergent approaches that evolve through being present to materials.

**Through immersive art process and practice**

Through IAP participants learnt in, through, about, and with, art and place exploring place at the micro and mesa level, rather than only through observation of a distant landscape. Immersion with materials from place led to new ways of working with, and gaining skills using, local materials. The focus on (re)visiting through (re)sensing, (re)looking, (re)thinking, (re)imagining and (re)creating/meaning made for a vast repertoire of images and narratives, enabling growth in creative skills and layered artistic works.

IAP revealed that walking, talking and harvesting materials from place are immersive acts that build active participation and social engagement. IAP was not contained by a studio or classroom or by commercially produced art materials.

**Through context, meaning making and reflexive practice**

In Creative World 1, IAP enabled multifaceted perspectives to emerge on place and identity as we walked and talked in the Little Yarra Junction. Diverse vantage points (Western, Indigenous, playful responses, responses to the site, everyday experiences) were valued as a source of contextual knowledge and an opportunity to develop creative agency. Ongoing
visual and text based documentation enabled these events to be used for reflection and reflexive practice.

IAP exposed how found objects are powerful agents for creative and accessible connection to local culture, sense of place and current art practices especially pertaining to environmental and sustainable art practice.

Several participants reported an increased sense of their own expressive potential.

IAP refutes traditional notions of art pedagogy that support “the familiar concept of culture as a hierarchy, with the upper strata as the best and most correct” (Cary, 1998a, p. 52). In Creative World 1 IAP started with the contextualized voice of the locally engaged art maker as a priority that then informed community sculptures made by project artists. Instead of the community participant’s artworks being at the bottom of a cultural hierarchy, they led the way and inspired the professional project artists’ permanent sculptures. The final Creative Junction artworks reflect community input. They are not artworks imposed on community.

IAP revealed that connections were made between participants as they made art together, fostering a community of practice. In the study, the emphasis was on being in and being with the process of making. Connections occurred as artworks became a talking point for local passers-by and as community members connected to place when making artworks at the Little Yarra Reserve. The signage on the permanent sculptures provided an ongoing connection to the Creative Junction Project for future visitors to the site. Community members shared knowledge with project artists who, in turn, shared art skills with community. IAP valued participatory appropriation when artists and community members shared their knowledge and expertise with others.

Although IAP revealed that participants experienced a connection to place and to each other, this connection could have been further developed. For example, further learning from Indigenous ways of knowing could have extended participants connection to place.

IAP challenged the notion of art as a sedentary process. Art can involve walking, searching, both indoor and outdoor participation, and movement. Art does not have to be a sedentary, confined or immobile process.

**Through simultaneous concept development**

IAP revealed a process whereby simultaneous concept development across a range of practices and approaches was valued. IAP prizes participatory appropriation of skills and local knowledge across participants so that creative agency was fostered. Working across media, people, age groups, art forms, formal and informal workshops, Creative Junction event days, time, place, artist, researcher, teacher, shire, community, loggers, greenies and...
loggers, IAP resisted simplicity in favour of layered and sometimes contesting ways of knowing across time and place.

**Through the context of the site**

An underused park in the Yarra Junction became the hub of the Creative Junction activities. The site was discovered to be rich in natural and cultural history. Participants shared Indigenous ways of knowing as expressed through the site, which led to intercultural understandings. The found materials from the site were free and accessible and were used in environmentally respectful ways. Using locally found materials, artists and community were able to capture the creative expression of loggers, greenies, children and adults in the one place enabling a multi-vocal sense of place and identity to evolve. Local people and leading artists (re)visited and (re)imagined the site thereby adding to the community's cultural repertoire. The site of learning was a crucial concern and enabled storied investigations of self and place.

Creative World 1 revealed that IAP was more readily embraced by the early childhood, primary school and community sectors than by the secondary school sector. In secondary schools the fixed curriculum and time pressures on teachers were barriers to taking on the IAP project. However, for those secondary students that did participate in immersive workshops, the experience was found to be transformative. In future IAP projects involving secondary schools, it is recommended that a longer lead time (perhaps twelve months) be used so that schools can incorporate the project into their busy schedules.

IAP challenges the habit of making art as solely an inside activity. It proposes a greater emphasis on movement and the use of both inside and outside space. In the study, embodiment in and movement through the site, along with playful material thinking and an emphasis on sense of touch, walking and deep looking developed aesthetic engagement with the site. The primary experience that place and found objects offered was a central concern.

**In Creative World 2**

As a consequence of Creative World 2 I came to understand that creativity, critical art pedagogy, sociocultural and place-based theories were central to the process of IAP.

This understanding led to the development of the IAP model and the 4-C approach (the creative, connecting, contextual and critical perspectives). In what follows I will use the 4-C approach to interpret the findings from Creative World 2.

**Through a creative perspective**

In Creative World 2, IAP revealed that a cross-fertilization of ideas between art making, appreciation and lesson planning enabled students to take on the roles of artist, researcher
Reflection and Conclusion

and teacher. The individual (student artist) linked into the field (themselves as future teachers of art) and the art domain (the NGV artworks). This approach, inspired by a systems view of creativity, revealed participants’ artistic development as they reported a more adventurous and more deeply considered approach to artworks and a deeper understanding of artworks from the cultural domain. Although sensory and tactile engagement was still an important factor, material prompts (postcards, books, flyers and postcards) and engagement with art materials enabled hands-on, yet cognitively engaging, activities.

IAP revealed a preference for experiential learning through engagement with the starting points and reflexive art making. IAP showed that through guided assistance students are able to choose preferred dispositions for their own art making and then link this to personally meaningful artworks. IAP showed how a range of starting points could lead participants to stylistic preferences and, in the process, to challenge their conception of art. The narratives revealed that participant’s artwork emphasized personal experience alongside awareness of the art domain. Their critical reflections and education kits helped link them to the art domain.

IAP showed that interest, involvement, imagination and interaction, the four attributes of immersion described by Burbules (2004), were achievable for the student participants. They were interested in developing their own complex ideas and styles. The level of involvement was high due to the relevance of the content to their lives. Imaginative engagement through their artworks sparked new insights and enabled inferences to be made; and interaction between art practice, appreciation and teaching. Interaction through dialogic appreciation inspired the making of artworks, critical reflections and education kits.

The starting points deconstructed the art process in a novel way that participants had not explored before allowing them to develop preferred approaches to the creative process. This is decidedly different to the traditional approach that emphasises skills, techniques and art history as the points of departure.

Some participants however reported a sense of discomfort. While the starting point approach was considered inspirational, the number of starting points was considered overwhelming as it presented so many ideas, processes and possibilities for consideration. I realised that as lecturer I needed to deconstruct the starting points more overtly and to provide a meta-explanation that communicated the following points: creativity can be threatening at times; productivity involves being stretched to take risks; choice can be daunting; the creative process is both pleasurable and painful at different times.

