A collaborative self-study exploring the experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators to inform professional practice

by

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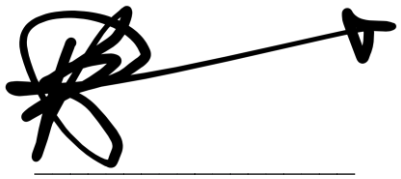
STUDY LEADER: Dr Marguerite Müller

DECLARATION

I, Paseka Blessing Chisale, declare that the PhD research thesis, **A collaborative self-study exploring the experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators to inform professional practice,** that I herewith submit at the University of the Free State is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted it for qualification at another institution of higher education.



Signed: Paseka Blessing Chisale

ABSTRACT

This thesis represents a living assemblage of my personal development as a Creative Arts teacher educator and the collective experiences of other educators in this field. By intertwining my educational journey with a broader focus on Creative Arts teacher education, the study reflects how my background in Art Education informs and shapes my current practices. Using self-study and Arts-Based Research (ABR) methods, I explore the interplay between personal memories, past experiences, and the evolving identity of Creative Arts teacher educators. Central to this inquiry is the concept of rhizomatic pockets, which are repositories of knowledge and memories that shape individual pedagogical practices, and the collective understanding of how past experiences influence present and future teaching.

Drawing on the narrative of the Avengers' journey in *Endgame*, this study illustrates the process of revisiting and reinterpreting significant moments in teaching and learning, allowing educators to shed biases and inform future practice. It emphasises the importance of reflexive and collaborative learning, highlighting the transformative potential of engaging with colleagues, mentors, and students to create a richer, more nuanced understanding of teaching and learning within Creative Arts Teacher Education.

The study advocates for positioning Creative Arts classrooms as dynamic research sites where teacher educators engage in inquiry to understand how collective experiences and contextual factors shape pedagogy. Recognising classrooms as spaces where social and physical environments intersect, I argue for acknowledging the lived experiences of both students and educators as rhizomatic pockets that inform practice. Educators can foster meaningful student engagement, cultivate confidence, and promote artistic expression by creating safe and supportive environments.

Further, this research highlights the value of collaboration and communities of practice. It suggests that through collaborative self-study and reflexive practices, Creative Arts teacher educators can co-construct knowledge, mentor each other, and engage in continuous professional growth. Collaborative research in this context enhances individual pedagogical practices and the collective development of evidence-based best practices for Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Ultimately, this study highlights the importance of lifelong learning and adaptability for Creative Arts teacher educators. By embracing a research-oriented, reflexive approach, teacher educators can innovate within their classrooms, contribute to the advancement of Creative Arts Teacher

Education, and better prepare future educators. The concept of rhizomatic pockets emerges as a guiding framework for understanding how personal and collective experiences can transform teaching and learning within this field.

Key Words:

Creative Arts Teacher Education, Rhizomatic Pockets, Creative Arts, Assemblage of Becoming, Self-study, Arts-Based Research, Artist, Researcher, Teacher Education.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this doctoral journey to my Grandmother, Lettia Sibanyoni. I fondly remember being a child visiting you and seeing you sitting by your paraffin lamp, learning to read and write. Even though you have never had the opportunity to go to school, you never stopped encouraging us to strive for more knowledge and education. I can almost always hear you say, “Imfundo, imnandi nana” These words live in my heart and have carried me through this journey.

While this journey has been incredibly fruitful, it has also been challenging, especially towards the end. God has been good throughout, guiding me to places and spaces where I encountered incredible people and opportunities. However, life also happens during such a journey, and it certainly did. Perhaps the best way to describe how the journey felt towards the end of this study is to use an extract from the song "Standby" by Trip Lee featuring Hulvey (2022) to epitomise the internal conversations I often had with God during this time.

“Holy Father, keep my head above the water
I've been drownin' in disorder
I need you to slow the slaughter
Am I trusting while I'm climbin'? Kinda sorta
But you got good news for me, send me more reporters
Keep, gotta keep, keep
When my head is down, I can't see
Forward vision pixelated when I need it HD
Sailing, navigate me to the Prince’s port like Haiti
I believe these rocky seas one day give way to safety
Save me from wandering through deserts
I've been grumblin' and angry, can't breathe
I got way more on my plate than I can take, it's eatin' me up
And I know you got new mercies for me daily, gotta re-up
And it's time to tell the enemy to stand down
When they ask who got it, put my hand down
Tell me what I need with worry when my help comes in a hurry?
Why be scared of them when you can make 'em scurry?
I wake up early, just to, Stand by

He can lift your burdens when your hands tied
Step outside, close your eyes, let him shade you
I feel alive when I hide, ‘cause I'm made to”

Thank you for keeping my head above water and for giving me the strength, kindness, and good reports from others. These kept me going, and you've enabled me to conclude this journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am incredibly grateful for the support and influence of every person and community that has contributed to my development, from my art educators who have nurtured my passion for art education to the established scholars who have taken chances on me and left the door to academia open for me, and to the friends who have pushed me to grow. I am also constantly inspired by my students, who remind me of my responsibility to prepare future Creative Arts educators who will create meaningful learning experiences for their students in the arts.

However, I would like to take the time to mention my sincere thanks to the following specifically:

Dr. Marguerite Müller, I am deeply grateful for your unwavering support, guidance, and patience throughout this transformative journey. Your guidance, more than anything else, has been instrumental in my scholarly growth. Thank you for never giving me the answers outright but instead guiding me to discover the answers to my questions. Your dedication to my academic development has been invaluable, and I consider myself truly fortunate to have had you as my supervisor. Your encouragement kept me going, even when I felt like giving up. I am deeply grateful for how you treated me as a scholar and acknowledged the value of my ideas. Thank you.

My parents, Johannes and Martha Chisale, express my deepest gratitude for the support you have given me over the years. Your role in my academic journey is immeasurable. Your endless encouragement, belief in my dreams, and unwavering guidance have carried me. I am who I am today because of your love and support.

To my dear siblings, Ufulu and Thami Chisale, your unwavering support and understanding during my studies have been a source of strength. Your willingness to listen to my thoughts, theories, excitement, and frustrations, even when they may not have interested you, is something I sincerely appreciate. I am grateful for your friendship and support.

To my beloved Ursula (Xola) Khoza**.** As I completed this study, you were embarking on your own journey in academia—a time filled with challenges and growth. Through every high and low, during the stretches of time we spent apart and the moments we shared, your unwavering support has been my anchor. You have been my strength on good days and my guiding light on the difficult ones. Throughout it all, you have meant the world to me. In many ways, I feel a debt of gratitude to you that I can never fully repay, but I will strive to show my appreciation for you each day.

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Chapter 1: The Empty Space on My Shelf

Juffrou Ansie,

Our pottery classes were my empty space-on-the-shelf moments. I fell in love with Visual Arts because of you; although I needed to figure out what we were doing in our Wednesday and Friday classes, you were a patient guide. You instilled an insatiable confidence in Visual Arts that I can never repay. I still remember the little note you wrote me "jy het 'n ongelooflike talent, koester dit."[1] Thank you for the safe space you created for us in those art classes.

Figure 1.1: The empty space on my shelf, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2023, Ink, pencil and watercolour.

[1] "You have an incredible talent, cherish it."

This dissertation represents a living assemblage[2] of my experiences as a Creative Arts teacher educator. Through a collaborative self-study, I aim to navigate and make sense of how the rhizomatic[3] messiness of my experiences in the Creative Arts informs my practices, enhances the programs I teach, and enriches my students' learning experiences. Figure 1.1: The empty space on my shelf, serves as the starting point for my journey. It is where I lay bare and exhibit my experiences for others to observe. This creates a space for intentional dialogue with my colleagues, students, memories, and the environments I interact with. I will reflect on where my art education journey began and where I find myself as a Creative Arts teacher educator today. I will also consider how my past experiences can inform my future practices. The empty space on the shelf symbolizes a fresh start and an opportunity to reassess and reorganize the layout of my experiences. It allows me to evaluate how these experiences have influenced my acquisition of knowledge, skills, and techniques. This, in turn, makes room for new discoveries and keeps me open to learning rather than hindering it. This process is enriched by learning from memories and the present and the spaces, places, and people I interact with. I am not dismantling or undoing the structure of my shelf; instead, I aim to strengthen it by integrating what is already there with the experiences that have shaped it.

To tell my narrative, I use Arts-Based Research (ABR) research as a metaphorical time travel tool, allowing me to go back in time to relive and retrieve memories from lived experiences in the form of drawings, paintings and memory objects such as photographs supported by accounts of lived experience descriptions, letters, teaching reflections, assessment briefs of modules and module guides. This helps me to understand how those experiences have informed my practices and how to use these insights to improve my pedagogical methods. To bring my study to life, I draw on the film "Avengers:

[2] An assemblage is a collection of elements gathered or assembled. It is a philosophical approach to studying the diverse ways in which entities can act, redistributing the capacity to act from individuals to a socio-material network of people, things, and narratives. (Nail, 2017)

[3] Rhizome is a philosophical concept that refers to a non-hierarchical, non-linear organizational mode that consists of several points of entry and departure. It also provides a non-hierarchical, networked framework for comprehending knowledge, culture, and society without a focal point. This concept, from the standpoint of my research, views our experiences as rhizomatic pockets that enable knowledge from the various archives of the past to inform the present and the future (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

Endgame," which concludes the Infinity Saga. Following the events of "Avengers: Infinity War," the "Endgame" narrative revolves around the Avengers' mission to reverse the devastating effects of Thanos' snap, which wiped out half of all life in the universe. Scott Lang plays a crucial role in this tale, returning five years later from the quantum realm with the suggestion that they could travel back in time with the right tools to retrieve the Infinity Stones before Thanos gets them…

> ***"SCOTT LANG**: Have either of you guys ever studied quantum physics?*
>
> ***NATASHA**: Only to make conversation.*
>
> ***SCOTT LANG**: Well, five years ago, just before this Thanos guy... I went into a place called the Quantum Realm. It's like its own microscopic universe. You can only get there if you're incredibly small. Hope, she's my... she was supposed to pull me out. But then Thanos happened. And I was stuck in there.*
>
> ***NATASHA**: I'm sorry. It must've been a long five years.*
>
> ***SCOTT LANG**: Okay, but that's the thing. It wasn't. For me, it was only five hours. The rules in the Quantum Realm aren't like out here. They're completely unpredictable. Is that anybody's sandwich? I'm starving.*
>
> ***STEVE**: Scott, what are you talking about?*
>
> ***SCOTT LANG**: Time works differently in the Quantum Realm.*
>
> ***SCOTT LANG**: Problem is, right now, it's chaos; there's no way to navigate it. But what if we could figure out a way to enter the Quantum Realm at a certain point in time... and then exit the Quantum Realm at another point out in time. Like, before Thanos.*
>
> ***STEVE**: Wait... wait. Scott. Are you talking about a time machine?*
>
> ***SCOTT LANG**: No, not a machine. More like a... Yeah, like a time machine. I know it sounds crazy...*
>
> ***NATASHA**: Scott, I get emails from a raccoon. Nothing's crazy anymore".*
>
> (Markus and Mcfeely, 2019)

This conversation would set in motion a plan involving visiting pivotal moments in their past, effectively allowing them to recall and reassess their memories and actions. The narrative is tied to time travel, a metaphor for the characters reliving and confronting their memories (the different Infinity Stones) in various spaces and times, making decisions that will inform their present selves. I liken their time travel to my journey of using ABR methods as a tool to retrieve memories of experiences that inform my pedagogical practices and their impact on my students. I also consider the introduction of Scott Lang as an essential piece to this time travel narrative, as he provides a crucial alternative lens for the remaining Avengers, showing that going back in time to retrieve the Infinity Stones is possible. In my case, my supervisor occupies the role of Scott Lang, providing me with guidance. Like Scott Lang, I also see my supervisor as Tony Stark, who equipped the Avengers with a time-space GPS to aid in time travel. Initially, he was very hesitant to get involved again with Avengers after the devastation of Thanos but could not ignore the potential of reversing the devastating effects of Thanos' snap. He investigates the problem, discovers a way to safely navigate time travel, and calls it a “fully functioning *time-space GPS.” The invention of the “*time-space GPS.” would allow the Avengers to have precise control of their movement through time and avoid some of the hiccups they encountered during the initial testing…

> ***“TONY STARK****: [Pulls up in his car and rolls down the window] Why the long face? Let me guess, he turned into a baby.*
>
> ***STEVE ROGERS****: Among other things yeah. What are you doing here?*
>
> ***TONY STARK****: It's the EPR Paradox. Instead of pushing Lang through time, you might have wound up pushing time through Lang. It's dangerous, tricky. Somebody could've cautioned you against it.*
>
> ***STEVE ROGERS****: You did.*
>
> ***TONY STARK:*** *[sarcastically] Oh did I? Well, thank God I'm here. Regardless, I've fixed it. A fully functioning time-space GPS”.*
>
> (Markus and Mcfeely, 2019)

Just like Scott Lang and Tony Stark, my supervisor is like a guide and sounding board for me. She has used the Quantum Realm and the time-space GPS in her practice to travel back in time. Her approach has improved and informed her methods, as indicated in Müller (2016; 2019; 2020; 2022) and Müller and Kruger (2023). To delve deeper into this exploration, in the next section, I will first outline the origins of my study and provide context for the methodological reasoning behind employing self-studies. I will also discuss how arts-based research and dialogue with my colleagues were vital in conceptualising my study. I will explain how these methodologies interrelate and how they will inform and enhance my pedagogical practices.

Why self-study research was critical in helping me take stock of what is on the shelf

As a Creative Arts teacher educator, I have become increasingly aware of myself and how my art education experiences have informed my approaches and beliefs to teaching Creative Arts and its effect on my students. Therefore, I sought to investigate my practices for improved pedagogical practice using self-study research (Bowles, Sweeney and Coulter, 2023; Hauge, 2021; Pithouse-Morgan, 2022; Samaras, 2011). In 2021, fresh from completing my Master of Education, I found myself at a crossroads. In a conversation with my supervisor, I let her into my thoughts about my plan to dedicate the next couple of years to publishing work from my M.Ed dissertation while simultaneously immersing myself in understanding current trends in Creative Arts Teacher Education. However, my well-intentioned plan overlooked a crucial detail. My future growth at the university where I was employed depended on enrolling for the doctoral programme. When reflecting, I sometimes wish I had started this journey in 2024. Pursuing a PhD requires a level of maturity that I didn't have when I began, but it also requires optimal timing and a conducive environment. With added maturity and a wealth of experiences, I am in a better mental and physical space than I was at the start of this study. Then, I often think this study brought on this maturity, which is precisely what I needed when I started.

As I began conceptualising my PhD research, my supervisor, Dr M, suggested an unconventional path. She proposed that I use this academic journey to delve into ABR methodologies, a field that aligned with my interests. Then, she introduced a concept entirely foreign to me: self-study research. This term, at first, seemed paradoxical. How could a self-study constitute a rigorous academic methodology? Little did I know that this seemingly contradictory approach would become the cornerstone of my study, marking the beginning of a transformative journey in reflexivity.

As I delved into the self-study literature my supervisor recommended, a new world of research opened. I discovered that self-study research is a reflexive approach that turns my attention inward, encouraging a deep examination of my professional practice through personal experience (Chiliza, 2015; Pithouse-Morgan, 2022; Samaras, 2011). This introspective journey not only enriches my practices but also offers opportunities for sharing learning with and from my students and fellow practitioners (Madondo, 2014: 9). According to scholars in this field, self-study of professional practice is an academic research field that emerged in the early 1990s. (Pithouse-Morgan, 2022; Lunenberg and Smaras, 2011). Teacher educators were interested in studying themselves in action within their field of expertise to inform and improve practice and contribute to the broader discussion on how to enhance teacher preparation for the good of society (Pithouse-Morgan, 2022).

Self-study is a part of reflective practice where educators systematically and critically analyse their actions and the context to develop a more conscious approach to professional activity (Samaras and Freese, 2006). Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Weber (2009: 45) posit that a self-study refers to a process that entails employing methods that facilitate a stepping back to reading a text of our situated self that is being interrogated and interpreted within the broader socio-political and historical context shaping our thinking and actions and how we view the world. Madondo further (2014) articulates that self-study is a process of interrogating one's practice, drawing from personal observations and experiences, and experimenting with novel teaching methods to enhance student learning. Moreover, Madondo (2014) highlights that the broader implications of self-study

go beyond personal growth; this approach can inform the restructuring of educational programmes and influence policy decisions while contributing to educators' collective pedagogical knowledge and practice. This exploration revealed self-study as a tool for personal reflection and a robust methodology with the potential to impact my pedagogical practices at multiple levels.

Müller (2023) provides a more relevant explanation of self-studies, noting the following:

> Those of us working with self-reflexivity and self-study will know that change must always begin with the self. I believe that the experiences, memories and subjectivities of educators (whom I define as everyone who enters pedagogical relationships with students and learners) matter. With matter, I do not mean in a large-scale, big-data kind of way. I mean in the small detail of a pencil shaving or faded photograph kind of way. I find that arts-based research steers me to self-reflexive research, and self-study is crucial to develop a narrative imagination that enables us to navigate the nonlinear complex experiences, conflicts and contradictions that we encounter in becoming educators.
>
> (Müller, 2023)

The work of Müller (2023) encapsulates the essence of what I refer to as rhizomatic pockets of experiences and memories of educators serving as valuable sources for becoming. Focusing on self-reflexivity and the small, “mundane” details of everyday experiences, we can engage in the assemblage of becoming (continuously). Our memories inside of experiences, as I will elaborate on later in this chapter, form rhizomatic pockets that also become repositories for significant nodes within the broader map of my experiences. All memories and actions hold a rich, interconnected significance that is valuable in informing practice and the constantly evolving act of re-configuring the layout of what we learn from experiences and how this learning becomes an ever-evolving assemblage of becoming. Therefore, "taking stock and emptying my shelf" is integral to self-study research. It involves laying bare preconceived notions and biases to examine the profound impact of my experiences on my practices. Moreover, the emptying process allows for genuine self-reflection and critical analysis, fostering a deeper understanding of the impact of my practices on my students.

In this regard, self-study research was highly appropriate for my research, as I aimed to enhance my practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator. Additionally, I endeavoured to utilise time and memories to deepen my understanding of how my past experiences have shaped my current practices and their implications for those I am in a pedagogical relationship with (Müller, 2023). This approach equipped me with the tools to refine my teaching methods in real time, informed by the specific needs of my students (Madondo, 2014). I firmly believed that engaging in self-study would facilitate a transformative shift in my pedagogical approach, unlocking new avenues of knowledge acquisition and implementing improved teaching strategies for better learning outcomes. In the following section, I wish to discuss further my rationale for incorporating ABR into my study and its connection to self-study research.

Connecting my use of Arts-based research with self-study research as I take stock of what is on the shelf

The utilisation of ABR is particularly relevant in this context. Weber (2014) notes that while ABR is employed for various purposes, it is instrumental in self-study research in education. Weber (2014) further elucidates…

> Visual and other arts-based methodologies, such as creative writing and performance, enable researchers to cast a wider net during data collection and offer a panoply of valuable lenses for analysing experiences in meaningful ways that relate back to ethical practice. Arts-based approaches to research expand our knowledge base by including many of the neglected, yet important ways in which we construct meaning through artistic forms of expression.
>
> (Weber, 2014)

While Pithouse-Morgan and Van Laren (2012) assert that self-study researchers also utilise a wide variety of artefacts, the chosen object is often selected by the researcher. It is a reflective tool drawn from their lived experiences, carrying associated personal meanings. Commonly, the object would not be a recently purchased but already exists within the researcher's environment and holds an emotional connection (Pithouse-Morgan and Van Laren, 2012). In other words, by reflecting on the selected object, the

researcher can uncover experiences and emotions linked to or evoked by the tangible object, enabling reflexive practice where changes in action are made possible.

The objects used and created in my arts-based self-study research are significant ontological tools that mark a particular time and space within the research process. Therefore, in my study, I sought to employ arts-based methods to elicit more profound and more reflexive accounts of memories within experiences of my Art Education. By reflecting on the selected objects and created artwork, I metaphorically go back in time to relive specific memories within lived experiences and emotions linked to or evoked by the tangible objects and use these objects as time machines to travel to the desired time and space. Moreover, these methods also served as meaning-making and interpretation tools to inform my current practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator (Müller, 2023; Weber, 2014). In many ways, I am compelled to take moments of stepping back and reflecting on my practice to discern what I can learn (Weber, 2014).

While reflecting on my experiences in Art Education, I realized that my sources were diverse, moving beyond just creating art to include memory objects, module guides, letters from students, and conversations with my family, all serving as reminders of memories. However, I grappled with internal conflict, thinking, "Would these artworks, memories, and memory objects count as data?" I was stuck in a qualitative "quantum realm" of research structures I had learned from my previous degrees. Somehow forgetting what Weber (2014) notes about ABR enabling researchers to cast a wider net during data collection. At my supervisor's suggestion, I delved deeper into theory and methodology, as St. Pierre (2015) suggests when advising her postgraduate students:

> Remember that no one can read for you, and people who read a lot can always tell when others don’t. If you read hard, you’ll likely find concepts that can help re-orient your thinking so you can think differently about whatever you want to think about.
>
> (St. Pierre, 2015)

Upon reading more, I came across Le Grange's (2018) discussion on post-qualitative research, arguing that post-humanism is the driving force and inspiration behind post-

qualitative research. This suggests moving beyond the traditional stance of research in understanding the influence of environmental, space and time factors on human existence and knowledge (Le Grange, 2018). Post-qualitative research moves beyond traditional qualitative methods towards incorporating new and innovative approaches to research (Müller, 2020). Post-qualitative research is in harmony with the two concepts of rhizomes and assemblage, which I borrow from Deleuze and Guattari (1987), which are anti-method but considers what Lather (2013: 635) in Le Grange (2018) refers to as “a thousand tiny methodologies.” According to St. Pierre (2021), it is a multiplicity (rhizomes), a becoming (assemblage) with a history. Müller (2023) adds to this discussion that data is not something to gather that is “out there” or to be harvested; however, it is already available if you choose to pay attention to it and how we respond to it opens new possibilities of being. This understanding and approach to post-qualitative research is supported by St. Pierre (2021) by problematising the concept *of data* collection as it points to an ontology that assumes data as separate from the existence of the human being so they can collect data wherever it may be.

In the context of my study, data is not separate from my existence; the memories embedded in my experiences and the multiplicity of nature can be thought of as rhizomatic pockets holding a storehouse of knowledge that informs my practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator. I use artworks and memory objects as tools to assess these rhizomatic pockets, retrieving new ways of being and discovering what else I can learn from my experiences and forming the capacity for new nodes (Müller, 2023). Here, I can build my ever-evolving assemblage of becoming as informed by my history (Müller and Schurr, 2016; Nail, 2017). However, I also draw on the work of Pithouse (2007) as inspiration to consider field texts as part of my data collection process of retrieving my memories. This led me further to understand that the nature of my self-study research also resembled the characteristics of a narrative inquiry.

According to Wei (2023:37), “Narrative inquirers contribute to the research by virtue of their presence in the setting as observers, the questions asked, and participation in the mutual process of elaborating on the participants’ stories. The data sources of narrative inquiry are myriad, such as observations, field notes, journal records by either participants

or the researchers, interview transcripts, letter writing, documents, picturing, metaphors, personal philosophies, autobiography, biography, and storytelling". Drawing from Pithouse (2007) and Wei (2023), I incorporated the use of pictures, lived experience descriptions, letters, teaching reflections, assessment briefs, module guides and interviews that I used as spaces for dialogue with my colleagues about their experiences. Furthermore, as part of my reflection, data collection and analysis process, I also created art that also forms part of building an assemblage of becoming and learning from the rhizomatic pockets of my experiences and created work that would serve as analysis and interpretation for my experiences and collaborative engagement with my colleagues. However, as I was developing my study further, I noticed that some of the memories I wanted to retrieve had vaguely disappeared. So, I sought the insights of my family to help me retrieve some of these early memories of myself. Therefore, in my narrative, I also introduce some of my family members to help me retrieve some of these memories.

Within my study, ABR can be conceptualised as the process of gathering, analysing data and presenting findings in the form of memory objects and [4]fine arts ABR representing my assemblage of becoming (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2016). The primary purpose of using ABR would be to explore, epitomise and understand my own experiences while using the lived experiences of my colleagues and myself in Art Education. In addition to the interview dialogue, I used memory objects as alternative lenses for critical engagement and gathering data inaccessible through traditional modes of scientific inquiry (Müller, 2019). Moreover, throughout my study, I will create a body of work fine arts ABR that will form part of reflection, data gathering, analysis and presentation (Greenwood, 2012; McNiff, 2007: 29; Wassermann, 2016). At the end of my research process, informed by the memory object, insights of my colleagues and the developed body of work from the rhizomatic pockets, I curate what I have learnt through this journey to create my assemblage of becoming. The next crucial aspect of my study is the engagement in dialogue with my colleagues, which is essential for engaging in reflexive practice and transformative learning.

[4]Fine arts ABR refers to painting, drawing, and graphic novels while performative ABR refers theatre, dance, music (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2016: 322)

Connecting stories told by colleagues with a (collaborative) self-study research before I take stock of what is on the shelf

In my research, I use a narrative approach to understand the stories of my colleagues. I draw on the work of Creswell (2013) and Wei (2023). According to Creswell (2013), these stories are co-constructed through interaction and dialogue between the researcher and participant, highlighting a collaborative aspect of research. Fartch (2017) suggests a shift from traditional interview formats to allowing participants to narrate their experiences freely, transforming the roles of the interviewer to narrator-listener and participant to collaborator-to-storyteller. I conduct interviews to allow my colleagues to share their stories. I use a multimethod approach informed by narrative inquiry to gather valuable stories from colleagues in the Creative Arts teacher education field. Their narratives guide me through my study and allow me to retell their stories (Müller, 2016).

Initially, I planned to organize a collaborative workshop involving my supervisor and willing Creative Arts educators from other universities to shape alternative perspectives and guide my thinking (Chiliza, 2015: 24). However, logistical challenges made it difficult to involve all the desired participants. As a result, I focused on my colleagues at the Private institution in Pretoria where I was teaching in 2023. I approached seven colleagues, but only three; Jay, Ash, and Lina, agreed to participate. During our interview engagement, I allowed my colleagues to share their art education experiences and teaching practices in Creative Arts. I also asked them to share four objects representing different aspects of Creative Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama) to best describe their experiences and understanding of each art form. The hope was to learn from their stories and experiences.

Therefore, in this study I draw on the experiences of my three colleagues, Jay, Ash and Lina, who became invaluable resources, serving as trusted sources for ideas to enhance my own teaching practices. I value the stories of my colleagues in Creative Arts Teacher Education, as they provide meaningful insights within our specific contexts. By using interviews as storytelling opportunities, I adopt a multimethod approach informed by

narrative inquiry (Wei, 2023). This includes engaging with my colleagues' stories to construct new ways of thinking and being.

This is an ideal moment to pause and consolidate my methodological reasoning, perhaps even offering a visual representation of my thought process. Diagram 1.1 provides a conceptual map illustrating how the combination of narrative inquiry, self-study, memory work, and ABR forms an interconnected approach to my educational research. Narrative inquiry structures my storytelling, while self-study promotes critical reflection on these narratives. Memory work bridges the personal and professional realms, enabling me to draw from my past to inform present practices. ABR, meanwhile, brings these methods to life through creative exploration, turning abstract reflections into tangible and deeply felt experiences.

Together, these methods create a cyclical process of reflection, action, and transformation. They allow me to "take stock of what is on the shelf," fostering deep introspection into both my personal and professional growth. Through this dynamic interplay of narrative, self-reflection, memory, and creative expression, I develop a deeper understanding of my identity and improve my teaching practices not only for my benefit but for the broader field of education. Now that I have established the importance of my colleagues' stories and how these methodological components interlink, the next section will explore my position within the study and how it has shaped my philosophical stance to make sense of it.

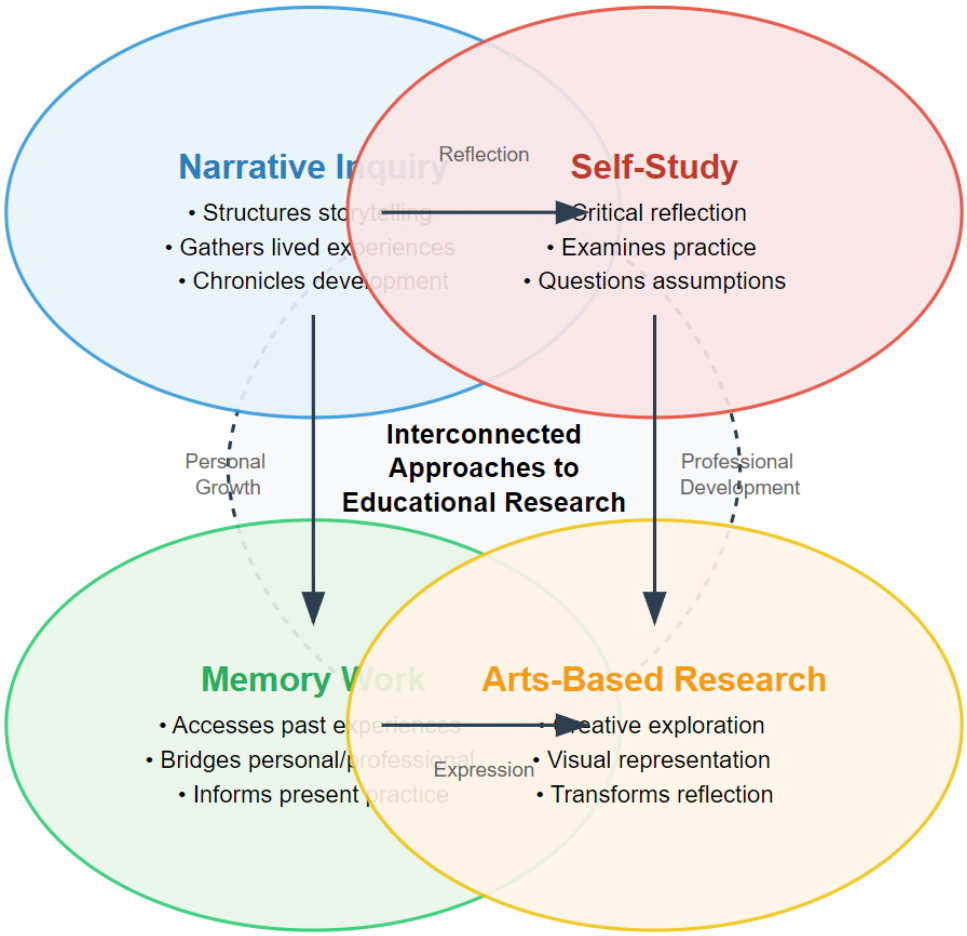


Diagram 1.1: Entwined Narratives: Narrative Inquiry, Self-Study, Memory Work, and Memory Objects Through Arts-Based Research

My positioning, in time and spaces, as I take stock of what is on the shelf

To understand what is represented by my shelf, I propose starting with me. I start with the thought and concept of researcher positionality. According to Holmes (2020), for researchers pursuing PhD or master's studies in the social sciences, it is often important to identify and explain their positionality. The term positionality refers to an individual's worldview and stance regarding research they undertake, including its social and political context. Bukamal (2022) views positionality from a perspective of reflexivity, considering one's attentiveness to the cultural aspects of the research context and how the

researcher's cultural identity, gender, educational background and profession directly influence the topic under study. From an educational perspective, Barends and Brown (2024) further note that a researcher's positionality includes their personal and professional backgrounds, beliefs and biases, which affect how they interpret data and interact with participants in the educational setting (Holmes, 2020). Many novice researchers like myself struggle with defining positionality and describing their positionality. I did not realise how much it has influenced my study until I took time to reflect on feedback I received from my supervisor, calling me to be more critical and connect with my study. So, I took a deep and honest introspection at myself and my experiences.

Thus, I will start here: I am a Black South African male of Malawian and Ndebele descent. I am a Christian, and I often have internal conflicts about how I represent my faith, which have persisted throughout my adult life. I do not particularly enjoy talking and consider myself quite reserved, and often too polite for my own good. I attended former Model C schools[5], where I attended Afrikaans classes until Grade 12. In primary school, I played soccer with my black friends. Once I understood the game's rules, I was praised and felt accepted. However, I was often teased and questioned for not being in the English class. With my white friends, I connected by playing "running red rovers," a tackling game, and received their praises when I mastered it. Despite my efforts to fit in, I never quite belonged to either group. My black friends labelled me a "coconut," implying I was not black enough, while with my white friends, even though at the time I related more to them

[5] According to Christie and McKinney (2017:), Model C schools were established in the final days of apartheid to protect well-resourced white schools from the end of racial privilege. In 1990, the apartheid government created governance options for these schools, transferring significant power to parent bodies and allowing the admission of learners from other races under strict conditions. These "Clase Models," named after Minister Piet Clase, helped maintain white control during the transition and under the post-1994 government of national unity.
Model C schools became semi-private, with management councils handling operations, staff appointments, fee setting, and maintenance. They received state subsidies covering approximately 80% of expenses, with the governing body raising the rest. School properties were transferred to the governing body. These schools had to remain majority white, prioritize white learners, uphold Christian National Education, provide mother-tongue instruction in English and Afrikaans, and maintain traditional values. They stayed tied to white education departments and served other races only if their core characteristics remained unchanged.

because I spent more time with them, I was not white enough to like the blonde-haired, blue-eyed girls. These experiences often led to struggles with my identity.

However, these places of learning hold my earliest and most formative recollections of organised Art Education experiences, instrumental in weaving the rich tapestry of my artistic and educational journey to date. Throughout this narrative, I move between the dimensions of time, space and place extracting meaning from memories inside experiences, which I later in this chapter introduce as rhizomatic pockets as I navigate my ongoing process of personal and professional assemblage of becoming and informing pedagogical practices.

Taking stock of the roles of the Artist, Researcher and Teacher on my shelf

When I started this study, I initially saw myself primarily as a teacher, specifically a Creative Art teacher educator. I viewed my roles as an artist and researcher as less important than my role as a teacher, believing my teaching mainly influenced them. However, as I delved deeper into my study and practised self-reflection, I realised that I had compartmentalised these roles too much, which hindered my growth as a Creative Arts teacher educator.

To understand the different roles I play as an art teacher, I make use of the work of Meyer (2018), recognising that an art teacher encompasses multiple roles, abbreviated as ART theory, representing Artist, Researcher, and Teacher. These roles define the essential aspects of an art teacher's responsibilities, incorporating new skills, theories, and practices that could impact art education practices and knowledge (Thornton, 2013). In contrast to my view of the roles of a Creative Arts teacher educator, Mayer (2018) sees the ART theory roles as interconnected, allowing for the exchange of knowledge and practices among the three ART roles.

In my own practice, I have often neglected the researcher role and only focussed on my role as an artist and teacher (Daichendt, 2009; Zwirn, 2002), which has left the hushed

reverberations of what I would like to refer to as “research” atrophy. As I reflect on my positionality in relation to the ART theory, the point of departure I move from in this study is as a Creative Arts teacher educator, which determines how I interact and engage with the remaining roles of artist and teacher. As my teaching practises occur inside the higher education space, my positionality is challenged through the course of my study as my practices, experiences and interactions with others start informing a differentiated lens from which, in Chapter 4, I start referring to myself as a researcher engaged in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Examining the lenses through which I perceive the empty space on the shelf

Acknowledging that my positionality has significantly influenced the philosophical lens through which I view the world and approach my research is crucial. I enter this study from a quality education perspective, which aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (2015). Specifically, I focus on delivering high-quality Creative Arts education and preparing teachers to provide this education effectively. My stance places Teacher Education programmes, including my own work, at the forefront of delivering quality education in the Creative Arts. I firmly believe that access to quality Creative Arts education is a fundamental right, as it provides opportunities for children and young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures to showcase their learning, express themselves and participate in meaningful artistic activities (Kerby, Lorenza, Dyson, Ewing and Baguley, 2021). This perspective shapes my research approach and highlights the importance of preparing educators who can foster inclusive, engaging and transformative experiences in Creative Arts classrooms. By emphasising the role of Teacher Education in achieving quality Creative Arts teaching, I hope my work can contribute to the broader goal of ensuring quality Arts Education for all learners and students.

Establishing and philosophically grounding my study in sound theory was not as straightforward as I had anticipated. Much of the time, I relied heavily on the theoretical

framework of Biesta (2017). It was not until my supervisor provided feedback on my initial work that I was challenged to scrutinise the theoretical and philosophical lens I had chosen from multiple perspectives and to grasp the deeper implications of the scholar's views. She noted…

> *This is not yet clear... Why are you using this... How have you applied it... Are you aware of other theories that propose different perspectives... Please work more meticulously with your theoretical framework... If you intend to utilise Biesta, you need to delve deeper into his work, providing a comprehensive approach and dissecting his theories from various angles.*

It was then that I realised how awkward and somewhat forced integrating Biesta's work felt in relation to my study goals. Since my undergraduate studies in education, where I first encountered Biesta's influential ideas in literature such as "*Good Education in an Age of Measurement: On the Need to Reconnect with the Question of Purpose in Education*" (2009), I had regarded him as a seminal voice in educational discourse. However, upon a more thorough examination beyond the aspects of his work that initially resonated with me, I concluded that the philosophical lens I had chosen from "*Letting Art Teach*" (2017) was like a beautiful couch in the wrong room, it was beautiful to look at but not optimally functional in the space where I had put it. It offered a little relevance to how I intended to engage students in dialogue with the world (Biesta, 2017). However, it did not adequately address the core issue of reflection on my experiences and how they informed my practices.

After delving into primary sources, reviews of their work, and engaging with discussions on philosophers such as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, whose collaborative work "*A Thousand Plateaus*" (1987) initially posed challenges with how difficult it was to understand but ultimately introduced me to valuable concepts such as rhizome and assemblage, I sought to adopt and rethink these as ontological tools. Additionally, I explored concepts of time and memory from Bergson (1889; 1896), which I discuss further in this chapter.

Realising that I had overlooked two of the most prominent theorists in Art Education, John Dewey and Elliot Eisner, I revisited their work, this time aiming to gain a comprehensive understanding of their ideas and perspectives. I explored "*Art as Experience*" (1934) and "*The Arts and the Creation of Mind*" (2002), respectively, seeking insights into how their theories could enrich my study and broaden my thinking about my problem. Considering the complexity of my study in addressing my experiences of all four art forms (Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama) in the South African Creative Arts curriculum, I struggled with finding a theoretical lens that would illuminate the way to new ways of thinking that might even package my thinking of Creative Arts. This is owing to the complexity of each art form as a discipline. Therefore, I considered Dewy and Eisner's philosophical views as appropriate points of departure for developing my study. They provide a language for what I think about Creative Arts as an experience integral to everyday life.

I want to start with Dewey's (1934) work, coming from an Art Education perspective, taking the stance that when we separate art experiences and objects to an esoteric thinking of art and not as part of the process of everyday life, we lose out on the aesthetic experiences of the arts (Dewey, 1934) as he so eloquently puts in *Arts as Experience*...

> Dancing and pantomime, the sources of the art of the theatre, flourished as part of religious rites and celebrations. Musical art abounded in the fingering of the stretched string, the beating of the taut skin, the blowing with reeds. Even in the caves, human habitations were adorned with coloured pictures that kept alive to the senses experiences with the animals that were so closely bound with the lives of humans. Structures that housed their gods and the instrumentalities that facilitated commerce with the higher powers were wrought with especial fineness. But the arts of the drama, music, painting, and architecture thus exemplified had no peculiar connection with theatres, galleries, museums. They were part of the significant life of an organized community.
>
> (Dewey, 1934)

I do not intend to criticise theatres, galleries or museums in my argument, as they play a crucial role in housing and disseminating the arts. However, I challenge the rigid boundaries and walls that often dictate where art can be experienced and explored.

These traditional institutions do not necessarily give the average person opportunities to engage with the arts genuinely. Instead, they often offer a passive, anaesthetic interaction that diminishes the joy of experiencing art. For those who have never painted, worked with clay, engaged with tableau, or experimented with the elements of dance, these institutions fail to facilitate active learning and meaningful interaction with the arts (Dewey, 1934). This understanding of artistic experiences can be related to what I have seen students say when they describe situations they find difficult to engage with, such as that they "cannot sing," "cannot draw," or that they are "not creative enough" to complete a task that calls for them to produce an artistic piece. These are experiences that we ought to be able to freely engage with and have in the environments we inhabit; by isolating the experience of art from the ordinary to an esoteric purpose, we forfeit the chance for the arts to be integral to the creation of the mind (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002).

The second consideration regarding Dewey's work (1934) is that experiences are continuous occurrences within the relationship between a living being and environmental conditions, such as the spaces we grow, live and occupy. This suggests an inherent relationship from birth between ourselves and the environments we are exposed to. Eisner (2002) expands on this inherent relationship, arguing that these environments play a crucial role in shaping our minds. He posits that our interactions with these spaces significantly influence our cognitive development, shaping how we perceive and engage with the world...

> Mind is not present at birth. Minds are invented when humans interact with the culture in and through which they live. Brains are biological. They are conferred at life's beginning. Minds are cultural.
>
> (Eisner, 2002)

Part of the invention of minds apart from the inherited environment we are born in within our families, the social and political structures we interact with; Eisner (2002) considers the school as being vital to that invention of the mind…

> I want to commend is that schools have something significant to do with the invention of mind. The invention of mind in schools is promoted both by the opportunities located in the curriculum and by the school's wider culture. They are found in the forms of mediation through which the curriculum and schooling as a culture take place. In this sense, the curriculum is, as I indicated earlier, a mind-altering device.
>
> (Eisner, 2002)

As a Creative Arts teacher educator, I am responsible for preparing my students to organise and create spaces where their learners can experience the arts and engage in experimentation, fostering a focus on process over product (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002) and creating an environment for intentional conversations as part of this experience (Eckhoff, 2012). I believe that when places of learning fail to provide opportunities for interaction with Art Education, "the invention of the mind" does not occur, leading to what I call the malnutrition of the mind. To describe the lack of artistic engagement, I borrow the medical term "atrophy" (which I discuss later in this chapter), as it aptly captures the effects of neglect, lack of preparation or disuse in this context.

Considering the importance of space, I wish to expand more on this concept, drawing from Henry Lefebvre's (1991) influential theory on the Production of Space, De Villiers, Van Rooi, Biscombe and Constandius (2023) define space as a triad of conceived, perceived and lived aspects, encompassing both physical and experiential dimensions. De Villiers et al, (2023) further posit that spaces possess a unique ability to shape and be shaped by individuals, imbued with sociocultural meanings that can foster inclusion or exclusion, privileging certain groups over others based on factors such as social status, culture, race, and gender. In my understanding, space encompasses the physical and lived environments that are influenced by the sociocultural variables that inform how I interact with these spaces, materials and the individuals within them. Throughout this journey, I grapple with how I have experienced different physical spaces through memories and lived experiences and how these experiences as rhizomatic pockets over time have informed my interactions and approach to my assemblage of becoming as a Creative Arts teacher educator.

Place, on the other hand, imbues space with deeper meaning and significance beyond its physical attributes. As Kruger (2021) articulates, place is not a static backdrop for human actions; rather, it is dynamic, constantly evolving and being reshaped through the interactions, practices and lived experiences that unfold within its boundaries. Place carries profound political and ethical implications, shaping and being shaped by the narratives, identities and power dynamics that intersect within its confines (Kruger, 2021). This dimension of place holds truth in the notion that the meaning people attribute to spaces is shaped by their interactions with and experiences within those spaces over time. Space cannot truly exist or hold significance if it is not imbued with meaning by its inhabitants. Similarly, I attach varying meanings to different spaces based on how I relate to them, how I observe them changing, and my experiences within their boundaries.