IAP can be used as a means to show participants how to tolerate and work with ambiguity, excitement, self-doubt, choice and decision making in the art making process. IAP values these states of learning and acknowledges them as powerful ways in which to open up new creative possibilities. IAP contests the notion that art should be taught and experienced in
prescribed and pre-ordained lessons where students and teachers follow formulaic approaches. IAP reveals that students can build creative fortitude when guided by the teacher and supported by dialogic appreciation.

**Through a connecting perspective**

In Creative Word 2, IAP revealed that art can link into issues and topics of our time including intercultural, ICT (Information and communications technology) and sustainability. This is in line with the new Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) where the primary arts curriculum advocates that the arts link into ways of knowing in, through and about the arts as well as ICT, sustainability and intercultural knowledge.

IAP revealed that my role in Creative World 2 was a privileged one. I was able to write, plan and teach the studio arts unit under investigation. I was free to make pedagogical choices. This privilege enabled me to incorporate students’ interests alongside art content and learning. I was able to access works from the National Gallery of Victoria’s collection and the University’s art collection and to acquire specialist art books.

However IAP is possible without this level of resources and support. This was evident in Creative World 3 where art materials were gathered from the beach or on walks.

Other low cost approaches to accessing materials for IAP projects include internet art sites and borrowed materials (art works, books, et cetera) from local councils and other organisations.

**Through a contextual perspective**

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**Through a critical perspective**

IAP revealed that participants experienced a growing sense of agency with respect to their art practice and a deepening critical awareness of art. Participants reported that IAP helped them explore their own interest areas and express these through art. They felt empowered to undertake reflexive art making prompted by dialogic appreciation. They were encouraged to develop their artistic mark and to deeply reflect on artworks. These positive outcomes were largely due to the immersion approach used in the unit, including exposure to a wide range of art dispositions and art practices.

Students were also prompted to question what art is, to develop a greater aesthetic awareness of art generally and beyond their own art making *per se*.

Students expressed a desire to sustain their art making beyond the unit.

Participants made a double move (Hedegard & Chaiklin, 2005) as they connected their art making to life experiences as well as the art domain and the teaching/learning process. This was evident when one student joined an environmental group and another had commenced attending art exhibitions. In both cases, this had been driven by their experience and learning in the art studio unit.

Participants revealed that IAP gave them ideas on how to teach art. However my analysis of the narratives suggests that a more overt metacognitive discussion on the starting points could have helped students better understand the teaching/learning impact of this process.

IAP creates a bricolage of art experiences based around a topic, theme, issue, and the like. IAP questions the teaching of a linear approach to the history of art, preferring to uncover art styles and historical understandings through the art dispositions. IAP allows teaching to follow student interests by shifting the focus from teacher led art sessions to student inspired content that is then supported and co-explored by the teacher as the subject progresses. This is contrary to teacher-led and inspired art content to which students respond as required by a pre-set curriculum.

Creative World 2 challenged the greater weight given to final art products that given to process. IAP revealed that processes such as visual journals should be given the same merit as finished artworks. This would demonstrate that IAP values the development of a visual repertoire as an ongoing resource and that art process and product have equal merit.
Through creativity

In Creative World 3, IAP revealed that the creative act could, variously, be confronting and enlightening. Creativity is understood to be complex, problematic, relational and enticing. Self-questioning and uncertainty are part of the emergent creative process. Rather than slipping into absoluteness and full knowing, a space is created for new thoughts and images to evolve and is how artistic voice develops between my world and other world/s/culture/s. IAP uncovers contesting viewpoints through artistic process and opened up the in-between spaces of the seen/heard/silenced. The lived experience of the artist/r/t, as an act of agency, is the dominant space for creative investigations. In relation and contestation, each brings out a new quality in the other.

IAP challenged the acceptance of pre-ordained, end-outcome art experiences, allowing instead for ideas to grow and divert as creative growth dictates. IAP envisioned a bigger picture for art experiences than just the art product itself.

Through immersive process and product

Originally IAP acknowledged sociocultural and critical ways of knowing through material knowledge. In Creative World 3, IAP exposed the artist/r/t as bricoleur who travels across a range of theoretical and material ideas through the art process. Diverse theoretical dispositions were woven together, inspired by the creative process. The 4 I’s described by Burbules (2004) are at the heart of IAP. They are interest, involvement, imagination, and interactivity.

In Creative World 3, IAP troubled previous claims from Creative Worlds 1 and 2 and questioned whether as artist I could be truly immersed when, for instance, my fair skin and inability to tolerate the high temperatures in Central Australia, placed me outside the possibility of deep immersion through IAP.

Through art skills and aesthetic development

IAP revealed how, as artist, I undertook an approach that sat well with student-centred and Community Based Art Education (CBAE) approaches yet still engaged in part with Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) while also echoing aspects of place-based pedagogy. IAP revealed that place-based and pre-school artworks can be as influential in learning about art as can art works from the domain of art. That is, the Western cannon of art can be of value, but is not the only informing force for art making.

As artist, I was able to play with ideas and materials. In contrast, institutionalised views of learning tend to overpower notions of play, as deadlines and end-product outcomes take priority.
IAP revealed that when I played through art making it always felt better. The process and the product seemed less contrived and more poetic, allowing me to reach a space between expression and factual knowing. The liminal state between imagination and reality, and between expression and fact, felt good and enabled me to find personal insights and make my own expressive mark.

IAP revealed that the artist’s interests inform the initial stage of the art process. By (re)focusing on the lived world of the participant, art making is (re)imagined through the social and relational rather than privileging the Western cannon of art.

Through context: meaning making and reflexive practice

IAP showed that meaning is found in between concepts, identities, cultures and place, where the intertwining of multiple viewpoints combine. IAP revealed that learning in, through, and about, art helps us attend to and think about issues in our life and times. This awakened certain discomforts as the art process came into contact with the everyday, the war zone, the domestic and the media. The rollercoaster ride of the artist was revealed as part of the meaning making process. IAP revealed complexities that are not easy to verbalise. The questions raised through this process were simultaneous and non-linear. The answers, while often poetic, were ambiguous and non-conclusive. Contesting notions bring awareness of our place/your space, as a place in-between where creative possibilities are opened up for future interpretations and a place where we might glimpse the “others of our selves” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 38).

In Creative World 3, I contested simplification of the art process and that art is merely techné, preferring instead to foster links across an array of ideas and experiences. IAP prefers expansion across chosen topics that connect living inquiry through art, chosen media, time and place rather than art-centred experiences. IAP enabled this complexity and led me to contest the notion of art exercises within art education contexts, preferring complexity and sustainability as aesthetic considerations. Following Ellsworth’s statements on “knowledge in the making” (2005a, p. 5), IAP suggests that rather than thinking of art as already made we instead think of art in the making and as such, our own identities in the making through art.

In Creative World 3, IAP exposed the artist as a maker in dialogue with materials; as someone who uses materials to help emphasize what is personally meaningful. Art skills are developed in response to given sites, events and weather conditions. Skills across media are also developed to accommodate the immersive nature of the inquiry.