I would also like to acknowledge and contextualise the foregoing thoughts from Dewey and Eisner's work and discuss its significance for my research. From an experiential perspective, my journey as a Creative Arts teacher educator has been profoundly influenced by the places I have encountered and the people with whom I have connected. In many ways, I am a product of all the environments and interactions I have experienced. Based on my observations of their development, this principle applies equally to my students. Furthermore, the educational environments I create and engage with, hold great potential for what Eisner (2002) terms "the invention of the mind." This is particularly relevant in my role as a Creative Arts teacher educator as my methods of preparing students will ultimately impact the learners they will teach in the future. However, this is where the rhizomatic pockets of my experiences and my awareness of them become valuable as they inform how my students experience Creative Arts. In the next section, I provide the reader with a discussion and illustration of my understanding of what I term rhizomatic pockets.

Rhizomatic Pockets

My understanding of my experiences as rhizomatic pockets is informed by Bergson's (1889) work on how they can be retrieved and used to inform the present. Bergson's (1889) exploration of time challenges the notion of time being mechanical and quantifiable using clocks. He critiques this notion of time by noting that it is spatialised, separating time into distinct equal segments in a linear fashion. He argues that this spatialised view of time fails to capture the richness, complexity and true nature of lived experiences. Bergson (1889) further argues for a more qualitative, nuanced and subjective understanding of time, which he referred to as duration; the lived experience of time continuously flowing. Duration is time that is more concerned with the quality of lived, felt experiences and individuals' perceptions that unfold over time (Bergson, 1889). It is inside of duration where memories exist, and our past constantly informs how we approach the present and the future (Bergson, 1889). Memories are a dynamic interaction process between the past and the present, and recollection translates into creating the present and the future (Bergson, 1889).

I consider time from the perspective of two divergent yet interconnected flows: the past, which persists through memory and lived experiences, and the present, constantly unfolding and shaping my future (Müller, Le Roux and Kruger, 2022). In my study, time serves as an ontological tool, shaping the present moment and producing differences over time as I become increasingly self-aware and conscious of my identity as an Artist, Researcher, Teacher and human being (Meyer, 2018; Sefotho, 2018, Thornton, 2013). However, it is difficult to consider time and memory without Kahneman (2010), who identifies this from a perspective of the existence of two selves: the experiencing self and the remembering self. He argues that the experiencing self knows only the present moment. In contrast, the remembering self is a storyteller and can dictate our actions when we think of the future as an anticipated memory which holds that memories exist and can only be retrieved inside experiences (Kahneman, 2010). Furthermore, Dewey (1934) provides a more practical consideration of time, particularly the past, not thinking of it as a burden on the present regarding regrets of the past; however, as a storehouse of infinite resources, we can access in the present to inform our future.

> Most mortals are conscious that a split often occurs between their present living and their past and future. Then the past hangs upon them as a burden; it invades the present with a sense of regret, of opportunities not used, and of consequences we wish undone. It rests upon the present as an oppression, instead of being a storehouse of resources by which to move confidently forward. But the live creature adopts its past; it can make friends with even its stupidities, using them as warnings that increase present wariness. Instead of trying to live upon whatever may have been achieved in the past, it uses past successes to inform the present. Every living experience owes its richness to what Santayana well calls “hushed reverberations”
>
> (Dewey, 1934)

This approach to thinking about time considers experiences as a resource of infinite possibilities, latching on to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) philosophical concept of rhizomes, which holds a non-linear and non-hierarchal structure or mode of organisation existing of multiple points of entry and departure. Furthermore, it represents a framework for understanding knowledge, culture and society in a non-hierarchal and interconnected manner without a central point (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). From the perspective of my study, this concept considers our experiences as rhizomatic pockets that allow for learning from the multiple storehouses of the past to inform the present and the future (Maartens-Van Vuuren, 2019). Moreover, rhizomatic pockets also acknowledge the multiplicity (May, 2001) of exploring artistic ideas informed by my students’ experiences and the lenses through which they view the world. Lastly, they also acknowledge the value of rhizomatic pockets of knowing and experiences of fellow Creative Arts teacher educators as nodes for alternative perspectives to Creative Arts Education.

You might ask, what on earth do these rhizomatic pockets look like, and what are they? I want to interrupt myself for the benefit of the reader at this point and to retrieve a memory from my rhizomatic pockets in 2024…

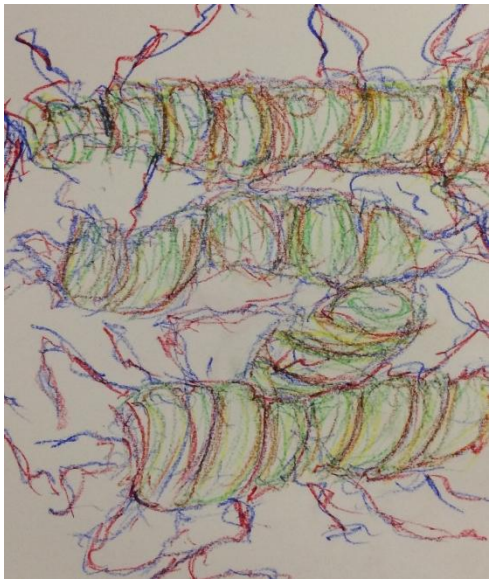
> *During a discussion with a colleague about our research, the topic of rhizomatic learning came up. I mentioned that I perceive my experiences as existing within complex and non-linear rhizomatic pockets, which serve as storehouses of information that I can draw from*

to inform my present and future actions. My colleague, who was familiar with rhizomatic thinking, asked me where my rhizomatic pockets were located. She showed me an image she found online and mentioned that she was trying to colour-code her understanding of rhizomatic learning on that image but was unsure where to place everything.

I initially considered using an image of 'Multiple Ginger Roots Representing Rhizomatic Pockets' in Table 1.1. I shared my image with her, but it didn't fully reflect the multiplicity of what I had in mind about rhizomatic pockets. After our conversation, I reflected on our discussion and realized that my conceptual understanding of rhizomatic pockets might be too abstract for the reader. I decided to relate it to something more tangible and relatable.

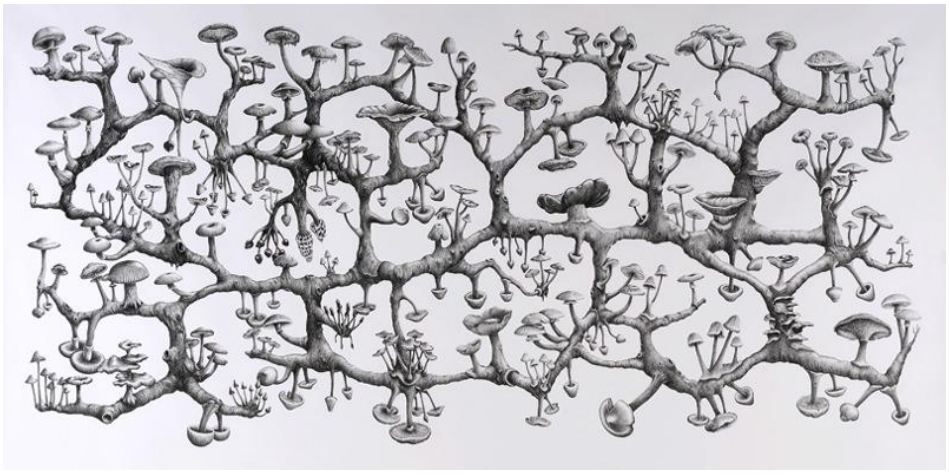
I explored the idea of 'A Basket Filled with Strings' in Table 1.1 and thought of those as rhizomatic pockets representing different experiences. As I shared the various ways I had used the strings in my practices, my colleague elaborated on how she would use them differently based on her own experiences. She also explained how taking a rhizome (string) from the network of the rhizomatic system and applying it elsewhere could serve a different purpose. The strings symbolized rhizomatic pockets of experiences that exist across time and different spaces and could be retrieved and used for various purposes in the present and the future.

Table 1.1: Process of Developing My Rhizomatic Pockets



Multiple Ginger Roots Representing Rhizomatic Pockets

A Basket Filled with Strings



Richard Giblett, Mycelium Rhizome, 2006-2009. Courtesy of the artist, In Menken (2019)

I revisited the image of 'Richard Giblett, Mycelium Rhizome,' in Table 1.1, with my reader in mind. The discussions I had with my colleague about rhizomatic thinking inspired me to create a visual representation of Rhizomatic Pockets. In Figure 1.2, Rhizomatic Pockets, I aimed to illustrate these pockets as repositories of memories and experiences, accessible to inform the present and the future. The rhizomatic structure of my image portrays interconnected branches that represent the intricate, non-linear nature of my past experiences, which I draw upon to inform my present and future practices. The coloured bags/pockets hanging from the branches symbolize the repositories of information and knowledge. These pockets can be accessed when necessary and offer different perspectives based on the different times and spaces I have occupied as a Creative Arts teacher educator (De Villiers et al, 2023). From the rhizomatic pockets, additional branches extend with orbs representing nodes with potential for new pathways (Müller et al., 2022). Some of these orbs have thorns, symbolizing the painful consequences of some of my well-intentioned actions informed by my rhizomatic pockets.

The ladders in the image symbolize the connections and pathways I create between different rhizomatic pockets in various spaces and time frames as a Creative Arts teacher educator. They represent the process of reflecting, pondering on past experiences, and reaching new insights (Dewey, 1934). The stick figures integrated into the composition depict me navigating the complex rhizomatic messiness of my experiences. The figure at the far-left bottom reflects me sitting, reflecting, and pondering on my experiences. The second figure at the top left shows me in action, trying to navigate and make sense of my experiences. The middle figure and the top right figure represent me looking outward from my rhizomatic structure to living and non-living entities to see what I can learn from them and the spaces I occupy. The fourth figure represents climbing the ladder, symbolizing the present self that has reflected and pondered on past experiences and reached new insights. The fifth figure on the far-right side represents the self who often feels like I am hanging by a thread in Creative Arts Teacher Education with the multiple roles of being an Artist, Researcher, and Teacher. All these figures represent the present self, travelling

to the past to navigate and wrestle with the complexities of my past experiences and make sense of them to inform my present and future self.

The different clocks symbolise the centrality of time to rhizomatic pockets, as they are embedded within time itself. Drawing on Bergson (1889), these clocks represent the quality of my lived experiences and how my perceptions evolve and unfold over time. Memories exist within duration, and the past continuously influences how I approach the present and the future (Bergson, 1889). The integration of clocks within my rhizomatic structure reflects the dynamic interaction between the past and the present, shaping both the present and the future. By drawing on these rich philosophical perspectives, I aim to use my rhizomatic pockets to understand how past experiences can be dynamically retrieved and utilised to inform present and future actions. This concept integrates the non-linear, interconnected nature of experiences, memories, and learning, positioning them as valuable resources contributing to ongoing self-awareness and development. In the following section, I will further explore another concept from Deleuze and Guattari (1987), namely assemblage theory, to discuss the development of my assemblage of becoming as I learn from my rhizomatic pockets.

Figure 1.2: Rhizomatic Pockets, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2024

My Assemblage of Becoming

I want to highlight the significance of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) assemblage theory as an essential component in my study. I am drawing from their original conception of the theory and striving to ensure that my use and understanding of the concept is not superficial, even within the context of my study (Buchanan, 2017). Anderson (2015) states that the assemblage theory challenges traditional ideas about the relationships between parts and wholes. Unlike the concept of organic and seamless entities, the assemblage theory suggests that wholes are formed by the combination of separate and individual parts (Anderson, 2015; Müller and Schurr, 2016; Nail, 2017). This means that parts can function independently, become part of assembled wholes, be removed from them, and become part of something new (Müller and Schurr, 2016). Assemblage theory emphasizes how the relationships between these parts are redefined by components internal to the assemblage and external components that inform the ongoing process (Müller and Schurr, 2016).

My rhizomatic pockets revolve around the interaction and relationship between time, living entities (such as my students, colleagues, myself, and people in my social circles), and the social, environmental, and material contexts. Bringing all these elements into the Creative Arts experience, I refer to it as the assemblage of becoming in my study. This assemblage highlights the convergence of these experiences from the rhizomatic pockets to shape the present and the future. It aims to create learning environments that transform me and influence how my students experience Creative Arts.

I find time fascinating from the perspective of two divergent yet interconnected flows: the past, which endures through memory and lived experiences, and the constantly unfolding present, which shapes my future (Müller et al., 2022). In my research, time serves as an ontological tool, shaping the present and creating differences over time as I become more self-aware and conscious of my identity as an artist, educator, and human being (Müller et al., 2022; Sefotho, 2018). Memory is challenging without referencing Kahneman (2010), who posits the existence of two selves: the experiencing self and the

remembering self. He argues that the experiencing self only knows the present moment, while the remembering self, shapes our actions by telling stories about anticipated memories when thinking about the future. Kahneman suggests that memories can only be retrieved from experiences.

Our experiences as people are preserved in time. The only way we can recall and learn from them in the present and future is through memories contained within those experiences. I like to think of these memories as rhizomatic pockets originating from different moments in time and space. Over time, these pockets develop into new life nodes and transform into different forms of existence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). They also function as repositories of knowledge when we begin to perceive them in that way (Dewey, 1934; Müller, 2023). These rhizomatic pockets can retrieve information to inform the present and the future, continuously forming an assemblage of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Therefore, in this assemblage of becoming, I will go back in time to retrieve memories from the rhizomatic pockets in time, in the place of the remembering self, who is a storyteller. However, doing so will inform new nodes to my rhizomatic pockets.

Therefore, throughout this self-study, I aim to examine and unpack how revisiting memories inside experiences critically (rhizomatic pockets) from the spaces and places I have inhabited and the sociocultural dynamics that permeated those environments has influenced my pedagogical practices, beliefs, and overall approach to teaching and learning as a Creative Arts teacher educator.

By engaging in a reflexive process of collecting and analysing memories from various points in time, I seek to explore the complex interplay between the physical spaces I have occupied, the sociocultural contexts that shaped those spaces, and how these factors have impacted my development as a Creative Arts teacher educator. Through this introspective journey, I endeavour to understand how lived experiences, interactions and power dynamics unfolded within these spaces have informed my pedagogical practices and relationships with my students.

Like the Avengers in Endgame, who had to confront their pasts and empty themselves of preconceived notions to retrieve the Infinity Stones and save the future, I too must confront my past, examine my positionality and empty myself of biases to achieve transformation in my pedagogical practices. In Endgame, the Avengers revisit significant moments from their past, extracting meaning and understanding to inform the present and future. Similarly, my self-study requires me to revisit my past experiences as rhizomatic pockets and storehouses that inform my identity and positionality and understand how these factors have influenced my present self.

The Avengers' journey is also marked by the duality of their experiencing and remembering selves. They must confront their past actions and decisions (their remembering selves) to understand their current roles and responsibilities (their experiencing selves). This mirrors Kahneman's (2010) concept of the two selves, where my remembering self, retrieves and analyses memories from my rhizomatic pockets to inform my present actions and future teaching for improved pedagogical practices as I put together my assemblage of becoming to develop better programmes.

The film's portrayal of time travel also resonates with the idea that space cannot truly exist without being infused with meaning by its inhabitants. The past spaces the Avengers visit are significant precisely because of the memories and experiences they hold. These places carry profound emotional, social, political, ethical and personal implications as the heroes' actions in the past ripple through time, shaping their narratives. Moreover, the Avengers' mission is a collaborative effort, relying on the strengths and perspectives of each member. My approach to self-study and ABR similarly involves collaboration and reflexivity, drawing on the insights of my supervisor, peers and student engagement to enrich my practice. These human connections also form part of rhizomatic pockets serving as storehouses for new nodes that inform my constant assemblage of becoming. The Avengers' journey through different spaces and time to collect the Infinity Stones

parallels my exploration of different physical and sociocultural spaces and time frames, understanding how they shape and constantly alter my mind (Eisner, 2002), identity and pedagogical practices.

The time travel in Avengers: Endgame is a metaphor for the reflective process in self-study research. As I delve into my past to understand how spaces and experiences have shaped my identity and practice as a Creative Arts teacher educator, the Avengers traverse their history to redefine their present selves and shape a future imbued with hope and redemption. Their journey highlights that our identities and practices are not static but are continually shaped by drawing on rhizomatic pockets through the interplay of time, the spaces we inhabit and the memories we carry. In the next section, I draw on these rhizomatic pockets as I visit two significant memories from primary school that profoundly impacted my Arts Education experiences and conclude the section with my high school experiences.

Let us time travel!

Chapter 2: Navigating the Rhizomatic Pockets of My Experiences

My experiences in Art Education during my school years

In the upcoming scene, the Avengers discuss their time travel mission to retrieve the infinity stones from different points in time. They debate their theories and scientific arguments to understand how to use time travel. This marks their first successful exploration of time. In this section, I would like to delve into my first experience of time travel, drawing on memory objects and memories retrieved from conversations with my family…

> **“BRUCE BANNER**: *Clint, now you're gonna feel a little discombobulated from the chronoshift. Don't worry about it.*
>
> **RHODEY**: *Wai-Wait a second, let me ask you something. If we can do this, you know, go back in time, why don't we just find baby Thanos, you know, and... [he makes a hand gesture suggesting that they strangle baby Thanos with a rope.]*
>
> **BRUCE BANNER**: *[Disgusted] First of all, that's horrible...*
>
> **RHODEY**: [In a tone that says it's what we're all thinking.] *It's Thanos.*
>
> **BRUCE BANNER**: *...And secondly, time doesn't work that way. Changing the past doesn't change the future.*
>
> **SCOTT LANG**: *Look, we go back, we get the stones before Thanos gets them... Thanos doesn't have the stones. Problem solved.*
>
> **CLINT BARTON**: *Bingo.*
>
> **NEBULA**: *That's not how it works.*
>
> **CLINT BARTON**: *Well, that's what I heard.*
>
> **BRUCE BANNER**: *What? By who? Who told you that?*

RHODEY: *[counting with his fingers] Star Trek, Terminator, Time Cop, Time After Time -*

SCOTT LANG: *Quantum Leap*

RHODEY: *A Wrinkle in Time, Somewhere in Time -*

SCOTT LANG: *Hot Tub Time Machine -*

RHODEY: *Hot Tub Time Machine. Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure. Basically, any movie that deals with time travel.*

SCOTT LANG: *Die Hard? No, it's not one...*

RHODEY: *This is known.*

BRUCE BANNER: *I don't know why everyone believes that, but that isn't true. Think about it: If you travel to the past, that past becomes your future. And your former present becomes the past. Which can't now be changed by your new future...*

NEBULA*: Exactly.*

SCOTT LANG: *So... Back To The Future's a bunch of bullshit?*

BRUCE BANNER: *[Turning to Clint] Alright, Clint. We're going in 3... 2... 1!"*

(Markus and Mcfeely, 2019)

The first memory I would like to go back in time to is 2001, when I was in primary school…

After moving from the North-West, where my sister Lulu and I were first exposed to an Afrikaans school in 2000, we learned to communicate in the language in just about a year. There was still quite a lot I was still learning about these fluffy-haired and pale-skinned children that, at the time for me, seemed to all look alike. I can still remember how our parents broke the news before we went to the school; they told us we would be going to an Afrikaans school, with the fear and excitement of what was being shared, my Dad ended the conversation with these words, "Don't disrespect anyone there but you don't take any nonsense from anyone." These words he often repeated throughout my life, and I still live with their hushed reverberations today. However, at the time, I did not realise

how much those words would help me navigate the different social nuances in the spaces of learning and work. As I think of this now, I would like to think that the message he was trying to get across to us was, don't be afraid; you belong as much as the white children you will find in the classrooms you will be learning in and the professional environments you will go to occupy. Quite a loaded message for an 8- and 5-year-old...

After leaving the North-West, my family and I settled in what was then a small town called Akasia, just north of Pretoria and still relatively close to the North-West provincial border. During this time, my mother resumed her career and could not pick us up from school early. As a result, we joined the aftercare programme, allowing our parents to complete their workday before fetching us. The aftercare programme offered several extracurricular activities, including music, arts and crafts. When I asked my mother how we ended up in Juffrou Ansie's class, she explained that it was to prevent us from getting bored at aftercare. She enrolled us in music, arts and crafts. Unfortunately, Lulu and I did not enjoy music very much. When I asked Lulu why, she said the teacher looked strict and had an unfriendly demeanour. I agreed, recalling, 'Oh yes, I remember. It was an intimidating class.' Noticing our preference for arts and crafts class with Juffrou Ansie, our parents decided to continue with those classes.

Figure 2.1 is an image that represents an object that evokes memories from that specific time and space. Taken on my very first photo day at the school, this image depicts a scene seven years after the end of apartheid in 1994, a period when South Africa was undergoing significant social and educational reforms. Schools were becoming more integrated, with efforts to provide equal educational opportunities for all racial groups. The image showcases a mixture of learners from different racial backgrounds, reflecting South Africa's diverse population and the post-apartheid era's strides towards an inclusive educational environment. The text on the board is in Afrikaans, indicating that the school used it as the medium of instruction, catering to a predominantly Afrikaans-speaking community at the time.

Figure 2.1: My first formal art class with Juffrou Ansie

However, my fondest and most cherished memory about this image is the classes we had with Juffrou Ansie. What I remember most about these classes was how she fostered a sense of belonging, irrespective of one's perceived creative abilities. There was something profoundly gentle yet very stern, welcoming and human about the way she cultivated this inclusive atmosphere. In contrast, I remember encountering other white teachers at my old school who neither looked at nor spoke to me the way Juffrou Ansie did. Ideas mattered in her class and sharing them felt safe. More importantly, I understood what I was doing; her teaching clarified the tasks and concepts.

I fondly recall her small figure seated by the demonstration table, peering over her glasses to ensure she had everyone's attention before beginning, almost inviting us to come and see that there was something worthwhile in the demonstration, inviting us to take part in the process of experiencing Art (Biesta, 2017; Dewey, 1934). In my teaching practice as a Creative Arts educator, I relive this memory every time I introduce a new project or material that requires demonstration. I often strive to create that same nurturing

environment where every student feels valued, secure and capable of understanding the work. These repeated acts of demonstration, inspired by Juffrou Ansie's approach, have profoundly impacted how I introduce students to new ideas, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning space (Odendaal, 2016).