I also developed a new skill. By including both the making of art and narratives as interrelated concerns, I wove together spontaneous and considered reflections on the IAP process that disclosed forward possibilities for my ongoing roles as artist, researcher and teacher.
Art making, aesthetic perception and evaluative reflection are innate to IAP. This is relevant to the new Australian Curriculum for the Arts (ACARA, 2012) where art making includes working through three processes: generating; realizing; and responding. IAP prompted me to pose serious questions about art: where to place my artist’s gaze; and how to speak about art and artist. These questions informed my a/r/t roles and enabled an awareness of relational aesthetics and an aesthetic of complexity.

IAP revealed how a relational aesthetic builds sensitivity to connections across the self and with others, enabling meta-cultural perspectives. Being with self, with others and with the artwork itself was understood as a relational concern enabling many perspectives to be incorporated into the art process. An aesthetic of complexity is made possible through IAP’s valuing and juxtaposing everyday experiences with intercultural spaces. There was an aesthetic awakening to place, then to place/space, and then to the notion of (y)our (s)p(l)ace. An “aesthetics of sustainability” (Kagan, 2011, p. xx) developed as IAP enabled a greater concern with the layered complexity of connecting ideas. The process of making the Photo Book, artworks and narratives opened my thinking to the intercultural space (Kramsch, 1993). This space is between identities and places, offered a zone for dawning understandings and ongoing questioning to occur.

**Through simultaneous concept development**

By embracing uncertainty/not knowing, a space was created for new thoughts to evolve. This is how I found my artistic voice which enabled me to invite others to experience beyond given presumptions, static images or beliefs. IAP enabled the subject matter to open to multiple interpretations and multiple revisitations of a given theme. Art and story led me to consider politics, art, the ways in which countries deal with drug dealing, allowing conjuncture and the non-linear to foster. IAP accepts ideas in opposition so that big questions can emerge and contest developing subject matter and the art process itself. IAP opened me to other than myself. It disclosed unease about world events when pitted against my own immersion which drove me to examine and explore places in a comparative light. Unsettling images alongside my own aesthetic investigations of place enabled a third intercultural space to open up through my artwork.

IAP advocates for ongoing creative agency alongside the development of a greater awareness of sustainability as understood through creativity. IAP challenges us to embrace a long term vision to sustain our creativity and to also develop a greater awareness of sustainability through the art process.
Through context

IAP disclosed that we can script and be scripted through the artistic process. IAP developed a critical awareness of my power as artist to edit images, evoke through colour, and decide what is included or excluded.

IAP revealed that the freedom to move in and between places and across ideas uncovered many stories about place, space and identity. IAP revealed that the place of making impacts on the meaning making and the techniques and media used. Formal and informal learning spaces allowed me, as artist, to work at home, travel, and listen to music. A much greater diversity of location is afforded my own art practice than those of my students in Creative World 2.

The dominant discourse in visual art education does not overtly consider the body as embedded in the site or the subject matter under investigation. Art needs to be reconsidered as a physical activity informed by the place of making. Places, like people, are always in progress depending on which view we are looking from. Making in place is an important part of IAP.

Sustainability is an important world issue. In Creative World 3, IAP responded to this issue by developing the concept of sustainable practice through creative endeavours. This runs in tandem with the concept of sustaining creativity beyond given art experiences. IAP positioned creativity and sustainability as provocations for agency.

5.1.3 How does IAP (Re)Connect Artist, Researcher and Teacher?

In Creative World 1

At the time of Creative World 1, a/r/tography was a relatively new approach. As such, Creative World 1 was not conducted using the a/r/tography perspective.

However, since that time, the a/r/tographic perspective has become an (accepted) approach that has been researched more widely. I therefore re-analysed Creative World 1 from the perspective of artist, researcher and teacher as informed by the a/r/tographic perspective and include those findings in this section.

Prior to the Creative Junction Project, I saw myself as part-time artist, part-time lecturer/artist-coordinator and part-time researcher with each of those roles being discrete. However, applying a/r/tography to the research allowed me to reappraise my view of self as an integrated whole; an artist/researcher/teacher who is empowered by the relational and creative connections across my related roles. A/r/tography offered me a mode of creative thinking that allows for being and being with (Springgay, 2008d), such that the complexities,
roles and identities of the self, across and between that of artist, researcher and teacher, can be reclaimed as a place of imaginative possibility and strength: a place of creative agency.

In Creative World 1, and as a consequence of IAP, I was able to call on a multidisciplinary sense of self to inform the artistic coordination of the project. My artist self, which enjoys making art outdoors, in given sites and using natural objects, inspired the planning aspect of the workshops to ensure that participants could also enjoy an intimate experience of making art in place. My teaching self, understood the need to scaffold the workshops so that participants could enter into the project at a non-threatening level. My teaching role ensured that more complex artworks and sophisticated concepts were introduced as the project progressed, thus enabling participants to develop artistic confidence over time. My researcher role investigated culturally and environmentally appropriate practices for exploring the Little Yarra Reserve. This included Aunty Joy’s Welcome to Country Ceremony which acknowledged the importance of the manna gum to local Indigenous people and prompted liaison with the Shire and project artists on environmental protocols. This research shaped how we applied best practice cultural and environmental approaches to the art workshops and permanent sculptures. In addition, as researcher I explored how ephemeral artworks are made and document. This enabled me to carefully communicate the value of ephemeral artworks to the public in my role as artistic coordinator. These intersecting roles and viewpoints were iterated throughout the project, offering new understandings and depth of insight about art, research and teaching. In the process I was reminded that my identity is not fixed, that it is always being made and remade across sites of learning.

Many of the project artists were able to combine their roles in order to weave together their strengths at the intersection of art, research and teaching. A sense of being (re)made was evident as the contiguous roles of artist, researcher and teacher impacted across participants. For instance, as artistic coordinator I felt refreshed by the viewpoints of the project artists. They reminded me to keep things open to informality and emergence. My work as a teacher and researcher saw me plan, write and justify art experiences through the written word. In contrast, the artists allowed for spontaneity as a way to open new experiences. They stepped back from their artist/teaching roles at times to let others become teacher/artists. They reminded me to plan but to also allow spontaneous participation and to appreciate silence and non-busy-ness as part of the process. They prompted me to remember my own artist-self amongst the coordination role. They prompted me to reimagine my teaching self; to reimagine how art education could learn from a more spontaneous and emergent approach. They prompted me to re-explore my roles in relation to the participant artists, community and Shire with whom I worked.

In applying an a/r/tographic lens to Creative World 1, I understood how the learner could also be the teacher. By positioning participants as artists, researchers and teachers, they could be
understood as dynamically intersecting with each other. This helped me better understand how a sense of agency can be fostered across roles. This concept speaks to the intersection of the learner/teacher identity and how, by reconceptualising learners as also being teachers, we can empower them as artists. This reconceptualization of the participant artist/learner as artist/teacher was evident through the community journals where participants built on the inspiration of previous work. It was also evident in the postcards that were shared amongst the community. Using the postcards, participant artist/learners informed others about the project and ways that artworks can be made from local materials. This fits with the ‘graphy’ aspect of a/r/tography where modes of communication are used to share the insights of artists, researchers and teachers.

*In Creative World 2*

A discussion on how IAP (re)connected artist, researcher and teacher in Creative World 2 was presented at Chapter 3. Below I summarise the major points.

In Creative World 2, IAP integrated “theory/research, teaching/learning, and art/making” (Irwin, 2004, p. 28) so that the roles of artist/researcher/teacher were both interconnected and singular identities. As individual identities, students experienced themselves as: artists when they made their own artwork; researchers when they undertook visual and pedagogical research and art appreciation; and teachers when they prepared education kits for school contexts. As (re)connected identities, participants welcomed relational ways of knowing across, and in-between, theirs and others’ roles. The in-between space of our multiple roles troubled our awareness and knowing, as we embodied “theory-as-practice-as-process-as-complication” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xi).

The unit was teacher-driven for the first six weeks. This enabled me to identify which starting points appealed to different students. This approach tended to keep our roles as artists, researchers and teachers as separate identities. However after the first six weeks, the students took on the role of artists who led their own learning through their preferred ways of working. I then became a facilitator for their learning needs. This saw a greater connection across our roles as the students moved from being receivers to makers of new knowledge through their artwork. It also saw me call on my various roles to support them. As the boundaries between our roles loosened, greater dialogue and more complex learning was enabled. For example, in order to help students through the ups and downs of the creative process, we became a creative community that shared knowledge from our roles as artists, researchers and teachers. In the process I shared my artist role with the students as a way to support them through the creative process. As an approach, this contests the separateness of the artist and teacher identities that prevail in many learning contexts. Students reported
that this process helped them normalize their own struggles and triumphs within the creative process.

However, students were less sure about whether I had learnt from them. I realized that I had not fully shared my insights with them. This was an oversight that I intend to address in future IAP events.

In Creative World 2, threads of connection were built across the roles of artist, researcher and teacher. These threads were then connected into further artist, teaching/learning, and researcher experiences. Students reported that they too planned to share the visual journal process with future students as a means to connect across roles. I too began to plan how I could share the artworks in Creative World 3 through the lens of artist, researcher and teacher.

**In Creative World 3**

A/r/tography materializes the in-between and thus effectively invites researchers and teachers to move beyond static dualisms which pit theory against practice, self against other, and mind against body towards a living, breathing, becoming - inquiry. (Springgay, 2008b, p. 29)

The weaving together of artworks and narratives throughout the Photo Book enabled me to analyze my roles as artist, researcher and teacher. The rendering narratives and the a/r/t narratives helped me (re)connect across my identities as artist, researcher and teacher. The process saw the artist role open up and inform the other roles as a holistic concern. In turn, my teaching and researcher roles informed my artist role. In the making, they merged together as a contiguous whole, enhancing and contesting each other as I grew IAP.

The in-between spaces of roles overlapped revealing hybrid approaches that provided further insights and perspectives. These liminal and transformational spaces (Turner, 1969) allowed me to interrogate how the artist/researcher/teacher contests, reveals or reimagines each other through IAP. For instance, in the making of the artwork *Big Fat Country: Visible-IN-Visible #2* (Section 4 of the Photo Book), the artist inspired the teacher to take on a more intuitive and non-sequential approach to teaching art, to take up on the way that place, weather, and event affect art making. This then revealed to the researcher how socio-ecological ways of knowing are relevant to art making and to the teaching of art.

In Section 4 of the Photo Book the artist experiences the freedom and power to declare which artworks are developed, discarded or further worked through visual journaling. As teacher, I realised that I did not allow my pre-service students the same freedom. I allowed an institutionalized way of assessing art to dominate creative assessment which I now contest. I suggest assigning more weight to the visual journal (in process work) and less to
Reflection and Conclusion

the finished artwork. This would allow students who want to focus on emerging concepts and creative problems, greater opportunity to explore the process and the event of art making. This would provide students to choose to focus either on an intended outcome or an emergent process-driven outcome, both of which are valid ways of exploring visual art.

Through my role as artist I realised that the studio/art-room had come to dominate the way we perceive of art making in education. As artist, I experienced the power of art making out doors and across places and thus want to include diverse art making places and movement in place as part of the art process. By taking on a contiguous view of a/r/t I was encouraged to re-introduce the imaginary into my teacher identity, to see it as a place of reciprocity, such that the teacher who concentrates on the student feeds back to the artist and vice versa.

The self as researcher learns from the chaos and emotional journeys that come with the creative process of artist. For instance, the artist role illuminated my sensitivity for dealing with complex topics and helped me understand how exploration into complex issues/topics can be undertaken through the teaching of art. The researcher looks to a/r/tographic and sustainable ways of knowing to acknowledge the importance of complexity and layered thought in troubled times. The depiction of a hostage from war torn Iraq (in Party-Pack Tea Towel for Country, Section 5 of the Photo Book) and the multiple depictions of a drug dealer/loved son across locational viewpoint (in What about Caleb? Van Tuong Nguyen/ Nguyen Tuong Van (d. 6.07 am Dec 2, 2005 SST) in Section 4 of the Photo Book), highlight how I developed a sensitivity to complexity across poesis, theoria and praxis.

By opening up interstitial spaces in the artworks, bridges were created across roles and processes and combined insights informed, contested and grew each other. These zones gave me permission to question how self as teacher informs, contests and reveals artist.

The starting points determined in Creative World 2 were informed by my work with artists and community in Creative World 1. These starting points were then added to the curriculum in a teaching unit I ran as teacher/lecturer in Creative World 2. They were further revisited as inspiration for Creative World 3. But instead of undertaking these starting points in a linear way, the artist-self contested this approach as being too prescriptive, opting instead to merge and meander across these starting points, as ideas and materials suggested. This prompted a further seven starting points to emerge.

My work as a teacher kept me informed of curriculum updates changes such as learning in, though and about art (UNESCO, 2010). This affected my art practice which saw me learning in art, about art and extending to the art domain through art as a way of learning about the world. The photo book process also enabled me, as artist, to de-emphasis the final product and re-claim a greater mindfulness of the art making process, much as self as teacher might
value process and product as simultaneous concerns. This was evident by the inclusion of visual journal pages and the narratives in process that led to final commentary.

**Towards a philosophy of practice: diving in**

I acknowledge that the intersecting dynamics of each role inspired, illuminated, shaped and extended ways of knowing through the art experiences within the study. By (re)connecting to my roles as artist, researcher and teacher I found that the data in the Photo Book opened up future possibilities rather than generating definitive conclusions. This fits with the enduring and growth intentions of IAP, which I envisage as a dynamic ongoing process.

Learnings from IAP have led me towards a philosophy of practice which is represented in the Venn diagram depicted at Figure 57. In the diagram, the central image, the splash, is imagined as the dramatic impact made when someone literally or figuratively dives energetically into a new space. For instance, I think of my hope to curate an Amnesty-inspired portrait prize as an emergent splash that will inspire my teaching, researching and art making.