> *When Juffrou Ansie introduced us to pottery and ceramic clay and the idea of moving from two-dimensional to three-dimensional work, I mainly took great interest in it, starting from pinching, coiling, slab building and slipping. It is just something I enjoyed, and I wanted to explore it further as a medium. So, coming back in time, in 2023, I decided to try and reconnect with this part of myself again and started attending pottery classes (Figure 2.2). Maybe I was a little glazed and confused, as my apron suggested at the time, glazed and looking like I knew what I was doing on the outside but experiencing much turmoil inwardly regarding my practices in the time and space (2023) I found myself and with the direction of my research. I wanted to incorporate this significant part of my life into my study (and, in many ways, wish to be a practising ceramicist/potter). However, I did not know how to do it without it being connected to my study. I had initially used ABR as a data collection tool in my master's study, Chisale (2016), but never as a tool to tell a narrative and collect and analyse data. This was an opportunity for discovery and learning.*
>
> *As I went to my first lesson, the instructor, who I will call Lizzy, at first looked very unfriendly. However, a few minutes into the session, she started asking questions about my interest in pottery and what line of work I do; I told her I teach Creative Arts. She paused for a moment and said oh, what is that? So, I explained, and she then asked me, do you also break down your students? Confused, I then asked: 'What do you mean?' She explained her stance: I have many people here who are from universities, and they are all broken and come here to relearn to love art again...*

This was a very generalised statement but one that I could believe to be true for some people, but I did not know enough about other art programmes to have this posture. However, it was something I had seen in my teacher preparation when I was studying (I delve into this memory in Chapter 3)

… As we started working with the clay, she looked at me as I was wedging the clay and asked, have you ever worked with clay? You seem to know your way around it. I responded and said, it has been 20-odd years, but yes, I have. 'Then I do not have to guide you as much,' Lizzy responded.

I enjoyed the messy process, much like the self-study research I've been doing. It felt like wrestling with clay - pinching, removing, and forming it into what I wanted it to be. This process mirrored the exploration of becoming that I am studying. Using different tools and assembling parts together to form a whole took me back to Juffrou Ansie's class.

Figure 2.2: My first pottery class in over 20 years, 2023.

The second memory was of another Art Education teacher during primary school, Juffrou Bets…

She was always impeccably dressed, often in a two or three-piece outfit, with her short hair and always with her signature red lips. Her appearance subtly hinted at her exceptional music knowledge and skills. She introduced us to the music of different cultures, broadening our musical horizons. Juffrou Bets' ability to play the piano allowed her to lead us with beautiful melodies to sing along to, creating a captivating experience as we sat on her classroom floor. She was truly in her element during these sessions,

guiding us in song. There was something remarkable about how she incorporated various components of the performing arts into her music teaching. Though she was strict, she was consistently fair.

Although she taught other art forms such as dance, drama and visual arts, she seemed most at home with music. I assume she was formally trained in music but did her best to teach other art forms. For instance, in Visual Arts, she taught us about the South African flag and the meaning of its colours. In Drama and Dance, we would go to the rugby field or the school hall to create work that addressed social issues. Not fully aware of socio-political issues at the time, she would always bring newspaper articles about recent events in society and paste them on the window outside her classroom and use them as an introductory conversation as we start with the lesson. She infused her teaching with addressing current social issues, creating a space for patriotism about South Africa and its various cultures. In retrospect, she embodied everything I hope to be as a Creative Arts teacher educator. She was brave, pushing the boundaries of what was possible to teach in Art and Culture classes at the time and I am perhaps still searching for that in my practice.

One memory of her still lodged in my mind was the appointment of Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as the country's deputy president…

Her excitement was tangible and infectious. Although I was not fully aware of what apartheid was at the time, conversations in the social spaces I grew up in and the more recent history suggested that white people in governance would not be favourable for black people; so, surely, they would want white people to be in power again. I wondered how this white lady could be so excited about a black person's leadership progress. Her excitement about the prominence of artists such as Miriam Makeba, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and Johnny Clegg in South African history was equally infectious. I think she viewed the world differently, suggesting a social justice perspective and perhaps understanding Art Education's power in addressing social issues and uniting us as people from different cultures in the classroom from a young age (Koster, 2015). Much of what she taught was not only from a Eurocentric perspective but balanced the African and European content in her teaching…

Looking back, I would have loved to have had a teacher like her in my high school years (2006-2010). She would have challenged different ways of thinking in me and my peers because, in many ways, I still believe she was ahead of her time in how she taught us.

What makes these memories from 2001-2005 significant is how vital this initial exposure to Art Education was in developing a positive attitude and appreciation for the arts. These moments provided a lens through which I could later view Art Education as central to addressing social issues, fostering social cohesion and serving as a vehicle for social justice, especially developing visual literacy and communicating effectively using visual, symbolic, and/or language skills in various modes. This is also confirmed by Westraadt (2015), who notes that the goal of Art Education is to provide learners with the space to become critical citizens. These citizens should know how to think independently, communicate effectively, appreciate diversity, and be visually literate in their interactions with and understanding of the world around them (Westraadt, 2015). Moreover, keeping to the ideals of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) “to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights” as articulated in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). In these two memories, Art Education mattered; it was not merely entertainment or a filler subject but a place for learning. Moreover, it introduced a sense of belonging to a black child struggling with his identity at the time. However, this also points out the significance of these two very different Art Educators in developing and forming attributes of lifelong engagement with the arts.

As I reflect on my present self, perhaps something significant about exposing learners to specific skills at a young age allows them to develop those knowledge, skills and attitudes towards the arts as indicated in the National Curriculum Statement 2003. This involved the ability to learn to use arts equipment, techniques and materials, and know art terminology for each art form and guided to forming Values and Attitudes through simulated opportunities to learn to develop socialising/interpersonal skills (DoE 2003). In my current day practice drawing on what Eisner (2002) refers to as the invention of the mind, I have found that preparing my students also to transfer these skills to their own

learners is challenging and in many ways, I still question if I am in any way getting this right and often sitting with self-doubt and questioning if I am doing a good enough job as a Creative Arts teacher educator. However, I would like to hold the thought here for a moment as I would like to connect it with another rhizomatic pocket, and I go back to retrieve memories from my Art Education memories during my high school years…

Crossing over to my high school years (2006-2010), I had Creative Arts from 2006 to 2009 and Visual Arts from 2008 to 2010…

> *I remember my Creative Arts teacher as rather eccentric. She wore oversized clothes and often taught as if she were uninterested in being at school. Despite this, she was very kind and understanding. I suspect she was a practising artist because she frequently spent time in the pottery room during art class.*
>
> *After having the Creative Arts teacher in Grades 8 and 9, I took Visual Arts from Grades 10 to 12. My Visual Arts teacher was still young and had moved from another province to teach at our school. She often shouted and, at least once a week, warned us not to try her patience because she was not in the mood. This created a tense atmosphere in the classroom, and her teaching style was very structured and textbook-oriented. I recall a memory from my Grade 12 year (2010) during Visual Arts theory lessons. From a theory perspective, she skipped certain textbook content, stating that it was disturbing work and, therefore, would not discuss it in class. I particularly remember skipping over Jane Alexander's "Butcher Boys" (Figure 2.3), which I would discover later was a prominent piece of contemporary protest art. Perhaps we should have questioned her more, as this might reflect how we perceived power dynamics in the classroom and why we did not challenge or seek her perspectives…*

However, this hesitation affected what I would like to view as our exposure to crucial contemporary art. It took away a valuable learning opportunity to engage in individual thinking and develop visual literacy skills that would shape how we viewed the world (Westraadt, 2015).

Figure 2. 3: Jane Alexander, Butcher Boys, plaster, paint, bone, horns, wooden bench, 1985 – 6

From a practical perspective, I think she was not always comfortable with unconventional work that deviated from two-dimensional projects. I once peeked into the pottery room and asked her if I could explore my work using clay. She looked at me with some hesitation and said, "As jy dit wil doen, is dit ok, maar ek moet vir jou waarsku, as dit bars terwyl dit bak, is ek nie verantwoordelik nie. Ek raai aan dat jy iets doen wat vir jou nie probleme sal gee nie.[6]" Naturally, with my very polite and non-confrontational personality, I explored something else on a two-dimensional surface. I used to be critical of both my high school art teachers (Creative Arts and Visual Arts). However, as I reflect on my past and consider my present self, I realise that they were also products of their own

[6] Translation: If you want to do it, that's fine, but I must warn you, if it cracks while baking, I am not responsible. I suggest you do something that won't give you problems.

experiences, which could have informed their approaches to teaching art education (Altan and Lane, 2018; Schaefer, 2022).

Considering this thought, I thought of this as a poignant time in my study to reflect on how my aforementioned school experiences still inform my practice as a Creative Arts teacher educator, and I wish to explore this more in the next chapter as I explore my Teacher Education in relation to my school experiences. However, I also believe that these experiences influenced how I see myself as a Creative Arts teacher educator and how I have developed and, in some cases, experienced what I would like to refer to as atrophy in the invention of the mind in my art knowledge and skills.

As I reflected on my high school experiences, I contemplated what these experiences meant to me as a Creative Arts teacher educator. I viewed this period as one where artistic expression was present but limited in challenging different ways of thinking. I felt that the artist in me was not adequately nourished. This led me to the medical term "atrophy," which aptly describes the effects of neglect and lack of preparation in this context as previously indicated in this chapter (Gutierrez and Haak, 2023). I will use this term throughout my study to describe different kinds of atrophy. In medicine, atrophy refers to wasting away or reducing a body part's size due to a lack of use or illness, ultimately decreasing its function (Gutierrez and Haak, 2023). This concept mirrors the impact of my experiences and decisions on my role as a scholar. Specifically, "disuse atrophy" describes the atrophy caused by inactivity, which can often be reversed with exercise and proper nutrition.

In my study, I view "disuse atrophy" through a retrospective lens, reflecting on the different phases of my Art Education experiences (Gutierrez and Haak, 2023). I consider how the lack of activity in certain aspects of my development as a Creative Arts teacher educator has hindered my progress as the scholar I aspire to be. Additionally, I see atrophy in relation to the invention of the mind as something that also happens to learners in a Creative Arts classroom who are still in basic education and depend on their teacher to nourish their creativity, ideas and imagination. This highlights the importance of preparing

to provide learning opportunities that push the boundaries of learning. When this does not happen, learners risk suffering atrophy in the invention of the mind.

I do not absolve myself from the role I played in experiencing my own atrophy during different phases of my journey. I recognise my central role in both past and present experiences of atrophy. I also acknowledge the potential atrophy my students may have experienced in my classes due to my lack of self-awareness and certain shortcomings. Therefore, I see this as an opportunity to repair or reverse this artistic atrophy's effects and learn from past decisions to better inform my present and future actions. Moreover, it perhaps puts me in a space where I put myself in the shoes of the people who prepared them to be Art educators, and after seeing them teach, how would I better inform my teaching going forward? In the next section, I wish to give an overview of my higher education and career and a better context from where my interest in my study emanated.

How did I get to be a Creative Arts teacher educator?

Before this doctoral study, I acquired a B.Ed degree in Human Movement Studies and chose to specialise in Visual Arts and Music (2014). I furthered my education by obtaining a B.Ed Honours in Assessment and Quality Assurance in Education and Training (2016) and a Master's in Education, focusing on institutional practices shaping Art Education student-teacher attitudes towards community engagement (2020).

In 2015, I began my career as a part-time Visual Arts lecturer, preparing Foundation Phase students to teach and incorporate Visual Arts as a Creative Arts component into their teaching. Personally, I did not think it went very well, but my Head of Department (HoD) and course coordinator seemed satisfied with my work. So, my contract was extended for another year. In 2016, I was given another opportunity to lecture part-time, this time with a broader focus on different phases, including Foundation, Intermediate, Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) students, to teach and incorporate Visual Arts and Creative Arts. During this phase, I was still figuring out my role as an art

teacher educator and struggled significantly to find my academic voice, often feeling inadequate for the position. Eventually, at the end of 2016, I resigned and returned to an administrative role I had occupied at the university before I started teaching.

In 2017, while working in an administrative role, the course coordinator of a Service-Learning module was short-staffed and needed someone with a background in community engagement. My master's focused on community engagement, so I lectured on that module for a year. This experience allowed me to build confidence and address some of the issues I was facing. In 2018, I had another opportunity to teach Visual Arts, with fewer students, focusing on second-year practical and fourth-year art methodology and running the art community engagement project I inherited from a colleague. In the same year, my M.Ed supervisor, who challenged my thinking as a teacher, artist and engaged scholar, informed me about a maternity leave post at a prominent Afrikaans school in Pretoria and suggested I apply to build my confidence and gain insight into the schooling environment. I applied and got the post, which laid the foundation for dealing with my self-doubt at the time. At the end of 2018, although I had the opportunity to stay at the school, my heart was set on Teacher Education. So, at the start of 2019, I accepted another contract at the university, focusing only on the fourth-year methodology module. This meant it would be a financially challenging year as I was being remunerated based on the hours and modules I teach.

I remained at the university from 2015 to 2019. Subsequently, I secured a post at an English private school to teach Creative Arts, Visual Arts and Design. However, this position was short-lived. In late January of that year, I received a missed call from a woman who left a voicemail asking if I was interested in teaching at their university. She mentioned being referred by a colleague who had worked with me (my old HoD, who apparently thought I did a good job). I called her back and expressed my interest. She informed me that the post would be advertised soon and I should follow the application process.

Three months later, I got the post and started teaching Creative Arts, transitioning from only teaching Visual Arts to now focusing on all four Creative Arts components: Visual

Arts, Music, Dance and Drama. This period was filled with moments of self-doubt about my abilities as a Creative Arts teacher educator. I often felt like I was juggling multiple specialisations, questioning the quality of my output. However, the positives far outweighed the negatives. I learned to be adaptable in my lifelong learning journey, finding strategies to better engage student learning and becoming more introspective and self-aware about my practice and its impact on my students. Although I wished to be more active in research, I gained significant knowledge about my teaching practices.

During this time, I met Dr M, who insisted I call her by her first name, perhaps breaking the barriers and considering me an equal in the knowledge creation process (Jansen, 2013) challenging my thinking as a researcher and helping me grow significantly as a scholar. It was here where I also met Dr K, who also did not want to be referred to by his title, who invited me to a special interest group (SIG) and often asked me to deliver commentary on postgraduate work that was related to my field of interest during some of the SIG sessions. I often wondered if this man was sure he wanted me to say something about this student's work. Even though I was extremely uncertain of myself then and felt like I did not know what I was doing, this was an instrumental tool to help me realise the importance of my voice in scholarly discourse.

I remained at this university for three years, from 2019 to 2022. For personal reasons, I moved back to Pretoria and took a post at a private institution there, intending to take a break from research and focus solely on teaching. Looking back, this decision led to atrophy relating to my research skills, as I did not need to keep up with research and scholarly discourse, and perhaps from my initial intention, it was inevitable. At this institution, the focus of the core business of the institution was on teaching. My teaching was focused on the performing arts: Music, Dance and Drama, taught in a hybrid format, which included asynchronous, synchronous and face-to-face teaching. This changed my perspective on the possibilities of teaching Creative Arts online and rethinking the development of Creative Arts programmes for the future that will be more accessible. During this time, I also met my colleagues, Jay, Ash and Lina, who became sounding

boards for my practices and served as models for what I aspired to achieve as a Creative Arts teacher educator.

In 2024, I have returned to a Creative Arts teacher educator role in my disciplinary home of Visual Arts at a public South African university. Having acquired knowledge from all the Creative Arts components, I now understand what is possible. Moreover, as I indicated earlier in this chapter, I wish I was only starting this doctoral study now. I feel that the maturity required for such a study has only recently developed. I also think I would have had more intentional conversations with Dr M. as I did not fully tap into her expertise as a supervisor and critical friend. However, the intention of a self-study is to critically examine one's own practices and use these insights to inform and improve current practices. So, perhaps the study is what triggered this self-awareness for the need to mature and be more reflexive (Müller, 2023). In the spirit of self-reflexivity, I draw on the overview of my career experiences in the following section. I look to contextualise how my experiences led me to conduct this study.

The realisation that something needed to happen in my practice

My interest in conducting this study stems from my experiences as a Creative Arts teacher educator. In my professional capacity, as indicated in the previous section, I have occupied the role of a Creative Arts teacher educator at several higher education institutions, with all of them having their own structure of Creative Arts programmes. In late 2019 and continuing over the years, I started noticing the challenges with teaching Creative Arts from my daily practices and my pre-service teacher reflections on Creative Arts work integrated learning (WIL) experiences. Some of the pre-service teachers I teach have had positive Creative Arts experiences, guided by Art Education specialists appointed by schools in either Visual Arts, Music, Dance or Drama.

However, some of my students have also highlighted that their Creative Arts experiences could have been improved, as their mentor teachers needed more training in the Creative Arts teaching, therefore having difficulty teaching the learning area or completely ignoring

it from their daily programmes. This is confirmed by Westraadt (2016), who highlights that within the South African context, Creative Arts have been marginalised to a secondary status at the Foundation (Grades R-3, approximately between the ages of 6 to 9) and Intermediate Phases (Grades 4-7, approximately between the ages of 10 to 13).[7] She further notes that many of these teachers are trained as [8]generalist teachers and, therefore, feel they need more confidence teaching Creative Arts (Westraadt, 2016). The challenge is that although they may teach Art Education[9] in their classes, it remains mainly prescriptive and theoretical, not encouraging learners' creativity, learning and knowledge acquisition (Westraadt, 2016).

These challenges of art education being marginalised have a historical significance within the South African context, dating back to the establishment of apartheid and the Eiselen Commission. Established by the apartheid regime in 1949 and named after its chair, Werner Eiselen, the commission's findings laid the foundation for the Bantu Education Act of 1953. This act legalised segregation, racially separating educational institutions such as schools and universities (Thobejane, 2013). The establishment of a segregated education system allowed the apartheid government to uphold systematic inequalities and reinforce racial hierarchies by dividing the provision of education into four racial groups: White, Black, Indian, and Coloured South Africans (Thobejane, 2013).

These laws also affected Art Education opportunities, with resources, facilities and specialised arts teachers predominantly made available in white schools. In contrast, significantly less provision was made for Black, Indian and Coloured schools (Beukes, 2016). The latter author explains that Art Education was assessed using a progression

[7] A detailed overview of the history of art education within a South African context is provided in Chapter 2.
[8] Generalist teachers in the context of this study refer to teachers who teach a variety of subjects at a primary school level and lack the required experiences and training to effectively teach Creative Arts (Ampeh, 2011: 34-35; Opoku-Asare, Tachie-Menson and Ampeh, 2015: 7)

[9] Art education refers to the collective term of the experience of different artistic experiences and disciplines that existed outside of my pre-exposure to Creative Arts teaching such as: dance, music, drama, folk arts, media arts and visual arts.

level from A to F, but it was never assessed for promotional purposes. Instead, it was provided as a personal enrichment subject at the secondary school level.

There are three overarching issues to highlight in the foregoing discussion. The first relates to the legacy of exclusion of non-white South Africans from Art Education experiences, which has created ongoing problems in providing Art Education in present-day South Africa, including inadequately prepared teachers (Beukes, 2016). The second issue concerns the allocation of human and material resources, which remains problematic in the current context of South Africa. The third issue is the classification of Art Education as a non-promotion and personal enrichment subject. It was not considered important enough to form part of the promotion criteria, thereby creating a marginalised space for it within the education system. I, therefore, would like to argue that the latter perpetuates Art Education being an esoteric experience, meaning that there may be atrophy in the creation of mind being the reality of learners and students who are not exposed to artistic experiences or only know of it theoretically (Dewey, 1934, Eisner, 2002; Westraadt, 2016). I further wish to elaborate on this context in which I am a Creative Arts teacher educator in Chapter 3 to give the reader a better overview of the history and present context of Art Education in South Africa.

Therefore, being mindful of my experiences and those of my students, have encouraged me to reflect on my teaching and how my education and experiences in Arts Education have informed my practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator. I am prepared as a Visual Arts specialist teacher for the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, which covers Grades 10–12 in the South African high school context (learners approximately 16–18 years old). I also have training in Intermediate Phase Music Education, which encompasses Grades 4–7 in the South African primary school context. I have no prior background in the two remaining performing arts: Dance and Drama. During my first year of teaching Creative Arts, I felt less confident and sometimes inadequate in teaching Dance and Drama, which encouraged me to spend more time reading and preparing for teaching.

However, my lack of specialisation still hindered my ability to teach these two Creative Arts aspects confidently. This challenge is confirmed by Jansen van Vuuren (2018) who highlights that educators locally and internationally are ill-prepared to teach Creative Arts. Jansen van Vuuren (2018) explicates that teaching all four learning areas is an unrealistic expectation for the generalist teacher. Creative Arts is too specialised and a broad learning area for the generalist teacher. It must be taught by specialist art educators with the requisite knowledge and skills it demands (Opoku-Asare, Tachie-Menson and Ampeh, 2015: 8). However, the lack of specialisation is also affected by the combination of Creative Arts with other Life Skills subjects which has historical evolution dating from apartheid to the current curriculum (Schneider, Dixon, Janks, Botha, Earle, Poo, Oldacre and Pather, 2018). In the following section, I provide a brief introduction to the challenges inherent in integrating Creative Arts with other Life Skills subjects. I will expand upon this in more detail in Chapter 3.

For a moment, I would like to pause and discuss the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) to bring the reader who might not be familiar with the South African education landscape into the conversation. CAPS, introduced by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) in 2012, is a comprehensive national curriculum framework designed to standardize and improve the quality of education post-apartheid. It provides detailed guidelines on what teachers should teach and how learner progress should be recorded and assessed.

The South African education system is divided into two main phases:

1. **General Education and Training (GET) Phase:** This phase caters to learners aged 5 to 15, covering Grades R to 9. The GET has three phases: Foundation Phase (ages 5-9), Intermediate Phases (ages 9-12) and the Senior Phase (ages 13-15) (Beukes, 2016).

2. **Further Education and Training (FET) Phase:** This phase encompasses learners aged 16 to 18 in Grades 10 to 12. Table 2.1: The Structure of the South African National Curriculum provides a layout of time allocation and subject choices in the different phases of learning as discussed above.