The (re)connected roles of a/r/t enabled me to speak about the meaning of Immersive Art Pedagogy and the roles that play out within its experience. I was able to ponder what I would change or retain the same in relation to the institutional system, the school, the students, and the Art Department; the cultural, social, ecological and political contexts that come into play with the experiences at hand. From this standpoint I was able to ask what inventive processes could be put in place; what changes could be made? The insights afforded by this process revealed my developing philosophy of practice, as understood through the arts-based process of IAP. By making a splash I am diving in, naming and embodying my approach to immersive art practice, and simultaneously (re)connecting to the roles of artist, researcher and teacher.

By re-imagining and harnessing the multifaceted and connected roles of artist/researcher and teacher they become summative and enhancing. As a way of being and becoming they suggest that we do not have to be singular and exceptional to un-conceal findings that are of relevance to art education; reclaiming the artist self in the teaching world or reimagining the possibilities of student as teacher within the art classroom are empowering insights brought about by everyday investigations. The in-between space of artist, researcher teacher is a space of possibility, and strength; the yet to discover.
5.2 Limitations of the Model

The limitations of the model are discussed below to identify any deficiencies or problems arising from this work.

IAP was applied to three creative worlds. Further enactment and research into IAP across a range of art contexts would have enabled a more in-depth appraisal of the applicability of the IAP model to other sites.

I enacted IAP as the point of reference in this study. Further application of the IAP model by other artists, researchers and teachers would broaden the research parameters of the study enabling a view of the IAP model beyond my insights.

The model is presented in a state of harmony and as a two dimensional diagram. However, a three dimensional model could be further developed so that areas of growth and areas that need further attention could be tracked through the diagram. This would enable a view of the model that indicates where further creative connections need to be developed.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

As a consequence of Creative World 3, the IAP model was further developed to include an outer blue rim that symbolizes the theme of creating sustainability and sustaining creativity (C/S & S/C) (see Figure 60). This is a new and important concept that I intend to research in future creative worlds. I suggest that future applications of IAP should include the C/S & S/C concept as an umbrella concept to determine the impact of a socio-ecological perspective alongside the development of creative agency. This could be undertaken by researchers in art education and could be extended to environmental education.

![Figure 60: Growing the IAP Model](image)
This research suggests that the primary schools would be amenable to adopting IAP, but that the secondary schools would be less likely to do so given the constraints of fixed curricula, the time and pressure constraints on teachers, the emphasis on assessment and, at least at this point in time, low awareness of the potential value of IAP in art education.

However, I recommend that IAP be trialled in secondary art classes so that students and teachers can develop a greater interplay between local and discipline based knowledge, as well as place-based art practices. To facilitate the adoption of IAP in secondary schools I recommend that future projects include a longer lead time so that schools can plan ahead for IAP projects to be included into their busy schedules.

The exploration of IAP within a secondary art class could address the tensions between planned and lived curricula perhaps offering hybrid ways for IAP to enrich secondary school contexts.

The Photo Book developed a way of exploring IAP that was informed by the artist self in contiguity with the researcher self and teacher self. This led to the notion of an artist/r/t Photo Book (an A/R/T Photo Book). I intend to develop two other Photo Books to explore: the researcher self as the focus in relation to artist/teacher (an R/A/T Photo Book) and the teacher self as the focus in relation to artist/researcher (a T/A/R Photo Book). These additional two Photo Books together with the A/R/T Photo Book generated from this study, would provide people the opportunity to explore a/r/tography and IAP across image and text, and through multiple role relationships and perspectives. This methodology could also incorporate learners, so that together teachers and learners could communicate through the ‘graphy’ of a/r/tography, in this case, through the photo book format.

5.3.1 Developing a Philosophy of Practice

Prior to commencing this research, I had developed a way of working in art and teaching that I termed Immersive Art Pedagogy. I sought to understand this more fully through the research.

Now, having researched three creative worlds in which IAP was been enacted, I have come to understand that IAP is a way of being, being with and becoming through immersion in art experiences. My understanding of IAP now, is that:

- the lived experience of the learner, teacher and researcher should be the primary source of inspiration;
- place-responsive art methods should be valued;
- material thinking and embodied learning should be valued;
- personally meaningful artwork should be encouraged and used as a catalyst to connect to the cultural domain; and
Reflection and Conclusion

- diverse viewpoints and multiple ways of knowing through the visual arts should be positioned as another form of immersion and a means to explore the issues of our time.

IAP unashamedly weaves a bricolage of theoretical influences to its cause, believing that arts-based ways of knowing draw from a range of practical and theoretical influences. IAP links creativity, art pedagogy, discipline, and local knowledge to sociocultural, socio-ecological, and critical ways of knowing.

Creativity is a central point within the learning experience. IAP highlights the need for a self-conscious awareness of personal, societal and pedagogical creativity.

In this study, IAP developed an approach to creativity that advocates for a dual awareness of agency and sustainability. This informative approach was applied to immersive processes, skill development, personally meaningful contexts, and the development of simultaneous concepts.

A initial model for IAP was developed in the early stages of the research and was further developed at each phase of the research (the three creative worlds/sites of exploration). Each creative world was informed by the practical and theoretical data and by the evolving model through which each creative world was reflexively analysed within the Exegesis. The model enabled IAP to explore multiple viewpoints and theoretical influences. It contributed to the development of the 4-C approach (connecting, contextual and critical perspectives), the use of starting points and the development of the C/S & S/C concept (creating sustainability and sustaining creativity) whereby creativity and sustainability are (re)considered in relation to each other, as a way to foster sustainability awareness and ongoing creative agency. IAP opened up the space of the in-between so that relational, place-based and intercultural questions and understandings could be explored through the visual arts.

This in-between space is the place where IAP challenges the participant to question and rethink taken for granted approaches to image and text, art education, place/space and identity.

The in-between space is a feature of the Photo Book which showcases an intertextual enactment of IAP. It develops a series of artworks inspired by the IAP model and introduces layered narratives to analyse the data. The A/R/T Photo Book is a new contribution to arts-based research. These new ways of exploring a/r/tography are a novel contribution to the genres used for arts-based research.

IAP (re)connects the contiguous identities of artist, researcher and teacher. It values the notion of the pracademic who is inspired across practical and theoretical experiences. IAP enables artist/researcher/teacher identities to develop across and between teachers and students, as a means to create a community of practice through art. As these roles intersect...
they inform each other and hybrid possibilities are evoked. Through reflexive a/r/tographic responses the IAP process is further understood to include art as event, time, relationships and place. IAP also reconnects to the roles of artist/researcher/teacher when these roles intersect and provoke forward possibilities for future IAP experiences.

In each creative world, IAP built creative agency amongst the participants.

IAP has the potential to be applied to many more sites of investigation. Hopefully other artists, researchers, teachers will explore its potential across future sites of engagement.
6. LIST OF REFERENCES


References


References


References


References


7. APPENDICES

7.1 Ethics Documents

HREC Form No 2b

RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Prescribed Consent Form for Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires or Disclosure of Personal Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACULTY OF</th>
<th>School of Education, Portfolio of Design and Social Context</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENT OF</td>
<td>School and Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of participant:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>Immersive Pedagogies: a study of the influence and role of art</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>practice on the personal and professional pedagogy of a critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of investigator:</td>
<td>Geraldine Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>9904 4244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.

2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me. Namely that I will be asked to:

   - Take part in two x one hour open ended, informal interviews. The first interview will set the context for the research and the final interview will be preceded by a personal viewing of the participant’s journal and artwork.
   - Keep a visual journal over a period of ten weeks.
   - Bring along four artefacts for discussion at the second interview.
   - Interviews will be conducted at a mutually convenient location and time.
   - Visual data will be returned to participants after the second interview.

Participants will retain ownership of their artworks. Artworks and visual journals will be photographed and scanned for the purposes of the study. Interviews will be taped and transcribed and kept in a safe place for a period of five years.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.

4. I acknowledge that:
   - Having read Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   - I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   - The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.

The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.

The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to Monash Faculty of Education (researcher to specify). Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

Name: ___________________________________________ Date: _______________

(Participant)

Name: ___________________________________________ Date: _______________

(Witness to signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745.

Details of the complaints procedure are available from the above address.
7.2 Plain Language Statement: Creative Junction Project

The Creative Junction Project is being conducted collaboratively by a multi-disciplinary team of external consultants contracted by the Shire of Yarra Ranges. The project management committee consists of Geraldine Burke, the Artistic Coordinator from the Faculty of Education at Monash University; Karen Malone, the Environment and Participation Coordinator from the Faculty of Education at RMIT University; Jana Scomazzon, the Project Manager and a Director of LTG; and Christopher Dupé, the Shire of Yarra Ranges representative on the project and Executive Officer of Cultural Development.

This two-year project is a joint initiative between the Shire of Yarra Ranges and VicHealth’s Art and Environment scheme. It has as its underpinning goal to promote community mental health and wellbeing, by encouraging social connectedness and economic participation by valuing the diversity of community members. This project proposes to facilitate a number of creative projects that enhance well-being, reconnect people with the cycles and rhythms of nature and promote physical activity.

A community capacity building process will involve artists, both local and external, working closely with the Yarra Ranges community to create a number of ephemeral and permanent artworks at Yarra Junction. Community involvement, a foundation principle of this project, will be encouraged throughout the life of the project. Community members can register their interest in participating in the project with the Yarra Ranges Cultural Development Officer. A series of community workshops will be conducted over February, March and April of 2004, which will result in the making of visual diaries and ephemeral artworks. These artworks will be created in the Yarra Junction environment, with and through the exploration of natural loose materials. A major permanent sculpture, consisting of two or three forms, is also to be constructed and positioned along Yarra Junction’s stretch of the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail (between the rail trail and the Yarra Junction oval), serving as a marker and inviting people to explore the site. This sculpture will be created by select artists employed by council.

A series of postcards of the evolving community artwork and the finished sculptures, using the photographs taken throughout the artistic process, will form the basis of large scale posters that will be displayed in a durable, mobile outdoor format located in select areas of the locality. Anecdotal comments and stories from community participants will be featured alongside the images in these posters, postcards and visual diaries to further celebrate the community’s engagement and connection with the Yarra Junction site. The postcards, posters and visual diaries will be publicly displayed to celebrate the process and outcomes of the project and maybe displayed in future exhibitions.
The multidisciplinary team will write a report on the project for the VicHealth Art and Environment Scheme that explores the project outcomes. A copy of this report will be given to Yarra Ranges Council. Further use of the data may appear in research articles or publications. The same protocols regarding participant data will be adhered to as are outlined in this form. Participants will be encouraged to collect a set of postcards that result from the project and will be encouraged to participate in a celebratory event at the completion of the project. The project report will be made available for public access through the Shire’s Cultural Development Officer.

The benefits for participants involved in this project involve community participation, tactile engagement with the unique environment evident in the Yarra Junction, the opportunity to develop art skills that reflect the environment and a sense of wellbeing and engagement.

Participation in this project is completely voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time. Not participating or withdrawing from the project will not disadvantage you in any way. Your participation may involve:

- **Visual Documentation:** At different stages during the project participants may be asked to contribute visual documentation such as images, drawings, photographs and journal entries for use in posters, postcards and the community visual journal. Contributing to the visual documentation is voluntary. Steps will be taken that acknowledge the name of participants who choose to have their visual documentation included for potential use in the postcards, posters and visual diaries will be acknowledged by name. Participants less than eighteen years of age will be acknowledged by first name and age only, pending parent carer, guardian consent.

- **Interviews:** At different stages during the project participants may be asked to take part in an informal Open ended interview regarding their sense of connection with the Yarra Ranges and their choice of artwork. Participation is voluntary. Participants can withdraw at any stage and can avoid answering questions which are felt too personal or intrusive. Steps will be taken to acknowledge participants contributions by name or to acknowledge anonymity pending participants discretion. Steps will also be taken to acknowledge first name and age of participants less than eighteen years of age or to acknowledge anonymity pending the discretion of the participant and the parent, carer, guardian. The data from these interviews will be stored for five years by Dr. Karen Malone in accordance with University policies.

- **Photographs:** At different stages during the project participants may be photographed while engaging in artistic activities. Participation is voluntary and photographs will be coded to ensure confidentiality. Steps will be taken to gain consent from participants or their parents, guardians, carers if less than eighteen years of age.
• **Time:** the community workshops will run for approximately 2 – 3 hours each. The making of the ephemeral artworks will take place over the period of a day. Community participants can contribute to the ephemeral artworks at their leisure. Interviews will take no more than ten to fifteen minutes and are of an informal nature. They will take place during the workshops or at a mutually agreeable time between Dr Karen Malone and interested community participants.

Should you need clarification of any aspect of this project at any time you are invited to contact the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belinda Gillam</th>
<th>Chris Dupe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Development Officer, Recreation, Youth &amp; Cultural Development, Shire of Yarra Ranges</td>
<td>Executive Officer - Cultural Services Recreation, Youth &amp; Cultural Development, Shire of Yarra Ranges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone (03) 9294 6741</td>
<td>Phone (03) 9294 6751</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facsimile (03) 9294 6497</td>
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<td>PO Box 105 Lilydale VIC 3140</td>
<td>Mobile 0419 524 742</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mobile 0419 524 742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldine Burke</td>
<td>Associate Professor Karen Malone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Junction Project Art Co-ordinator, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Peninsula Campus, Mahomons Rd, Frankston Vic 3199</td>
<td>Environment and Participation Coordinator, Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, SECE, R.M.I.T. University, Bundoora Campus, Bundoora, Vic 3083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (03) 9904 4244</td>
<td>Phone (03) 9925 7850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:jana@ltg.net.au">jana@ltg.net.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jana Scomazzon

Creative Junction Project Manager, LTG

Email jana@ltg.net.au

Should you have any complaint concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the Monash University Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans at the following address:

The Secretary, The Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH), Building 3D, Research Grants & Ethics Branch, Monash University, VIC, 3800.