Foundation Phase

(a) The instructional time in the Foundation Phase is as follows:

SUBJECT	GRADE R (HOURS)	GRADES 1-2 (HOURS)	GRADE 3 (HOURS)
Home Language	10	8/7	8/7
First Additional Language		2/3	3/4
Mathematics	7	7	7
Life Skills • Beginning Knowledge • Creative Arts • Physical Education • Personal and Social Well-being	**6** (1) (2) (2) (1)	**6** (1) (2) (2) (1)	**7** (2) (2) (2) (1)
TOTAL	**23**	**23**	**25**

Intermediate Phase

(a) The instructional time in the Intermediate Phase is as follows:

SUBJECT	HOURS
Home Language	6
First Additional Language	5
Mathematics	6
Natural Sciences and Technology	3,5
Social Sciences	3
Life Skills • Creative Arts • Physical Education • Personal and Social Well-being	**4** (1,5) (1) (1,5)
TOTAL	**27,5**

Senior Phase

(a) The instructional time in the Senior Phase is as follows:

SUBJECT	HOURS
Home Language	5
First Additional Language	4
Mathematics	4,5
Natural Sciences	3
Social Sciences	3
Technology	2
Economic Management Sciences	2
Life Orientation	2
Creative Arts	2
TOTAL	**27,5**

Further Education and Training

(a) The instructional time in Grades 10-12 is as follows:

SUBJECT	TIME ALLOCATION PER WEEK (HOURS)
Home Language	**4.5**
First Additional Language	**4.5**
Mathematics	**4.5**
Life Orientation	**2**
A minimum of any three subjects selected from **Group B** Annexure B, Tables B1-B8 of the policy document, *National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12,* subject to the provisos stipulated in paragraph 28 of the said policy document.	**12 (3x4h)**
TOTAL	**27,5**

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (GRADES 10–12)	
Further Education and Training (continued) ANY THREE SUBJECTS FROM GROUP B B1: Agriculture Agricultural Management Sciences Agricultural Sciences Agricultural Technology B2: **Culture and Arts** Dance Studies Design Dramatic Arts Music Visual Arts B3: Business, Commerce and Management Studies Accounting Business Studies Economics B4: Official Languages at Second Additional Level, and Non-Official Languages B5: Engineering and Technology Civil Technology Electrical Technology Mechanical Technology Engineering Graphics and Design B6: Human and Social Studies Geography History Religion Studies B7: Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences Computer Applications Technology Information Technology Life Sciences Physical Sciences B8: Services Consumer Studies Hospitality Studies Tourism	12 (3X4)
TOTAL	**27.5 hours**

Tabel 2.1: The Structure of the South African National Curriculum

Within the GET phase, there are two key sub-phases:

- **Foundation Phase (Grades R-3):** This phase includes learners typically aged 5 to 9, focusing on developing basic reading, writing, numeracy, and life skills. While Creative Arts is formally allocated time in the weekly curriculum, in practice, it is integrated into the Life Skills subject, as well as other core areas like reading and numeracy (CAPS, 2011; Schneider et al., 2018). Activities such as drawing, painting, singing, and storytelling are used to nurture creativity and foster learning through play (CAPS, 2011).
- **Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6):** This phase builds on the foundational skills of the earlier years, introducing learners aged 9 to 12 to more complex learning processes. Here, learners experience a more structured form of Art Education through practical activities aimed at developing their artistic abilities (CAPS, 2011). The focus shifts to fostering creativity, imagination, and an appreciation for the arts, while also laying the groundwork for future specialised learning in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9, ages 13-15) (Beukes, 2016; CAPS, 2011).

In the Intermediate Phase, Creative Arts also aims to instil cultural awareness and prepare learners for more advanced engagement with the arts in later grades, providing them with both the knowledge and skills needed to participate in creative activities.

One significant challenge of this integration particularly with regards to Creative Arts from the Foundation to the Intermediate Phases stems from the structure of the CAPS documents (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8). These documents present Creative Arts not as an individual learning area but as a component of the broader Life Skills subject (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8). This combination has only compounded the challenge of effective Creative Arts teaching as this is a learning area that requires specialised instruction (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Magagula, Mugovhani and Yende, 2022).

However, I find the representation of Creative Arts in the CAPS document problematic as it needs to fully acknowledge the expansive nature of the Creative Arts learning area with its time allocation with other learning areas, therefore, compounding the issue of its

secondary status. In 2014, Jansen van Vuuren and Van Niekerk (2015) conducted an overview survey of Intermediate Phase curriculums within South African universities depicted in Table 1, and it revealed that school subjects such as Life Skills (including Creative Arts) were not receiving the attention they required. I noted that Creative Arts was structured in different ways at different institutions as noted by Steyn, Schuld and Hartell (2012). Moreover, the credit allocation seemed to be significantly lower than other modules such as Mathematics and Languages, highlighting less time spent preparing teachers for the demands of Creative Arts.

Table 1. *LS/CA training within Intermediate Phase B.Ed curricula in South African institutions*

University	Life Skills in Intermediate Phase B.Ed
Cape Town	No B.Ed offered
Fort Hare	Individual Arts subjects offered as electives – no Life Skills
Free State	Offered as compulsory subject
KwaZulu Natal	Creative Arts, Life Orientation and Life Skills are compulsory
Limpopo	Life Orientation or Arts offered as electives
North-West	Life Orientation and Creative Arts offered as electives
Pretoria	Art or Music or Life Orientation offered as electives
Rhodes	No B.Ed offered
Stellenbosch	No compulsory Life Skills or Creative Arts or Life Orientation
Witwatersrand	Offered as compulsory subject but in the format of Life Orientation and Creative Arts
Johannesburg	Culture and the Natural Environment (Life Skills content) offered as elective
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan	Arts and Life Orientation compulsory
Venda	No B.Ed Intermediate Phase offered
Walter Sisulu	No B.Ed Intermediate Phase offered
Zululand	B.Ed phased out
Rhodes	No B.Ed offered

Table 2.2: LS/CA Overview survey of Intermediate Phase curriculums within South African universities

Issues in teacher preparation further compound this curricular shortcoming. Scholars widely recognise that inadequate pre-service preparation of Creative Arts generalist teachers is a significant factor hindering effective teaching and learning (Alter and Hays, O'Hara, 2009: 28; Power and Klopper, 2011: 10). Beukes (2016: 135) corroborates this view noting a disconnect between teacher training and what is required for effective teaching and learning of Creative Arts in schools. A study conducted across nine South

African high education institutions explored the implementation of Life Skills modules in the foundation phase. This research sought to identify similarities and differences in the various curricula and assess their alignment with the national curriculum guidelines (Steyn et al., 2012). The study highlighted that implementing Life Skills (including Creative Arts) modules varied significantly among universities within their Teacher Education programmes (Steyn et al., 2012). It concluded that greater alignment was necessary to ensure teachers are adequately prepared to teach Life Skills (Creative Arts) (Steyn et al., 2012)

This strengthens the argument that Creative Arts teacher preparation is inadequate, affecting the delivery of the learning area at a school level. Alter et al., (2009: 3) argue that most generalist Creative Arts teachers are passionate and hardworking but are hindered by their limited understanding of materials and art knowledge. The limited understanding of materials and knowledge can be attributed to the need for ongoing professional development and training for the generalist Creative Arts educator. De Villiers and Sauls (2017: 4-5) weigh in on this noting that some teachers felt that their training did not adequately prepare them for the teaching of Creative Arts. Such teachers lacked the understanding and methodological underpinning of Creative Arts and, therefore, relied on secondary sources from the internet and school textbooks for their teaching of Creative Arts (De Villiers and Sauls, 2017: 5). This form of teaching could be described as narrative teaching where learners are passive receivers of what the teacher has to say. Such teaching limits the creativity and active participation of the learner.

Additionally, another hindrance to effective teaching highlighted in the literature, is the lack of teacher confidence in teaching certain aspects of Creative Arts that are not their fields of specialisation (Alter et al., 2009: 23). The argument can, therefore, be made that how teachers perceive their artistic abilities (which is influenced by their training and experiences) essentially informs their confidence and ultimately their effectiveness as Creative Arts educators. From a Creative Arts teacher educator's perspective, concerning subject areas that I am not formally trained in, teaching Creative Arts has been an anxious

experience that has often left me questioning my practice as an educator. Russell-Bowie and Dawson (2005: 7) support this by noting that teacher perceptions of self are primarily influenced by the teacher's belief about the preparation they have undergone to teach. In all Creative Arts disciplines, background knowledge is strongly determinative of teacher confidence and enjoyment. Therefore, teacher training programmes must create spaces where teacher competency and aptitude to teach Creative Arts are successfully developed. Such programmes should provide a fair balance between theory, demonstrations by the facilitator, practical work and providing feedback (Nompula, 2012: 296).

Through the exploration of literature, it is evident that more training to teach Creative Arts is needed than what is currently offered. Furthermore, there is evidence pointing to Creative Arts teachers' need to fully grasp the methodological underpinnings of Creative Arts teaching, therefore, affecting their confidence to teach the learning area effectively. There needs to be more literature regarding strategies to address the challenge of Creative Arts teacher training and prepare the generalist teacher for effective teaching and learning.

Understanding why I had to de-clutter my shelf

Locally and internationally, research highlights the importance of adequately preparing primary school teachers to teach Creative Arts/ Art Education, as this significantly affects their confidence and perceived ability to effectively teach across all four aspects of Creative Arts: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama (De Kock, Marais and Botha, 2023; Jansen van Vuuren 2018; Jansen van Vuuren and van Niekerk, 2015; Steyn et al, 2012; Westraadt, 2016; Alter et al., 2009; Russell-Bowie, 2012). Drawing from my professional experiences and observations, a significant problem arises: Creative Arts Teacher Education in South Africa inadequately prepares primary school teachers to teach Creative Arts comprehensively. This insufficiency stems from various factors mentioned in the previous section, including the marginalisation of Arts Education, insufficient time

allocation in teacher preparation programmes, and challenges in integrating Creative Arts within the broader Life Skills curriculum.

The consequence of insufficient preparation is that the holistic teaching of all four aspects of Creative Arts is often hampered. Many teachers lacking confidence in specialised knowledge in certain art disciplines may either avoid teaching these areas or rely on less effective theory-heavy approaches that do not fully engage learners in the practical and experiential aspects of Art Education. This identified problem has sparked my interest to critically reflect on my own experiences and training as a Creative Arts teacher educator. By engaging in this collaborative self-study with fellow Creative Arts teacher educators, I seek to explore how our collective experiences have shaped our pedagogical practices and how they can inform and strengthen the programmes we teach.

The Aims and Objectives of de-cluttering my Shelf

My study aims to critically reflect on my experiences as a Creative Arts teacher educator, using the concept of rhizomatic pockets of experience to investigate how these experiences shaped and continue to inform my practices and those of other Creative Arts teacher educators (my Colleagues). Through a collaborative self-study approach incorporating ABR methods, I hope to investigate how past experiences stored in rhizomatic pockets of memory influence my current pedagogical practices in Creative Arts education and ultimately improve my teaching. I also aim to collaborate with other Creative Arts teacher educators to form a community of practice that promotes shared learning, growth and improved programme development.

I also seek to use ABR methods to access and analyse the nonlinear nature of memories inside experiences, which may reveal new insights into improved practices in Creative Arts Teacher Education. I hope to further strengthen the programmes I teach by applying insights gained from this self-study as I continuously work on this assemblage of becoming. I also hope to provide a space for developing and informing practice in Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes, considering how the "invention of the mind" occurs

through Creative Arts education and how we can foster environments conducive to this process. By engaging in this multifaceted self-study, we aim to deepen our understanding of Creative Arts Teacher Education, contribute to the professional development of educators in this field, and ultimately provide new ways of thinking about what quality Creative Arts education looks like. In the next section, I provide the research questions that guided my study and my engagements with my colleagues.

Research Questions:

How can the self-study of Creative Arts teacher educators strengthen professional practice?

Subsidiary question/s

- How can we conceptualise the current experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators within the South African context?

- What contributions can a collaborative self-study make to improve a generalist Creative Arts teacher educator programme?

- How can a collaborative self-study that draws on an Arts-Based method of enquiry help us to understand the challenges and opportunities of Creative Arts Teacher Education?

The Value of de-cluttering

At a micro level, this study will significantly enhance my own practice and improve the Creative Arts programmes I teach, directly impacting the confidence and abilities of my students in their teaching of Creative Arts. On a macro level, the collaborative nature of this study, which involves fellow Creative Arts teacher educators, students, and researchers, will also benefit the broader field of education. This collaboration is not just about sharing insights, but about collectively enhancing and strengthening our programmes. In addition to fostering my professional growth and improving pedagogical practices, I anticipate that this study will inspire other Creative Arts teacher educators to enrich their own inquiries and pedagogical practices. The most important component for conducting this study is to inform, improve, adapt and question my own practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator as I develop my study. Moreover, I use the rhizomatic pockets to develop my own assemblage of becoming as I remove and add what I deem necessary to develop my own becoming and improve my teaching for the benefit of my students.

Just as the Avengers dared to travel through time to retrieve the infinity stones at certain points in time and inside different places and spaces to undo Thanos' devastating snap, I saw it fit to travel back in time to declutter my shelf to make sense of my experiences as a Creative Arts teacher educator. I sort through the clutter of my past experiences stored inside rhizomatic pockets of my memories (the infinity stones). These memories inside the rhizomatic pockets have shaped my practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator. However, as I critically reflect on how these rhizomatic pockets of experiences have influenced my teaching and how they can develop new nodes of knowledge, I also draw on the experiences of my colleagues: Jay, Ash and Lina as additional storehouses, our collective experiences are powerful and can inform the present and the future just as the infinity stones were, when put together. This process of decluttering my shelf became an action of self-reflexivity seeking to examine and refine my pedagogical practices. In my understanding of the importance of decluttering my past experiences and making sense

of them, I sought to intentionally create a learning environment for my students where the invention of the mind can happen through Creative Arts experiences.

Looking back at the decluttering process

In looking back on this chapter, I draw on the Avengers narrative to help me navigate the complex nature of time travel as I go back to retrieve memories inside rhizomatic pockets. I highlight the central role of ABR and self-study research in my study. The chapter also explains my positionality, the philosophical foundation, and the key concepts that form the basis of my study. Additionally, I give an overview of what motivated my study, its aims and objectives, emphasising the need to address the consequences of inadequate preparation that could hinder the comprehensive teaching of Creative Arts. I also critically reflect on my experiences and training as a Creative Arts teacher educator and stress the importance of collaborating with fellow educators to improve teaching practices.

In the next chapter, keeping to the Avengers narrative, I try to retrieve all the infinity stones (my memories) by looking into the context where I teach Creative Arts and the contextual nuances that influence my teaching and the preparation of my students. As I have figured out the “how” in this chapter, I will look at figuring out “when” and “where” my study will be in the next chapter. I use my memories as time travel tools as valuable lenses into the rhizomatic pockets that are helping me to build my assemblage of becoming.

Chapter 3: Reorganizing the Shelf: Lessons from Rhizomatic Pockets

Juffrou Bets, you personified everything a confident Creative Arts teacher needs to be. Might I add, a very strict but fair Creative Arts teacher. Your classroom opened the world for me. You introduced me to the music of different cultures, broadening my artistic horizons

Figure 3.1 Reorganising my Shelf, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2024

In the previous chapter, I reflected on my schooling memories. It seems I made it back in one piece because of Scott Lang and Toney Stark (my supervisor), who provided a valuable lens to guide my “how” and made me aware of the Quantum Realm and the time-space (GPS) to travel back to navigate this time travel journey. Through the guidance of those around me, I went through a process of emptying what was on my shelf and now the work of Reorganising my Shelf in Figure 3.1, has begun I was able to retrieve

valuable memories from my rhizomatic pockets in the form of my experiences from school and rekindling my love for ceramic work. But most significantly, I know how to navigate the rhizomatic pockets. In this chapter, I now need to figure out “when” and the “where”. In Avengers Endgame, as Steve Rogers and the team confirm that they know how to accomplish the task of retrieving all the infinity stones, they now need to determine the exact spaces in time they need to go to, to retrieve the stones. He points out that they all have encountered the infinity stones at one point in their past. In my case, I have encountered all the infinity stones as they are all based on my memories of my experiences in time…

> ***“STEVE ROGERS****: Okay, so the "how" works. Now we gotta figure out the when and the where. Almost all of us have had an encounter with at least one of the six Infinity Stones”…*
>
> (Markus and Mcfeely, 2019)

In this chapter, I will try to retrieve all the infinity stones (my memories). I investigate the context where I teach Creative Arts and the contextual nuances that influence my own teaching and the preparation of my students. I use excerpts from assessment briefs and module guides as examples and evidence of my practices, as well as sources of lessons for present and future practices. I draw on student letters and emails as assessment tools for my past practices and what I can learn from them. I also use memory objects in the form of photographs to go back in time to retrieve memories of my Art Education experiences. I express my art education experience by creating artworks that reflect my experiences teaching the four creative art forms. I consider these time travel tools as valuable lenses into the rhizomatic pockets that are helping me to build my assemblage of becoming. These are my memories and stories about being a Creative Arts teacher educator.

The context for Rhizomatic Pockets as a Creative Arts teacher educator

In my teaching context, Creative Arts consists of Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama. These disciplines within Creative Arts are intertwined and simultaneously taught during the Foundation and Intermediate Phases. This integrative approach is adapted into a more focused discipline at the Senior Phase (grades 7-9, ages 13-16) level, enabling learners to make well-informed decisions regarding their specialisation for the FET Phase – grades 10-12, ages 16-18) level, as supported by Nompula (2012). The South African national curriculum, specifically CAPS, offers a structured framework that shapes, directs and enhances the teaching and engagement with Creative Arts. In the initial phases, notably the Foundation and Intermediate Phases, Creative Arts is integral to the Life Skills subject area. This area encompasses Beginning Knowledge, Personal and Social Well-being, and Physical Education, as outlined in CAPS (2011: 8-9; 2011: 8). To provide a better context of how Creative Arts exists inside of the Life Skills subject, I will use the following section to provide a detailed discussion of the historical nuances of why Creative Arts now forms part of Life Skills at a Foundation and Intermediate Phase level.

Let us begin by defining life skills. According to Naudé and Meier (2016) and Jordaan and Naudé, (2018), Life Skills are understood as psycho-social skills, knowledge, behaviour, attitudes and values that develop problem-solving skills, thinking critically, creativity and adaptability that learners need to be equipped to become independent and effective in responding to life's challenges (UNICEF, 2013). Furthermore, it envisages providing learners with the required skills to play active and responsible societal roles (Naudé and Meier, 2016; Jordaan and Naudé, 2018). While the CAPS document defines it as follows…

> *Life Skills deals with the holistic development of the learner throughout childhood. It equips learners with knowledge, skills and values that assist them to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal, emotional and social potential. The subject encourages learners to acquire and practise life skills that will assist them to become independent and effective*

> *in responding to life's challenges and to play an active and responsible role in society. The subject aims to develop learners through three different, but interrelated study areas, that is, Personal and Social Well-being, Physical Education and Creative Arts.*
>
> (CAPS, 2011)

From a historical point of view, the Life Skills curriculum in the South African context has evolved from a segregated, apartheid syllabus to the Curriculum 2005 (C2005), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and the current CAPS (Schneider et al., 2018). Table 3.1, adapted from Schneider et al., (2018), provides an overview of Life Skills subjects from apartheid to the CAPS curriculum. Schneider et al., (2018) further provide a historical narrative for developing a Life Skills curriculum within a South African context. The evolution of the curriculum indicates the continuity and the changes over time (indicated in Table 2.1) that have shaped the curriculum as we know it. From its roots in the apartheid syllabus for white learners (Schneider et al., 2018), the subjects included Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, Bible Education, Guidance and Study of the Environment, each with its own syllabus. The apartheid curriculum emphasised that distinct disciplinary boundaries characterised subjects.

Over the years, these subjects were integrated and restructured under the C2005, which aimed "to encourage an integrated approach to learning", where subjects were grouped into learning areas, leading to content overload and weakening disciplinary boundaries (Schneider et al., 2018). The curriculum shift also transitioned from considering children having to be obedient and follow instructions under apartheid to children in C2005 being active, responsible citizens; However, this agency was reduced with the CAPS curriculum and more teacher-directed. Despite efforts to reform the curriculum after apartheid, many of the topics from the apartheid curriculum persisted (Schneider et al., 2018). The current Life Skills curriculum integrates a variety of subjects, including Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Arts and Culture, and Life Orientation, into the four focus areas: Beginning Knowledge, Personal and Social Well-being, Creative Arts and Physical Education, putting pressure on the teacher is to be specialists in all these areas.

Apartheid Syllabus	Curriculum 2005	RNCS/NCS	CAPS
Time Allocation:	Time Allocation:	Time Allocation:	Time Allocation:
No Grade R year	No Grade R Year	Grade R	Grade R
		Literacy: 40%	Literacy: 40%
		Numeracy: 35%	Numeracy: 30%
		Life Skills: 25%	Life Skills: 30%
Subjects	Learning Areas	Learning Areas	Subjects
Home Language	Languages Literacy and Communication	Literacy	(Literacy)
Second Language	Main Language	Home Language	Home Language
Mathematics	Additional Language	First Additional Language	First Additional Language
Art	Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics, and Mathematical Sciences	Mathematics (numeracy)	Mathematics
Music	Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture	Life Skills:
Physical Education	Dance	Dance	Creative Arts
Bible Education	Drama	Drama	Performing Arts
Guidance	Music	Music	Visual Arts
Study of Environment	Visual Arts	Visual Arts	Physical Education
Civics	Arts and Technology		
Health	Media and Communication		
History	Life Orientation	Life Orientation	Life Orientation
Geography		Physical development and movement	Physical development and movement
Elementary Science		Health promotion	Health promotion
	Human and Social Sciences	Social Development	Social Development
	History	Personal Development	Personal Development
	Geography	Orientation to the world of work	Orientation to the world of work
	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Beginning Knowledge and

Apartheid Syllabus	Curriculum 2005	RNCS/NCS	CAPS
			Personal and Social Wellbeing
		- History	
		- Geography	
		Natural Sciences	

Table 3.1 adapted from Schneider et al., (2018) Life Skills subjects from apartheid to the CAPS curriculum

Jansen van Vuuren (2018) further indicates that Life Skills was integrated into the Foundation Phase of South African schools in 2012 and subsequently into the Intermediate Phase in 2013 as part of the new CAPS. Life Skills is a mandatory subject in South African primary schools, and it is essentially a fusion of two learning areas from the previous curriculum: Arts and Culture, which included Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Art; and Life Orientation, which encompassed Health Promotion, Personal Development, Physical Education, and Social Development (Jansen van Vuuren and van Niekerk, 2015; Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Steyn et al., 2012). Jansen van Vuuren (2018) further explains that the integration of Arts and Culture with Life Orientation to form Life Skills has posed challenges for many teachers owing to the inclusion of highly specialised topics in the curriculum (Schneider et al., 2018; Steyn et al, 2012). Therefore, the argument is made that most educators do not possess expertise in all the required fields, and it is unrealistic to assume that teachers can teach all these Life Skills subjects requiring specialised knowledge (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Schneider et al., 2018).

Adding (Beginning knowledge-only in the Foundation Phase) Personal and Social well-being and Physical Education further complicates this subject, which demands a diverse range of skills from educators. Life Skills composition, as outlined in the Life Skills CAPS document (2011:8), is depicted in Figure 3.2. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, I find this representation of Creative Arts in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases provided in the respective CAPS documents problematic as it does not fully acknowledge the complexity and subject expertise required to teach all these subjects (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8; Nompula; 2012). In the CAPS document, Creative Arts

is not represented as an individual learning area, but, as a small component of learning that forms part of the Life Skills subject. However, my intention is not to remove the other subjects from their place of importance but to also highlight the standing of other learning areas that are also vital to the holistic development of the child in relation to other subject areas such as Mathematics and Language (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8).

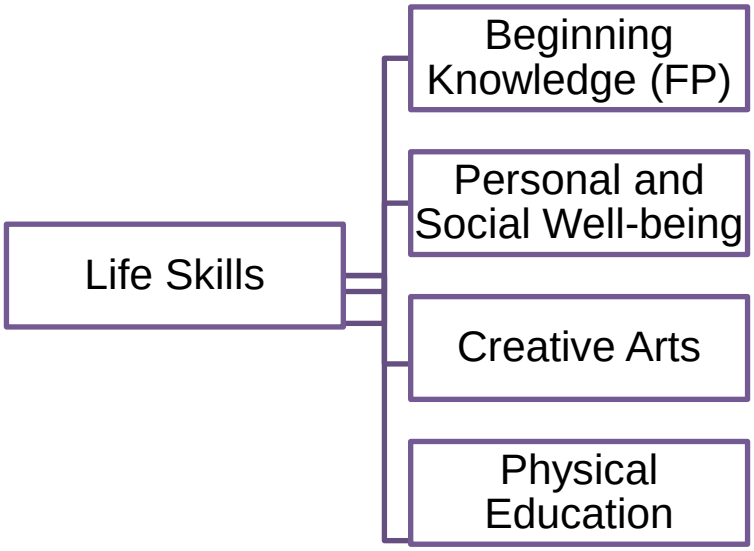


Figure 3.2: The Composition of Life Skills Subjects

Jansen van Vuuren (2018) further explicates that within the Life Skills subject area, Creative Arts has been divided into two categories: Visual Arts and Performing Arts, Figure 3.3 presents a visual depiction of the content allocation of the Creative Arts curriculum. The purpose of this division is to nurture learners as imaginative and creative individuals with an appreciation for the Arts starting from the Foundation Phase (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8). By the conclusion of the Intermediate Phase, learners should possess fundamental skills, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of all four art forms and be capable of (ideally) choosing two art forms to specialise in during the Senior Phase (grades 7, 8, and 9) (CAPS, 2011:8-9; CAPS, 2011: 8; Nompula; 2012). Talented learners are expected to select one art form to pursue during the FET Phase (grades 10, 11, and 12). The number and calibre of learners that progress to this final phase in school arts is heavily dependent on the passion, motivation and expertise of the Arts educators

the learners encounter throughout their school journey (Nompula, 2012). Without establishing a strong foundation during the school years, successful engagement with the Arts, problem-solving skills and creativity may be hindered. If the school curriculum (CAPS) is aligned with university curricula and supported by competent educators, it has the potential to cultivate creative problem-solvers (Nompula, 2012).

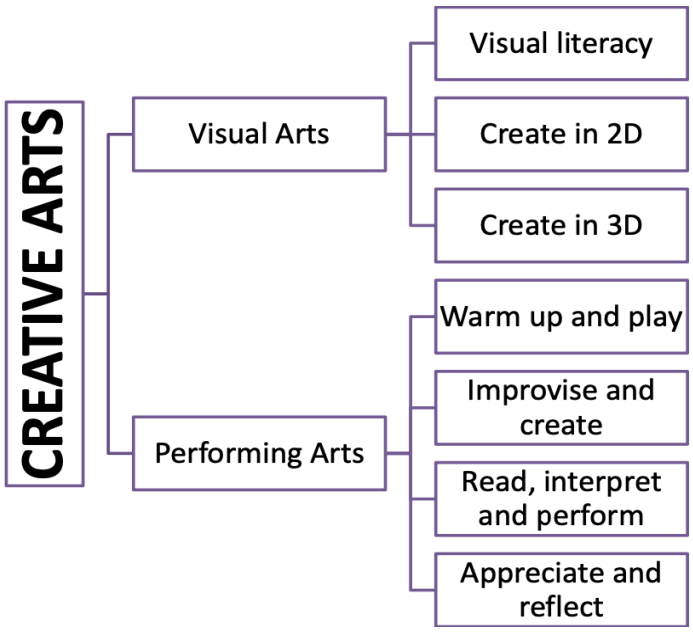


Figure 3.3: Content allocation of the Creative Arts curriculum

The combination of Creative Arts with Life Skills has only compounded the challenge of teachers not feeling adequately prepared for the teaching of Creative Arts as this is a learning area requiring specialisation (Alter and Hays, O'Hara, 2009: 28; Beukes, 2016; Power and Klopper, 2011). This representation of Creative Arts in the CAPS document is problematic as it needs to fully acknowledge the expansive nature of the Creative Arts learning area with the expertise required and time allocation in relation to other learning areas, therefore, adding to the secondary status of the Arts (De Kock., 2023; Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Magagula et al., 2022). This status was highlighted mainly by the COVID-

19 pandemic, where, in some cases, lost teaching time entailed focusing on reading, writing and numeracy skills and spending less time on Life Skills (Hoadley, 2023). The current structure and prioritisation within the CAPS document not only limit the development and expression of the Creative Arts but also signal a broader educational issue that extends beyond the curriculum design.

Other factors, such as the need for more resources in under-resourced schools, also hamper the effective teaching of Creative Arts within Life Skills. These resources include physical resources such as visual art materials, musical instruments and facilities for engagement in Dance and Drama (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018). The lack of resources is also more prevalent in historically non-white schools, affecting how teachers teach Creative Arts as discussed earlier (Chiliza, 2015). Bamford (2006) in Russell-Bowie (2013) further explicates that within the South African context, there is a significant lack of funding resources, training and priority provided to the arts. This indicates that the human resources required for specialising in the teaching of Creative Arts are further put at risk. Beukes (2016) notes that in the Senior Phase, for schools to provide Creative Arts is solely dependent on the availability of the minimum resources (this includes the physical materials and the human resources in the form of specialist art educators) facilities to teach the specific art form contained in Creative Arts, and learners abilities or talents and preferences which I would like to argue can only be developed through exposure to Creative Arts from the Foundation Phase through to the Intermediate Phase.

However, from my observation and experiences in practice, this challenge of resources is not confined solely to the school level but extends to the university level as well. From the four different higher education institutions where I taught Art Education, the studios and art facilities often cater to a small number of students, and these facilities are frequently insufficient for generalist teacher preparation programmes focused on Life Skills. My observation is supported by Beukes (2016), who highlights the financial limitations and strain on South African universities to invest in fully functioning Creative Arts staff. Moreover, the students registered for programmes that require them to take up Life Skills/Creative Arts modules are often grouped into large numbers, which also limits

practical activities and students missing out on meaningful Creative Arts experiences and the creation of the mind (Beukes, 2016; Eisner, 2002). Having such large cohorts in theory lessons may work for certain modules. However, for Creative Arts modules, this takes away the component of applying what is learnt in theory to creating a product and troubles their abilities to go through a process to see what may work during the practical activity (Beukes, 2016).

Rhizomatic Pockets of Full Lecture Halls

To put the issue of resources and large cohorts into context, I would like to go back in time to the years between 2015 and 2021…

> *I have a vivid memory of my first experience teaching a large class at the University in Gauteng. I was in a Foundation Phase class, and the module was focused on teaching students how to integrate Visual Art into their classrooms. It was a challenging experience as it was my first time as a teacher educator. Sharing the teaching load with my colleagues made it easier, but I still found it intimidating. I remember feeling nervous and even forgetting to breathe at times. The eyes of the students held a mix of curiosity and uncertainty as they looked at me. This experience made me realise how much self-confidence I needed to teach large groups and to be an effective Art Educator responsible for preparing new teachers. This realisation was emphasised by the feedback I received from a lecturer assessment form. One comment that particularly struck me, and still sticks with me to this day, was "dit lyk of hy nie seker is van homself nie" (translated as "it seems as if he is not sure of himself").*

> *I sat in the lecture hall, feeling like maybe I wasn't cut out for this. The self-doubt was overwhelming, and it bothered me that the students might view me negatively because of my race. I worried that they might think, 'I am some incompetent black lecturer.' I used to hear criticisms from fellow black students when a black lecturer didn't perform well, like, 'This lecturer is making us black people look bad.' Maybe I internalised these comments too much. The large and intimidating group might be affecting the quality of my teaching.*

Nonetheless, the comment caught my attention, and maybe this was the start of my journey to self-reflection.

As I reflect now, I realise that the issue was not related to my skin colour, but rather to the observations made by the students in the classes I taught. I wish I had the insight to ask a follow-up reflection question about which component of the module they thought I was struggling with; was it the practical work or the theory? I know that my theoretical knowledge at the time was lacking and required more work, and they perhaps noticed this. According to Göbel, Wyss, Neuber, and Raaflaub (2021), this was data that required me to step back, interpret, and understand what my students' perceptions were and what they needed in their learning process. I needed to respond to their feedback through reflection and acting on their feedback. Looking back now, they needed a lecturer who was confident and sure of themselves, which I was not then. I experienced many negative emotions regarding how students perceived me, which, according to Flodén (2016), is common among early higher education teachers. I want to infer that this confidence may have been deemed important by the students in acquiring the pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills, and confidence to teach Creative Arts in their classrooms. This means that how I presented myself to my students mattered; they could see through me and saw that I was not teaching from a place of owning knowledge.

The second observation about the comment that makes me realise it was not a personal attack is that the student provided the feedback as though they were addressing someone else who would convey the message to me and possibly assist me in improving. This means that the assessment tool could have also been used as an administrative instrument by the higher education institution or faculty to make judgments regarding my performance as a lecturer (Boysen, Kelly, Raesly, and Casner, 2014; Flodén, 2016; Kember, Leung, and Kwan, 2002).

However, today, I consider it as feedback and assessment of where the student/s thought I stood in my own practice, especially with the large cohorts of Life Skills/ Creative Arts

students I have (Beukes, 2016). Viewing students as valuable sources of feedback on my teaching decentralises (student feedback becomes a rhizomatic pocket) the teaching and learning process, turning it into an interaction where both the student and the lecturer share a pedagogical relationship and provide each other with valuable feedback about our progress as Creative Arts teacher educators. This interaction initiates a more dynamic and reciprocal learning environment. However, I need to note that the changes made in my teaching have never been unjustified (Flodén, 2016). I always tried to address what was required in the curriculum. However, I would adapt my teaching based on what I learned from building a pedagogical relationship with my students (Müller, 2023). This infers that my interactions and conversations with my students in and outside of class also serve as feedback and data to inform my teaching (Eckhoff, 2012; Flodén, 2016; Tomljenović, 2015). Some forms of feedback I have received from students (learners) include emails, letters and verbal feedback (Flodén, 2016).

I must acknowledge the significance of receiving feedback from my students regarding my classroom practices, as they represent the primary beneficiaries of my pedagogical efforts. Their perspectives and input about my practice are valuable and insightful resources that inform and refine my teaching practices. This reflective approach to feedback highlights my commitment to continually enhancing my pedagogical methods and creating a conducive learning environment for my students.

To better understand the importance of feedback from our pedagogical relationships, I want to take a quick detour to reflect on an experience from 2018. It involves receiving a booklet containing letters from learners at a school where I filled in for a teacher on maternity leave...

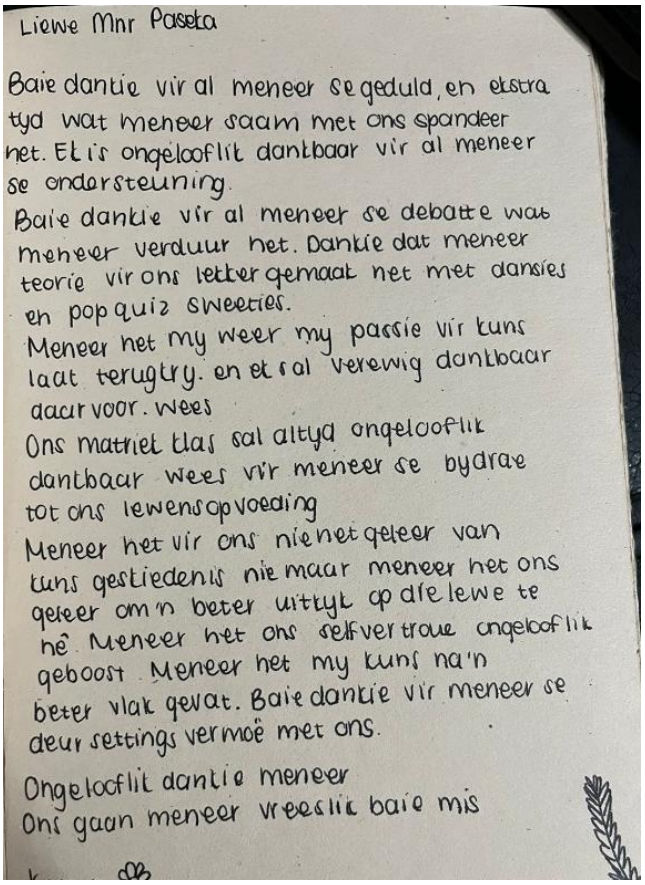
> *As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, due to my perceived shortcomings as a lecturer and not fully knowing how to deal with large groups of students I was teaching in the Foundation Phase Creative Arts module. At the end of 2016, I resigned from my part-time lecturing role and returned to an administrative role at the University In Gauteng. During this time away from teaching, I assisted in lecturing on a Service-Learning module due to my background in community engagement. This experience helped me build*

confidence and address some of my self-doubt issues. In 2018, I gave being an Art teacher educator another try. I started teaching Visual Arts with fewer students, focusing on second-year practical, fourth-year Art methodology, and an art community engagement project. My mentor and M.Ed supervisor, Prof S, informed me of a maternity leave post at school in Pretoria, which I secured and helped address my self-doubt. In a conversation I had with a colleague at the school after I secured the post, she said: 'When they showed you the learner's artwork and asked you what feedback you would give to the learners who came to you with this in the interview, you were the only candidate that answered the question correctly and in detail, everyone in the panel seemed to think you know what you are talking about." So, perhaps the problem was not my content knowledge; why was I being so hard on myself?

At first, I was unsure about how I would fit in at the Afrikaans school and how the learners would treat me. I had interacted with Afrikaans people in different settings before, which made me feel somewhat comfortable about the situation. However, at the back of my mind, I kept telling myself, "Don't mess this up, Paseka." I was the only non-white teacher at the school, so I think I put pressure on myself because I looked different, even though the school community welcomed me warmly and kindly. At the end of my time at the school, the learners I taught gave me a booklet filled with letters, and the learners provided feedback on my classroom practices. My learners did not enjoy Art theory at all. Whenever I mentioned that we would cover Art theory according to our schedule, their sighs and body language indicated their lack of enthusiasm. I draw on this memory from one of the letters written by a learner…

In Figure 3.4, "A Letter from a Learner," the learner expressed their enjoyment of my teaching approach. They mentioned that I made the classes enjoyable by incorporating dancing and offering sweets during pop quizzes. I made sure to adapt my teaching style to better meet their needs while still adhering to the curriculum requirements. I developed a strategy for each theory lesson by teaching for 10 minutes and then asking the students questions when the timer went off. Depending on their answers, I would either dance to a song of their choice for at least 30 seconds or provide candy as a reward. The learner indicated that my approach reignited their passion for the arts.

These letters allowed me to reassess my teaching methods. Reflecting on this experience, I have become more aware of how daily interactions and conversations, both verbal and non-verbal, provide valuable data that can inform our teaching practices. As much as I believe that I am responsible for creating a space for authentic Art Education experiences for my students Dewey (1934), I also believe that they are not passive recipients of knowledge; they actively participate in the creation of their minds in the Creative Arts classroom (Eisner, 2002).



Liewe Mnr Paseka

Baie dankie vir al meneer se geduld, en ekstra tyd wat meneer saam met ons spandeer het. Ek is ongelooflik dankbaar vir al meneer se ondersteuning.
Baie dankie vir al meneer se debatte was meneer verduur het. Dankie dat meneer teorie vir ons lekker gemaak het met dansies en pop quiz sweeties.
Meneer het my weer my passie vir kuns laat terugkry. en ek sal verewig dankbaar daarvoor. Wees
Ons matriek klas sal altyd ongelooflik dankbaar wees vir meneer se bydrae tot ons lewensopvoeding
Meneer het vir ons nie net geleer van kuns geskiedenis nie maar meneer het ons geleer om n beter uitkyk op die lewe te hê. Meneer het ons selfvertroue ongelooflik geboost. Meneer het my kuns na'n beter vlak gevat. Baie dankie vir meneer se deur settings vermoë met ons.

Ongelooflik dankie meneer
Ons gaan meneer vreeslik baie mis

Figure 3.4: Letter from a learner

Drawing on yet another memory from my rhizomatic pockets, I wish to return to 2019 when I was tasked with one of my most challenging teaching experiences of having large groups...

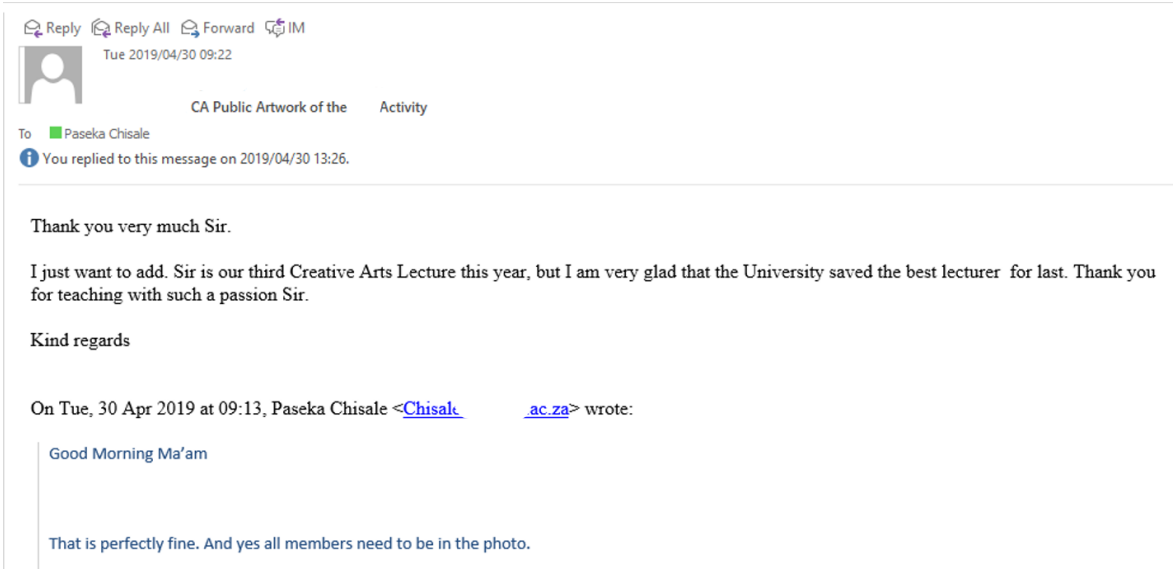
> *I vividly remember a large class at the University in the Midlands. It was a first-year Intermediate Phase class covering Visual Arts, and the number of students was nearly 400. As I looked at the class list, I also remembered having other large groups of students from different phases. I was concerned about how to handle such a large workload and if I could effectively assess the students. I also worried about the quality of education the students would receive in such large classes.*
>
> *I often spoke to my Head of Department about the need for a dedicated space for Creative Arts where students could truly experience and engage with the subject. I also emphasized the need for additional staff to teach Creative Arts. However, my concerns were not fully understood until my HoD visited a university in the United States and saw specialists teaching each art form to student teachers. Despite her excitement, she mentioned that financial constraints would prevent us from implementing the same model at our faculty…*

Literature provides insights into large cohorts of students and their negative impact on learning and the quality of interaction that students may experience (Moodley, 2015; Fortesa and Tchantchane, 2010; Wadesango, 2021). Large groups do not allow teachers to attend to students' needs, and it does not benefit the learning experience of the students (Moodly, 2015; Wadesango, 2021). Among other things that are highlighted as being affected by large classes is the lack of research engagement by scholars and the engagement in what I would like to refer to as boring traditional teaching and assessment practices (Moodly, 2015; Wadesango, 2021). This perhaps explains why assessment practices for the Life Skills modules, including Creative Arts, depended on traditional assessment forms, such as tests and exams at the University in the Midlands. The specialised nature of Creative Arts disciplines infers that large cohorts, put at risk the quality of Creative Arts teachers we produce (Beukes, 2016; Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Opoku-Asare et al., 2015).