Phone (03) 9905 2052, Facsimile (03) 9905 1420, Email scerh@adm.monash.edu.au
7.3 Plain Language Statement: Shire of Yarra Ranges

My name is Geraldine Burke and I am a Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. This study is being done as part of a PhD degree in the School of Education, Portfolio of Design and Social Context at R.M.I.T. University under the supervision of Associate Professor Karen Malone. The title of my study is *Immersive pedagogies: a study of the influence and role of art practice on the personal and professional pedagogy of a critical educator*

The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between art teaching and art practice. I am particularly interested in exploring with others how approaches to teaching and making art impact on artistic experiences. As a consequence my study will investigate the role of immersive practice, concept and thematic based art practices and the role of sociocultural influences on the expressive outcomes of participants. I will be interviewing a range of participants to gauge various points of view.

Participants from three research sites will provide standalone case studies that offer unique insights. This deliberately varied choice of participants includes community based, institutional and artist co-operative contexts so that immersive teaching and learning can be examined across a range of settings. Each site will form the basis for a narrative on artistic practice and learning. Within each narrative the way in which participants engage with their art making and the issues that inform this art making will be examined through a socially critical lens. In turn the story that evolves from the participants will be analyzed to gauge how my role as an art educator and artist is influenced by and influences the participants.

I invite you to participate in my study and ask that you make contact with me should you be interested to participate in this research. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Not participating or withdrawal from the research will not disadvantage you in any way. And any unprocessed data may also be withdrawn.

Your participation will involve:

- Two one hour, open ended informal interviews that will be audio taped and transcribed. Interviewees will retain anonymity. All interview transcripts will be coded so that participant’s identity is anonymous. Interviews will be arranged at a mutually convenient time.
- The keeping of a visual journal over a period of ten weeks and the making of artworks associated with the project/subject involved.
- Allowing your artwork and visual journal to be made available for the researcher to view prior to the second interview.
Appendices

- Visual Documentation: At different stages during the research participants may be asked to contribute visual documentation such as images, drawings, photographs and journal entries. Contributing to the visual documentation is voluntary and documentation will be coded to ensure confidentiality. These items will be returned to the participant after the second interview.

- Photographs: At different stages during the research participants may be photographed while engaging in artistic activities. Participation is voluntary and photographs will be coded to ensure confidentiality.

- Participants will retain ownership of their artwork. Participants may also access the research data if desired.

The data will be analyzed for my PhD and the results may appear in art and education publications and exhibition/s. The results will be reported in such a way that you will not be identified. Individual data will have pseudonyms attached. For further information, contact me at Monash University on 9904 4244 or my senior supervisor, Associate Professor Karen Malone at RMIT on 9925 7850.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geraldine Burke</th>
<th>Associate Professor Karen Malone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, SECE, R.M.I.T. University, Bundoora Campus, Bundoora, Vic 3083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University, Peninsula Campus,</td>
<td>Phone (03) 9904 4244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMahon's Rd, Frankston, Vic 3199,</td>
<td>Phone (03) 9925 7850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (03) 9904 4244</td>
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</table>

Only my supervisor and I will have access to this data. It will be stored for five years as prescribed by the university regulations. This data will only be used for the purposes described by the investigator unless your permission has been sought and approval given in writing. If you have any queries or would like to be informed of the research findings, please contact telephone 9904 4244 or fax 9904 4217. Thank you, Geraldine Burke

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745. Details of the complaints procedure are available from the above address.
### 7.4 Interview Questions and Topics – Creative Worlds 1 & 2

#### 7.4.1 First Round Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Round Interview Questions and Topics - (Creative World 1 and 2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How would you describe the type of learning and teaching that occurred during this project/subject/topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did the way that knowledge and techniques were presented in this project/subject/topic influence your artistic output or understanding of art pedagogy and practice? How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What role did the integration of your own knowledge and background play in the construction of your artworks or teaching? How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What effect does an immersive approach have on your art practice and pedagogy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Did the way that you approached this project/subject/topic create a critical awareness of issues or themes? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. What effect did concept and thematic based learning have on your art practice or pedagogy? How is this similar or different to previous art experiences?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. What role has reflective practice had on your understanding of your artwork and pedagogy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. What role did emergent practice have on your sense of self-expression and identity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Did the immersive approach used in this project/subject/topic enable you to draw upon your sense of identity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Did an immersive approach to this project/subject/topic enable you to draw upon your own sense of power in relationship to societal viewpoints so that your own expressive voice was highlighted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How did my part in the project/subject/topic influence your input? How do you think your role in the project/subject/topic has influenced me?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.4.2 Second Round Interviews

#### Second Round Interview Questions and Topics - (Creative Worlds 1 and 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The focus of our project was to empower. Do you think we achieved this aim? Why? Why Not? Has the community been empowered by this project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Are we creating the capacity for people to undertake a project like this again? Or are we reinforcing disempowerment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Did this project create social connectedness?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. What opportunities were generated that weren’t there before?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Has your relationship with council/the team changed over time? Has the project shifted/effect ed those relationships?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. How did you see yourself within the power relationship within council?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Was there a collegial approach within this project? How and Why, Why not? Was there a collegial and collaborative environment? Why, why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Was there negotiation around roles and responsibilities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Did you feel you had the capacity to change/inform/transform the shape and direction and scope of the project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. How did the selection process make you feel? Did you feel contained in terms of the application for the project? ...were you restricted as regards yours part in the project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. How did the ethics process affect you and your work within the project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. What power relationships existed between me and you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. What are your reactions to the processes you have had to go through to construct artworks/workshops?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. How did you feel responding to what I asked you to do? eg; visual diary, feedback, mentoring, talking on the radio, contacting community members, school groups, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. What have you learnt as a result of this project?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7.5 A Model for Reviewing and Developing Artworks

Developed by Geraldine Burke
Artistic Coordinator - Creative Junction

Introduction to Session

The intended outcome of this session is to provide the two principal Creative Junction artists, Savaad Felich and Glenn Romanis, with meaningful feedback on their initial artwork proposals that enable them to review and further develop their proposals within the context of the project's objectives.

The context for this meaningful feedback will be explored via

- Participants’ initial reactions;
- Analysis of the community data from Creative Junction;
- The VicHealth Aims;
- The site itself;
- Aesthetic ways of knowing.

A Dialogical Exploration of the Proposed Artworks

About our approach:

- Each viewer’s perspective is shared and respected;
- Multiple views contribute to the construction of meaning
- Authentic intellectual, aesthetic and social integration of viewpoints is allowed;
- Listening takes on the same importance as looking;
- We are positioned as co-explorers in the review and development of the artworks;
- We are encouraged to think creatively and critically at the same time;
- It reflects the immersive approach that underpins the community and art based activities within Creative Junction.
Appendices

Undertaking a Dialogic Approach to the Review and Development of the Sculpture Proposals

This dialogic method involves viewers giving their personal, facilitated responses to the artwork to the artist. The artist listens to the viewers’ responses.