However, the feedback I would receive from my students at the University in the Midlands suggested that something was working in the approach I was using, even though I was absolutely overwhelmed by the sheer size of the groups I taught. At the University in the Midlands, feedback often came via email Flodén (2016) with students acknowledging and giving feedback about my practices. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I acknowledge the significance of receiving feedback from my students regarding my classroom practices, as they are the primary beneficiaries of my pedagogical efforts. Moreover, the proximity of how I relate with my students through the pedagogical relationship (Müller, 2023) we share provides them with first-hand experience of my practices, and, therefore, their feedback becomes a valuable and insightful resource that informs and refines my teaching practices…

> *This memory is based on an email from a student, dated 30th April 2019 in Figure 3.5. In the email, the student asked for clarification on a class activity. The activity involved using prompts to identify public art pieces on campus, highlighting the importance of art in our daily lives based on Dewey (1934) and taking selfies at each art piece. The students were also required to include the selfies in their report and discuss the artwork based on the class material. At the time, I thought that taking selfies would make the activity enjoyable for the students and serve as evidence that they completed the task during the allocated class time.*
>
> *In her response, the student indicated that I had been their third lecturer for the year, perhaps highlighting the difficulty the previous colleagues had experienced dealing with the large cohort of almost 400 students in this group alone. It could have been a variety of different variables that led the students to highlight how many lecturers they had, had that year. However, it was good to receive positive feedback regarding my practices and my passion for teaching Art Education because I was and am passionate about it, as I had always been! In many ways, I wish that the student who thought I seemed uncertain of myself had experienced me now; perhaps she would have said something different; with such experiences, I really live in the past and struggle to let them go, just like Steve Rogers in the Avengers: Endgame…*
>
> ***STEVE ROGERS:** You know, I keep telling everybody they should move on and... grow. Some do. But not us.*

I keep telling my students that they will make mistakes in their teaching. Some things come with time as they grow, but somehow, I am still stuck at the comment that said I seemed unsure of myself. Maybe I just wonder how my teaching at the time affected her teaching.



Reply Reply All Forward IM

Tue 2019/04/30 09:22

CA Public Artwork of the Activity

To Paseka Chisale

You replied to this message on 2019/04/30 13:26.

Thank you very much Sir.

I just want to add. Sir is our third Creative Arts Lecture this year, but I am very glad that the University saved the best lecturer for last. Thank you for teaching with such a passion Sir.

Kind regards

On Tue, 30 Apr 2019 at 09:13, Paseka Chisale <Chisal ac.za> wrote:

> Good Morning Ma'am
>
> That is perfectly fine. And yes all members need to be in the photo.

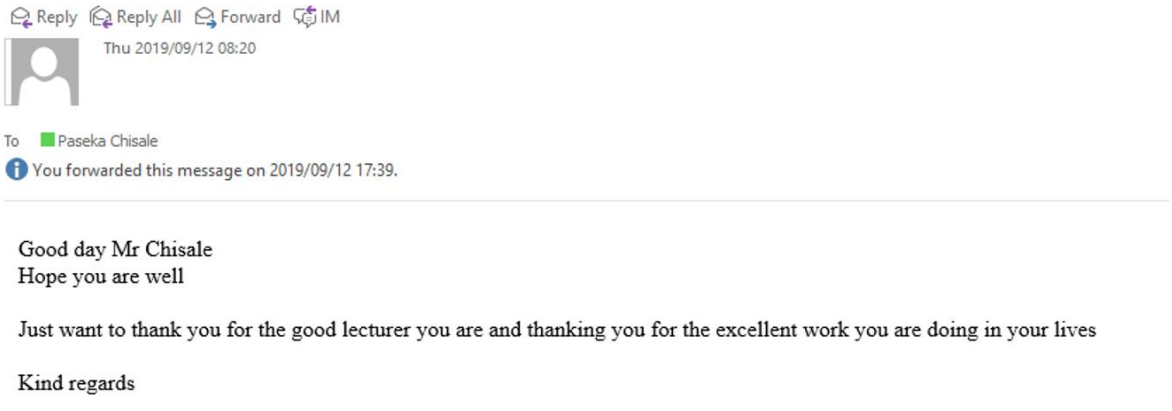
Figure 3.5: Email from a student: 30 April 2019

The second memory from that time is an email sent in September 2019 from Figure 3.6...

> *I cannot remember if there was any previous context for why the student sent the email. However, the contents of the email that only address the student thanking me for being a good lecturer and the work I am doing in their lives, indicates that the email was sent from*

the student mainly to give feedback on my teaching practices. With the large classes I had at the time, I was quite overwhelmed with the amount of marking and teaching I was doing at this time. It was very easy for my email to get flooded with students asking for a deadline extension, asking when marks would be released or querying a mark that was released, and you know how students get about their marks (laughing as I shake my head). So, receiving such an email felt like a little victory and did my confidence a great deal of good. Forwarding the email indicates that I had perhaps wanted to keep the email for future reference for days when I needed the reminder.

However, it is important to note that the email sent by this student indicates the proximity of the interaction Tomljenović (2015) and the pedagogical relationship Müller (2023) the student believed we shared to provide me with feedback as they assessed my practices in the class and judged my efforts to be excellent in relation to how it is influencing their lives. This led me to believe that the student then becomes an active participant in the creation of their mind (Eisner, 2002). However, they also play a role in the creation of my mind and how I view and understand my practices, and in this case also how I managed the large classes that I was teaching (Letseka, 2022).


Reply Reply All Forward IM

Thu 2019/09/12 08:20

To Paseka Chisale

You forwarded this message on 2019/09/12 17:39.

Good day Mr Chisale
Hope you are well

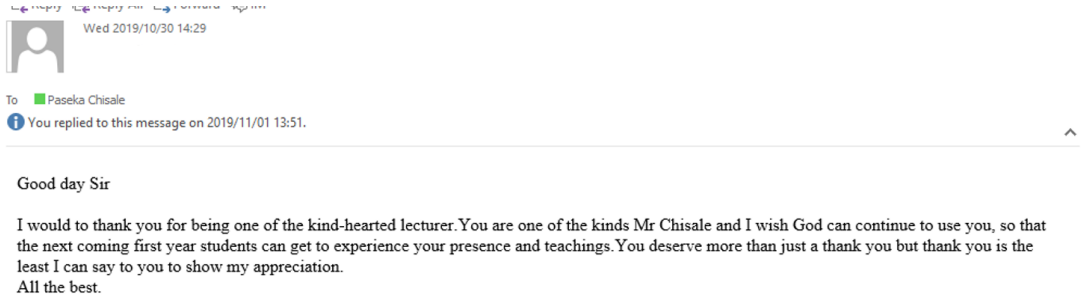
Just want to thank you for the good lecturer you are and thanking you for the excellent work you are doing in your lives

Kind regards

Figure 3.6: Email form a student: 12 September 2019

The third memory, Figure 3.7, I would like to explore comes from an email sent in October 2019 and extracts from four letters, Figure 3.8 in 2018 as supporting memories,

> *In this email, the student highlights my kindness as a character trait, which I often regard as a weakness, and my teaching as having a positive impact on them and that they hoped that future students would experience my presence and teaching. This was something I appreciated coming from a student. For many years, I thought I needed to be tougher and not show so much kindness to those I was in a pedagogical relationship with; at least, that is what I heard from older teachers, "They will take advantage if you allow them." However, it kept on being something those I was in a pedagogical relationship with kept mentioning as a valuable character trait in allowing them to learn effectively. Drawing on four letters from the school in Pretoria, my learners also noted that my calmness and kindness created a space for learning in our Visual Arts class, and for one learner, it allowed her to gain self-confidence in creating their own art. Perhaps this explains why Lizzy asked me if I break down my students too; maybe that is what happens in Art Education spaces; surely this can't be normal?*



Wed 2019/10/30 14:29

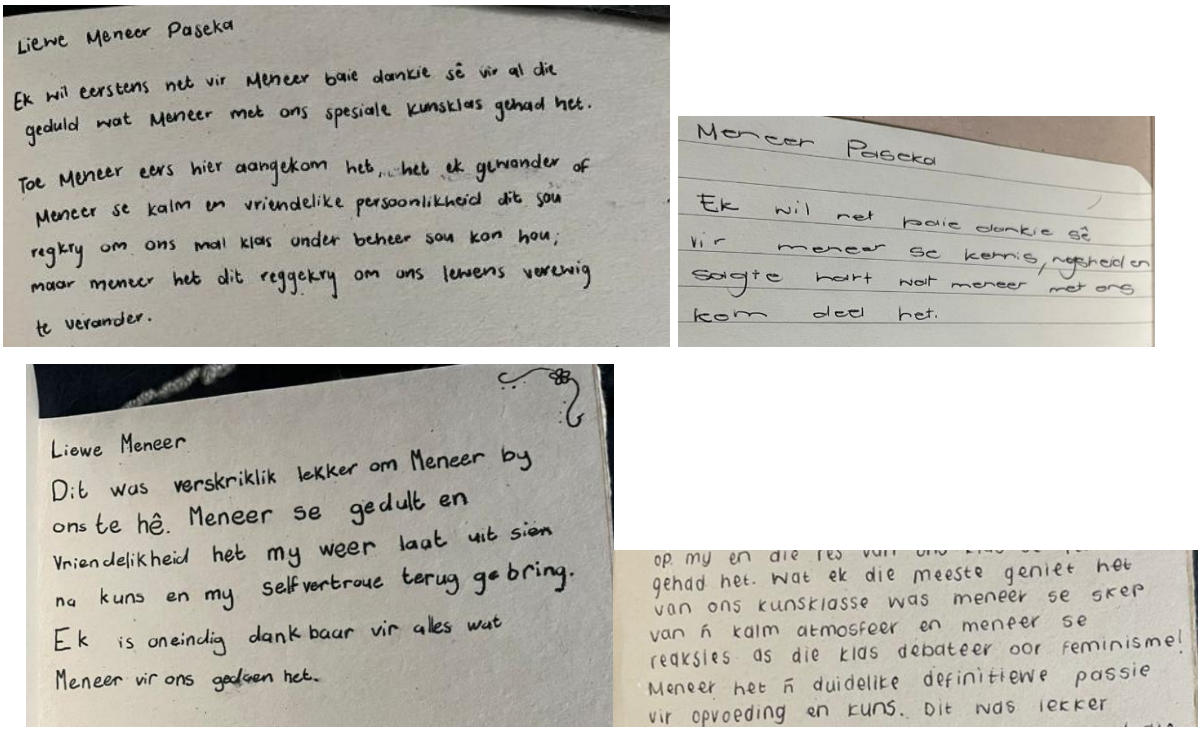
To Paseka Chisale

You replied to this message on 2019/11/01 13:51.

Good day Sir

I would to thank you for being one of the kind-hearted lecturer.You are one of the kinds Mr Chisale and I wish God can continue to use you, so that the next coming first year students can get to experience your presence and teachings.You deserve more than just a thank you but thank you is the least I can say to you to show my appreciation.
All the best.

Figure 3.7: Email from a student: 30 October 2019



Liewe Meneer Paseka

Ek wil eerstens net vir Meneer baie dankie sê vir al die geduld wat Meneer met ons spesiale kunsklas gehad het.

Toe Meneer eers hier aangekom het, het ek gewonder of Meneer se kalm en vriendelike persoonlikheid dit sou regkry om ons mal klas onder beheer sou kon hou; maar meneer het dit reggekry om ons lewens verewig te verander.

Meneer Paseka

Ek wil net baie dankie sê vir meneer se kennis, regheid en soigte hart wat meneer met ons kom deel het.

Liewe Meneer

Dit was verskriklik lekker om Meneer by ons te hê. Meneer se geduld en vriendelikheid het my weer laat uit sien na kuns en my selfvertroue terug gebring.

Ek is oneindig dankbaar vir alles wat Meneer vir ons gedoen het.

op my en die res van ons ... gehad het. Wat ek die meeste geniet het van ons kunsklasse was meneer se skep van ń kalm atmosfeer en meneer se reaksies as die klas debateer oor feminisme! Meneer het ń duidelike definitiewe passie vir opvoeding en kuns. Dit was lekker

Figure 3.8: A memory from 2018 Four letters from the school in Pretoria

But when I think back to my Teacher Education memories from 2012-2014, this type of kindness was not always readily available from all the lecturers. I remember the crit sessions we would have for the week where we had to exhibit our work on the board with the thumbnails. The tension would almost be unbearable for some as we waited to hear the critique of our work for the week. A professor with a big beard would walk into the

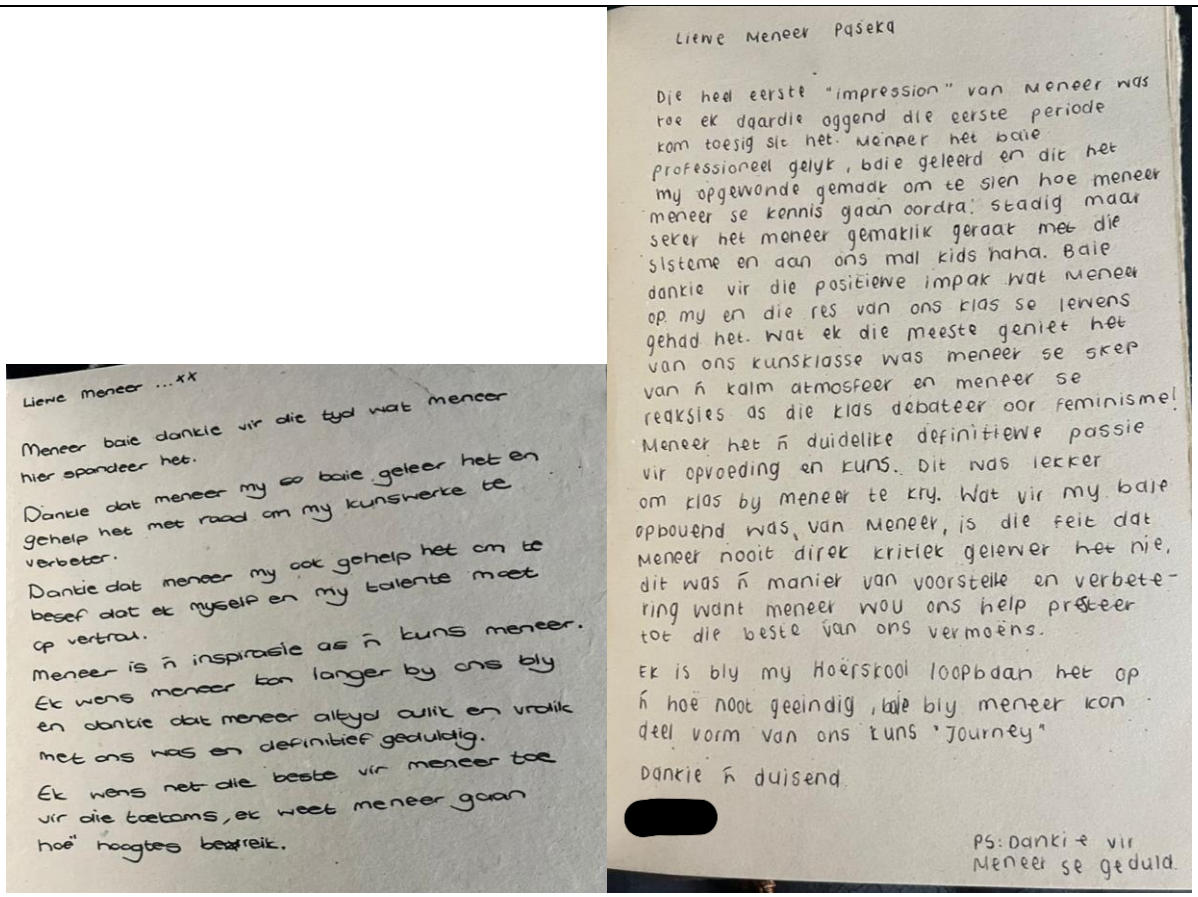
studio as he did each week, and each artwork received its fair share of criticism. If your work was to his liking for the week, you would sigh with relief, but it was the weekly crying session for those who were not so lucky. Don't get me wrong, all our Visual Arts lecturers as I was studying were extremely good and specialists and practising artists (with two of the three of them being approachable), but I still do not fully understand why those critique sessions needed to be the way they were; I really don't think it accomplished much in building our confidence. I choose to approach teaching Creative Arts based on my experience during those critique sessions, I never want a student to feel that way in any of my classes. I want my students to walk away with more than just an academic lesson.

I insist on creating a calm, safe and supportive learning environment for my students that does not only focus on academic performance or product-oriented teaching but also on the people the students become at the end of the learning process, allowing for the growth of their confidence and positive self-image (Odendaal, 2016). I am particularly interested in their confidence and self-image because these are aspects, I believe will be valuable for them in their teaching (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015). Maybe bringing my character traits into my teaching is what allows them to feel more like they belong in the Creative Arts teaching space. Therefore, I believe that our interactions with those we share pedagogical relationships with need to focus on developing confidence in their abilities to experience art without any fear of judgment.

I draw on a memory from 2018, two letters, Figure 3.10, written by the learners at the school in Pretoria, providing feedback on my practices. In the first letter, the learner highlights the value of my feedback on developing her artwork in the form of advice, which assisted the learners in improving their work and developing their confidence in their abilities. The second learner also highlights this but adds that the feedback I provided was never a critique of the work they developed; however, it was focused on providing suggestions on how they could improve their work.

I continue to implement this practice with my current 400 Intermediate and Foundation Phase students. I engage in interactive conversations with them about their work, asking

them how they feel about it and prompting them to elaborate on their ideas. This method aligns with how they will interact with their own learners in the future (Eckhoff, 2012; Tomljenović, 2015; Gregory, 2002). Their feedback suggests that when providing feedback on students' work in the Creative Arts, it should be in the form of suggestions that students can act upon as they go through the process of creating their work. It seems they were rejecting the idea of focusing solely on the final product and instead embracing the process of creating, where the student reacts to their experiences and the effect their environment has on them (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002; Odendaal, 2016). There is a sense of ownership that the student needs to be granted by the educator and understood as an intrinsic part of their lives (Odendaal, 2016). So, in many ways, when critique is aimed at the artwork and not at providing suggestions through conversation and interaction with the student, it may be seen as a criticism of the individual and the sharing of what is sacred to the student.



Lieve Meneer ...xx

Meneer baie dankie vir die tyd wat meneer hier spandeer het.

Dankie dat meneer my so baie geleer het en gehelp het met raad om my kunswerke te verbeter.

Dankie dat meneer my ook gehelp het om te besef dat ek myself en my talente moet op vertrou.

Meneer is ñ inspirasie as ñ kuns meneer. Ek wens meneer kan langer by ons bly en dankie dat meneer altyd oulik en vrolik met ons was en definitief geduldig.

Ek wens net die beste vir meneer toe vir die toekoms, ek weet meneer gaan hoë hoogtes bereik.

Liewe Meneer Paseka

Die heel eerste "impression" van Meneer was toe ek daardie oggend die eerste periode kom toesig sit het. Meneer het baie professioneel gelyk, baie geleerd en dit het my opgewonde gemaak om te sien hoe meneer meneer se kennis gaan oordra. stadig maar seker het meneer gemaklik geraak met die sisteme en dan ons mal kids haha. Baie dankie vir die positiewe impak wat Meneer op my en die res van ons klas se lewens gehad het. Wat ek die meeste geniet het van ons kunsklasse was meneer se skep van ñ kalm atmosfeer en meneer se reaksies as die klas debateer oor feminisme! Meneer het ñ duidelike definitiewe passie vir opvoeding en kuns. Dit was lekker om klas by meneer te kry. Wat vir my baie opbouend was, van Meneer, is die feit dat Meneer nooit direk kritiek gelewer het nie, dit was ñ manier van voorstelle en verbetering want meneer wou ons help presteer tot die beste van ons vermoëns.

Ek is bly my Hoërskool loopbaan het op ñ hoë noot geeindig, baie bly meneer kon deel vorm van ons kuns "journey"

Dankie ñ duisend

[redacted]

PS: Dankie vir Meneer se geduld

Figure 3.10: A memory from 2018 two letters written by the learners

The final memory I would like to share in this section, Figure 3.11, is from January 2021…

> *As we were starting to live in our new normal of COVID 19, there had been a lot of hiccups and disruptions to the academic programme in the previous year, delaying the release of marks to students. In the case of this email, I sought confirmation from the student to see if their marks had been corrected. The student provided confirmation of their marks being corrected; however, he also took the time to provide feedback regarding my practices and my passion for teaching and dedication to the students.*

> *The student also mentions, "This too shall pass and so shall you", a quote I heard while I was doing my honours; as we were preparing for our exams, one of my lecturers said it, and it stuck with me. I often use it towards the end of the year when I prepare students for their final assessments. However, it seems the students had also applied this quote to their personal lives. The student further notes that I had not only prepared them academically but for life too, perhaps indicating that the student felt that the Creative Arts modules I taught them had academically prepared him to teach Creative Arts and take on life. The student further urged me to continue with what I had been doing and inspire excellence and lives. Closing the email with an indication that they were now a graduate of the University in the Midland.*

This email is a valuable rhizomatic pocket as it was provided by a student, I had taught from the time I arrived at the University in the Midlands and who had experienced my teaching for at least over two years and had indicated that my teaching practices had prepared them for what they would need academically (pedagogical knowledge) and in their personal life. Based on the email from the student and the other feedback letters and emails, it becomes clear that those with whom we share pedagogical relationships with do not only value academic knowledge but also personal enrichment and how we make them feel in our interactions and the relationships we build with them (Burke-Smalley, 2018; Webb and Barrett, 2014). It is important to gather feedback and assess my teaching practices from students I have taught over the years. Their input will help me understand how they have experienced my teaching methods and what improvements can be made. This feedback can be integrated into the Creative Arts program as an assessment tool for both the program and the Creative Arts educators.