Group 1 (Chris Dupé, John McLeod and Jana Scomazzon) provides feedback to Savaad while Group 2 (Belinda Gillam, Dee Basinski and Karen Malone) provides feedback to Glenn. (5 minutes).

Groups then change.

Group 1 (Chris Dupé, John McLeod and Jana Scomazzon) provides feedback to Glenn while Group 2 (Belinda Gillam, Dee Basinski and Karen Malone) provides feedback to Savaad. (5 minutes).

“….different perspectives, interpretations and criticisms must be shared and creative conflicts (that lead to new discourse and new knowledge) must be engendered… knowing and learning are conceived of as communal acts of creation, rather than as “individual acts of discovery.” (Lin, 1995 p14)

“Knowledge is constructed, both in process and as a “process of human relationship.” (Jeffers, 2003)

These views are very much in line with our project’s immersive philosophy and the context of deep learning

Socially Critical Appraisal – Community Data

A discussion is held in which the meeting as a whole interrogates the politics of the artwork and its underlying concepts and context, teasing out reference to the community data.

Use the transcript from our last meeting as a point of reference to address some of the following questions/topics/issues as regards the proposed sculptures:

1. Is a community voice represented?
2. Whose voice is not included?
3. Is the artist’s signature evident amongst the community’s influence?
4. Has the artists’ voice been compromised or enhanced by adhering to the community’s input?
5. What layers of meaning are connected through the sculptures?
6. What future stories might these sculptures tell?
7. What history, viewpoint or way of knowing is not represented?
8. Do the sculptures empower or disempower the community?
9. What future stories could these sculptures tell?
10. What interactive activity is encouraged/discouraged by these sculptures?
11. How do these sculptures address intangible culture?
12. How do the proposed sculptures relate to concepts of nature?
13. Do the sculptures encourage tactile engagement with place?
14. Are strong or peripheral themes/stories represented?
15. What level of time, reflection is needed to engage with the sculptures?
16. What type of people will see the sculptures, what activity will they be engaged in?
17. Will the proposed sculptures create a distinctive/memorable experience?
18. Will people come back to see the sculptures over time? Why? Why not?
19. Will the sculptures create social focus?
20. Are the sculptures playful?
21. Are the sculptures functional?

**Socially Critical Appraisal – VicHealth Objectives**

A discussion in which we interrogate the artwork and its underlying concepts and context, teasing out reference to the VicHealth objectives:

- Mental health and wellbeing;
- Sense of place;
- Sense of Identity;
- Social connectedness;
- Economic participation;
- Valuing diversity;
- Sustainability both within the local community and the Shire of Yarra Ranges itself.

1. How do the proposed sculptures address the VicHealth aims?
2. Are any of the following responses encouraged by the sculptures:
   - Emotional;
   - Spiritual;
   - Environmental;
   - Physical;
   - Historical;
   - Social;
   - Cultural;
   - Mathematical.
   - How? Why?
3. Are various viewpoints/ways of knowing counter balanced?
4. How do the sculptures reflect that the site has been watched and listened to by the artists and by the community?
5. Do the sculptures enhance or transform a sense of place? ...or do they interrupt a sense of place?
6. Do the sculptures provide the viewer with a set of new skills through which to rethink and re-look at the site?
7. Do the sculptures present a sense of occasion?
8. What is the physical role of the sculpture?
9. Will tourism and local economic development be encouraged as a result of the sculptures?
10. What permanent memories will be made by the sculptures?

**Analysis of the Proposed Sculptures**

Let us now explore the proposed sculpture using the following:

- art principles;
- art elements.

**The elements of art:**

- Line;
- Tone;
- Texture;
- Form;
- Shape;
- Colour.

1. Using the elements of art for guidance...how do the proposed sculptures relate to the site?
2. What are the defining/signature elements of the proposed sculptures?
3. How would you use the elements of art to appraise and explain the work?
4. How could the elements of art be developed further to exaggerate or refine the context or meaning of the sculptures?...could they be used for greater contrast, camouflage, complexity/simplicity, size variation etc?

**The principles of art:**

- Harmony;
- Contrast;
- Rhythm;
- Variety;
- Unity;
- Proportion;
Appendices

- Composition.

1. Using the principles of art for guidance...how do the proposed sculptures relate to the site?
2. Using the principles of art for guidance...how do the proposed sculptures relate to each other?...are they vastly different/similar...do they create a sense of harmony or contrast from each other?

**Physicality of the Artwork**

Discussion of site, sensitivity, activity, place and movement,

Using the site as a guiding point for the proposed sculptures:

1. Do the sculptures integrate or interrupt their surrounds?
2. Do the works make a statement about man's relationship with nature?
3. Do these sculptures honour or defy the land?
4. Are the existing characteristics of the site drawn out by the sculptures?
5. Do the sculptures focus attention onto the surrounds?
6. Are the sculptures well sited so that the location empowers the way we respond to them?
7. Where should the work be sited?
8. How do the sculptures relate to the overall site usage, function of site?
9. How will people physically interact with the sculptures?
10. Is the work site specific?
11. Is the work contradictory to the site?
12. Why place a sculpture there in the first place?
13. Will the sculptures be used as markers, seats, reference points, meeting places?
14. What physical interaction will be possible with the sculptures?
15. How will the sculptures relate to...time?...and weather?

**Practicalities**

Proposed budgets, materials, transport, level of technical expertise, outsourcing, health and safety concerns, durability etc.

1. What are the difficulties in making these pieces?
2. Cost?
3. Materials- are they local or not?
4. What are the unknowns?
5. Stability and permanency of materials?
6. Health and safety concerns?
7. Environmental concerns?
8. Level of technical expertise required?
9. Level of outsourcing?
10. Budget...appropriate funds? And Is there enough Council support to achieve the work?

**Drawing Together of Session**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual Quality</th>
<th>Score: 1 weak - 5 strong</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High-order thinking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Deep knowledge</td>
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<td>3. Deep understanding</td>
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<td>4. Substantive conversation</td>
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<td>5. Knowledge as problematic</td>
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<td>6. Metalanguage</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connectedness</th>
<th>Score: 1 weak - 5 strong</th>
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<tr>
<td>7. Knowledge integration</td>
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<td>8. Background knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Connectedness to the world</td>
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<td>10. Problem based curriculum</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive Classroom Environment</th>
<th>Score: 1 weak - 5 strong</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Student direction</td>
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<td>12. Social support</td>
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<td>13. Academic engagement</td>
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<td>14. Explicit quality performance criteria</td>
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<td>15. Self-regulation</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recognition of Difference</th>
<th>Score: 1 weak - 5 strong</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Cultural knowledges</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Inclusivity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Narrative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Group identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Active citizenship</td>
<td></td>
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