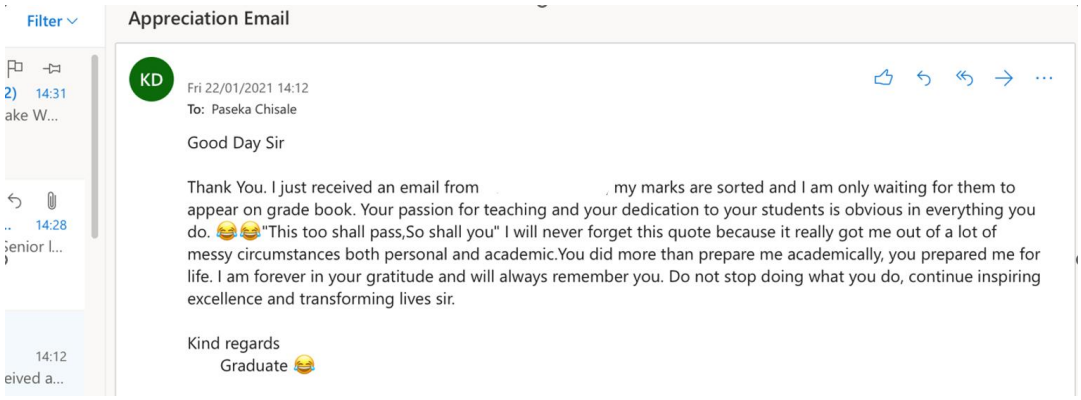


Figure 3.11: Email from a student: January 2021

The literature highlights a growing concern about the large cohorts of students in higher education programmes, stating that it is not conducive to quality learning (Letseka, 2022; Moodley, 2015; Fortesa and Tchantchane, 2010; Wadesango, 2021). For Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes, these large classes limit interaction with practical engagement in Creative Arts activities and disadvantage students who have had limited or negative Creative Arts experiences (Beukes, 2016). In my opinion, student feedback in these programmes is valuable, as they are the ones closest to us regarding our pedagogical practices and can provide feedback for change even with the large cohorts we often teach (Müller, 2023). Understanding feedback as constructive rather than personal criticism can be the catalyst for change in how students experience our teaching, our interactions, and conversations with them in the classroom (Eckhoff, 2012; Tomljenović, 2015).

Student feedback, as discussed by Tomljenović (2015), offers an opportunity for self-reflection. It helps us understand how to improve and adapt our teaching practices to make Creative Arts a part of students' daily lives, as Dewey (1934) and Eisner (2002) suggested. I believe that student feedback, whether positive or negative, offers potential for improving my teaching methods. It serves as rhizomatic pockets that enhance and inform my practice as I continue to grow and evolve as a Creative Arts teacher educator, following the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). The pedagogical relationship I

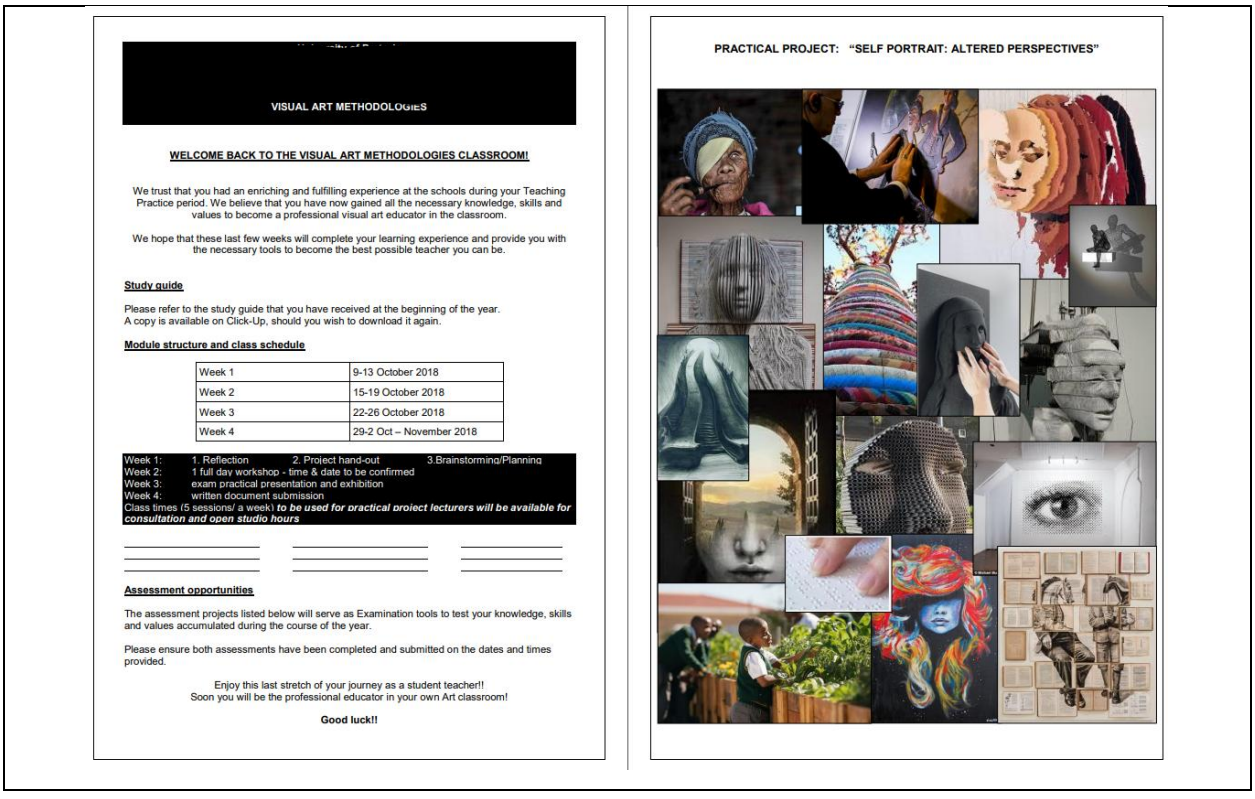
establish with my students shifts the focus away from traditional roles, empowering students to provide feedback on my teaching practices as they are the main beneficiaries. In the following section, I will take on my role as an assessor and provide examples of how I assess my students. I will draw on different experiences from various time periods and locations to inform my assessment of the large Creative Arts modules that I teach.

But how do you assess such big groups?

> *At the University in the Midlands, where I taught from 2019-2022, I remember being met by a pile of about 400 test scripts students had written earlier that week. My HOD then asked me if I would be okay with marking the scripts. I responded before I saw the scripts: yes, it would be lovely to get an idea of where students are learning at that time. Boy, did I regret that decision two weeks later as I was still marking and that pile of scripts. Many more tests followed that year; I did not enjoy the setting or marking of any of these tests and written exams, and I did not quite get the idea of sitting exams and tests in Creative Arts. I dreaded having to mark hundreds of written documents multiple of times a year. However, as I reflect on the experience, I would like to think that assessing students for the person who had occupied the post before me made it easier to manage the large number of students and the lack of facilities and staffing, which were all challenges during this time. In my thinking, all the modules I taught had very few credits allocated to them, some as little as 6 credits. So, I thought, let's have fewer assessments, but make sure it is quality assessments so that I also get to enjoy the marking process too.*

From my previous experience at the University in Gauteng, we never wrote sitting tests or exams for the Visual Arts modules I taught, only written assignments and practical assessments. Assessments were always designed to evaluate how well students were able to apply what they were taught practically, an example of this comes from Figure 3.12: Project brief example from 2018 a fourth-year project in which students had to provide a body of work that they would exhibit as part of their exit exam that also required reflexivity from students forming part of an arts festival in the faculty. Assessment and opportunities for the exploration of the creation of art were self-directed by students who were provided with open studio hours in consultation with their lecturer as they developed

their work. The assessment brief was about eight pages long, providing students with all the information they needed for the project. Although I had gone through the brief with the students, this was to foster a sense of self-directed problem-solving further and allow students to take accountability for their own work, find a variety of alternative ways to solve the problem with all the information, knowledge and skills at their disposal (South African Qualifications Authority, 2012). The assessment brief also called on students to address a social issue by being mindful of allowing their work to be an experience for blind people where they could also interact with their artwork using their other senses. The practices I learnt at the University in Gauteng have tremendously impacted my interaction with assessment practices throughout my career and would inform how I conducted assessments at the University in the Midlands and how I ought to create opportunities for my students to experience assessment and benefit from the assessment opportunities I create.



VISUAL ART METHODOLOGIES

WELCOME BACK TO THE VISUAL ART METHODOLOGIES CLASSROOM!

We trust that you had an enriching and fulfilling experience at the schools during your Teaching Practice period. We believe that you have now gained all the necessary knowledge, skills and values to become a professional visual art educator in the classroom.

We hope that these last few weeks will complete your learning experience and provide you with the necessary tools to become the best possible teacher you can be.

Study guide

Please refer to the study guide that you have received at the beginning of the year.
A copy is available on Click-Up, should you wish to download it again.

Module structure and class schedule

Week 1	9-13 October 2018
Week 2	15-19 October 2018
Week 3	22-26 October 2018
Week 4	29-2 Oct – November 2018

Week 1: 1. Reflection 2. Project hand-out 3.Brainstorming/Planning
Week 2: 1 full day workshop - time & date to be confirmed
Week 3: exam practical presentation and exhibition
Week 4: written document submission
Class times (5 sessions/ a week) ***to be used for practical project lecturers will be available for consultation and open studio hours***

Assessment opportunities

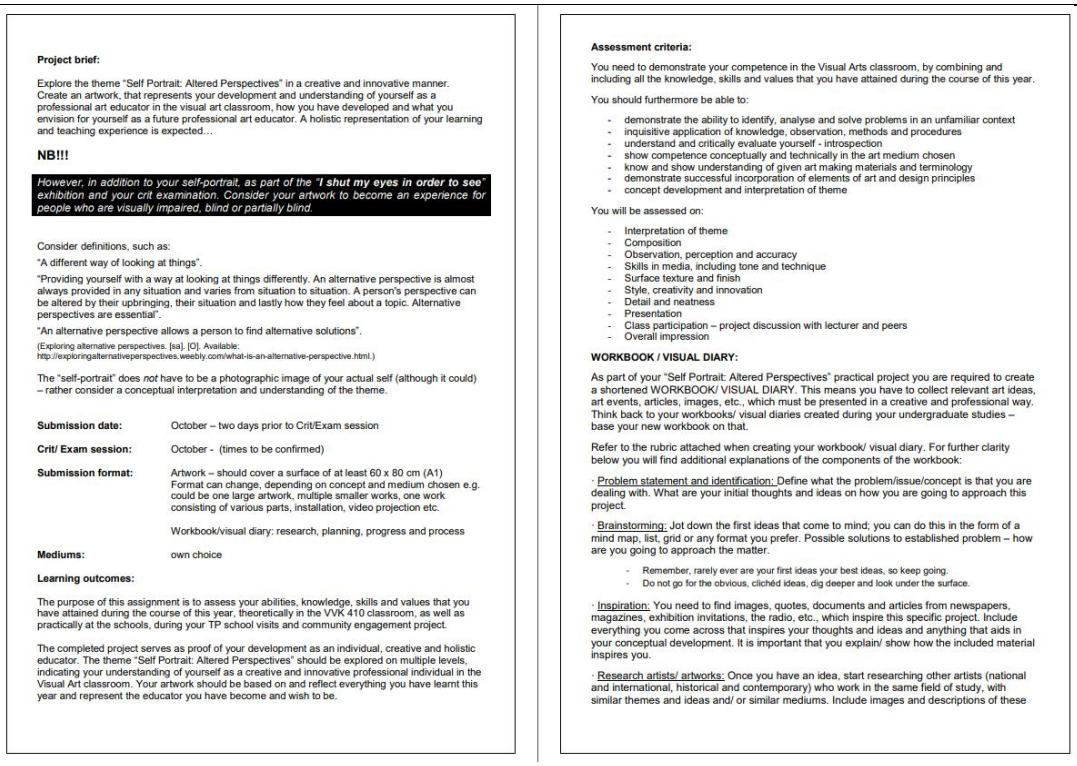
The assessment projects listed below will serve as Examination tools to test your knowledge, skills and values accumulated during the course of the year.

Please ensure both assessments have been completed and submitted on the dates and times provided.

Enjoy this last stretch of your journey as a student teacher!!
Soon you will be the professional educator in your own Art classroom!

Good luck!!

PRACTICAL PROJECT: "SELF PORTRAIT: ALTERED PERSPECTIVES"



Project brief:

Explore the theme "Self Portrait: Altered Perspectives" in a creative and innovative manner. Create an artwork, that represents your development and understanding of yourself as a professional art educator in the visual art classroom, how you have developed and what you envision for yourself as a future professional art educator. A holistic representation of your learning and teaching experience is expected…

NB!!!

*However, in addition to your self-portrait, as part of the "**I shut my eyes in order to see**" exhibition and your crit examination. Consider your artwork to become an experience for people who are visually impaired, blind or partially blind.*

Consider definitions, such as:

"A different way of looking at things".

"Providing yourself with a way at looking at things differently. An alternative perspective is almost always provided in any situation and varies from situation to situation. A person's perspective can be altered by their upbringing, their situation and lastly how they feel about a topic. Alternative perspectives are essential".

"An alternative perspective allows a person to find alternative solutions".

(Exploring alternative perspectives. [sa]. [O]. Available: http://exploringalternativeperspectives.weebly.com/what-is-an-alternative-perspective.html.)

The "self-portrait" does *not* have to be a photographic image of your actual self (although it could) – rather consider a conceptual interpretation and understanding of the theme.

Submission date: October – two days prior to Crit/Exam session

Crit/ Exam session: October - (times to be confirmed)

Submission format: Artwork – should cover a surface of at least 60 x 80 cm (A1) Format can change, depending on concept and medium chosen e.g. could be one large artwork, multiple smaller works, one work consisting of various parts, installation, video projection etc.

Workbook/visual diary: research, planning, progress and process

Mediums: own choice

Learning outcomes:

The purpose of this assignment is to assess your abilities, knowledge, skills and values that you have attained during the course of this year, theoretically in the VVK 410 classroom, as well as practically at the schools, during your TP school visits and community engagement project.

The completed project serves as proof of your development as an individual, creative and holistic educator. The theme "Self Portrait: Altered Perspectives" should be explored on multiple levels, indicating your understanding of yourself as a creative and innovative professional individual in the Visual Art classroom. Your artwork should be based on and reflect everything you have learnt this year and represent the educator you have become and wish to be.

Assessment criteria:

You need to demonstrate your competence in the Visual Arts classroom, by combining and including all the knowledge, skills and values that you have attained during the course of this year.

You should furthermore be able to:

- demonstrate the ability to identify, analyse and solve problems in an unfamiliar context
- inquisitive application of knowledge, observation, methods and procedures
- understand and critically evaluate yourself - introspection
- show competence conceptually and technically in the art medium chosen
- know and show understanding of given art making materials and terminology
- demonstrate successful incorporation of elements of art and design principles
- concept development and interpretation of theme

You will be assessed on:

- Interpretation of theme
- Composition
- Observation, perception and accuracy
- Skills in media, including tone and technique
- Surface texture and finish
- Style, creativity and innovation
- Detail and neatness
- Presentation
- Class participation – project discussion with lecturer and peers
- Overall impression

WORKBOOK / VISUAL DIARY:

As part of your "Self Portrait: Altered Perspectives" practical project you are required to create a shortened WORKBOOK/ VISUAL DIARY. This means you have to collect relevant art ideas, art events, articles, images, etc., which must be presented in a creative and professional way. Think back to your workbooks/ visual diaries created during your undergraduate studies – base your new workbook on that.

Refer to the rubric attached when creating your workbook/ visual diary. For further clarity below you will find additional explanations of the components of the workbook:

· Problem statement and identification: Define what the problem/issue/concept is that you are dealing with. What are your initial thoughts and ideas on how you are going to approach this project.

· Brainstorming: Jot down the first ideas that come to mind; you can do this in the form of a mind map, list, grid or any format you prefer. Possible solutions to established problem – how are you going to approach the matter.

- Remember, rarely ever are your first ideas your best ideas, so keep going.
- Do not go for the obvious, clichéd ideas, dig deeper and look under the surface.

· Inspiration: You need to find images, quotes, documents and articles from newspapers, magazines, exhibition invitations, the radio, etc., which inspire this specific project. Include everything you come across that inspires your thoughts and ideas and anything that aids in your conceptual development. It is important that you explain/ show how the included material inspires you.

· Research artists/ artworks: Once you have an idea, start researching other artists (national and international, historical and contemporary) who work in the same field of study, with similar themes and ideas and/ or similar mediums. Include images and descriptions of these

Figure 3.12 Email from a student: January 2021

Drawing on my experiences from the University in Gauteng and my knowledge from my B.Ed. Hons, which focused extensively on assessment in education, I understand assessment as a crucial information tool. It informs teaching methods, determines whether learning has taken place and evaluates the effectiveness of both the curriculum and its delivery (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall and William, 2004). This, in turn, guides improvements and best practices in education (Gareis and Grant, 2015; Maphalala, 2016; Mikre, 2010). Assessment methods will often vary depending on the type of activity and subject-specific discipline knowledge and skills (Wood, 2016). This means that assessment and teaching in the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes need to focus on the discipline and develop key competencies related to pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills and confidence as these are competencies that are highlighted as the most imperative for effective Creative Arts teaching (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015; Westraadt, 2017). Odendaal (2016) further posits that assessment should be aimed at helping those who are learning to reach their potential. In the case of Creative Arts student teachers, this

includes pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills and confidence. Therefore, students must be afforded appropriate learning and assessment opportunities to foster these competencies.

Further drawing on Gareis and Grant (2015), I have always considered assessment in the Creative Arts subject as a bar stool as illustrated in Figure 3.13: *A Model of Curriculum, instruction, and Assessment Gareis and Grant (2015)*. Their model emphasises the alignment, integration and interplay between the curriculum instruction and assessment to enhance student-centred learning. If one of its legs or the seat is missing, it loses its use and functionality (Gareis and Grant, 2015). Therefore, when we use assessment, we always need to understand our "why" as this will guide us in creating appropriate opportunities for learning and assessments (Odendaal, 2017). In preparing Creative Arts teachers, let's consider assessing students on their pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills and confidence, as these are key competencies highlighted in the literature as essential for the teaching of Creative Arts (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015).

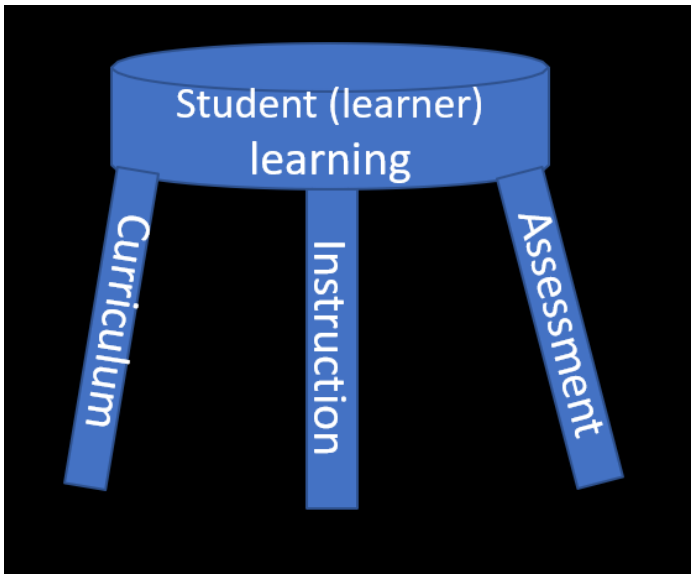


Figure 3.13: A model of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Gareis and Grant, 2015)

For many of my students who have encountered Creative Arts as an isolated experience of the arts that is removed from the ordinary everyday experience to an esoteric purpose that they cannot interact with (Dewey, 1934), how I choose to assess and interact with them about Creative Arts will be integral to the development and creation of the mind and their understanding of Creative Arts (Brandt, 1987; Eisner, 2002). Much of how students view Creative Arts will depend on their encounter with the Arts in my classroom, especially if they have previously had limited to no experiences with Creative Arts (Beukes, 2016). Making student learning dependent on the curriculum, teaching, and assessment opportunities I create through interaction and understanding the needs of my students (Gareis and Grant, 2015; Tomljenović, 2015), which I believe I initiate when I invite my students into a pedagogical relationship with me (Müller, 2023).

Westraadt (2017) argues that for the student preparing to be a primary school Creative Arts teacher but who has not had much engagement with Art Education before, assessment should only take place after experiential engagement; students need to be provided with ample opportunities to be immersed in the rich experience of creating art. Furthermore, students should also be engaged in activities that allow them to analyse, discriminate perceptually and reflect on what they have been doing (Brandt, 1987; Westraadt, 2017). Only after students have been provided with an opportunity to apply their artistic thinking and the experience of the process, then assessment can take place using a variety of assessment techniques based on the needs of your students (Brandt, 1987; Odendaal, 2016; Westraadt, 2017).

Westraadt (2017) further notes from Brandt (1987) that when engaging in this type of approach, this is where…

> aesthetic growth is clear from production, perception and reflection. How do people learn to see? The centrality of production, linked with perception and reflection is paramount. Learning grows from doing. When perception improves, they learn to see better, make finer discriminations and see connections between things. When they reflect, they step back from the creation and consider revision and improvement
>
> (Brandt 1987)

As students learn through doing, they develop a deeper sense of confidence in their abilities and assurance about their reflective self-assessment of their work, which is refined through the back-and-forth process of the art-making experience; this can be used as an assessment for learning (Odendaal, 2016; Westraadt, 2017).

Using Gareis and Grant's (2015) model of assessment, I would like to argue that assessment takes on a more multipurpose role as a feedback and information-gathering tool in informing student learning, curriculum and teaching. The first role is how well student learning is happening and to what extent it is happening using assessment for learning, including the above-mentioned example (Black et al., 2004; Boud, 2000; Odendaal,2016; Wiliam, 2011). There is an intentional interaction between myself and my students, promoting thought-provoking prompts in the learning process to stimulate critical thinking and peer engagement between students and myself (Odendaal, 2016; Tomljenović, 2015; Westraadt, 2017). As students interact with the learning process in the Creative Arts classroom, it also informs them and me on how learning is progressing (Odendaal, 2016; Westraadt, 2017). This message gives me valuable feedback that I can use for developing nodes that enhance teaching and student learning, providing me with a map for improving learning opportunities and catering to the needs of my students (Andrade, Heffering and Palma 2014).

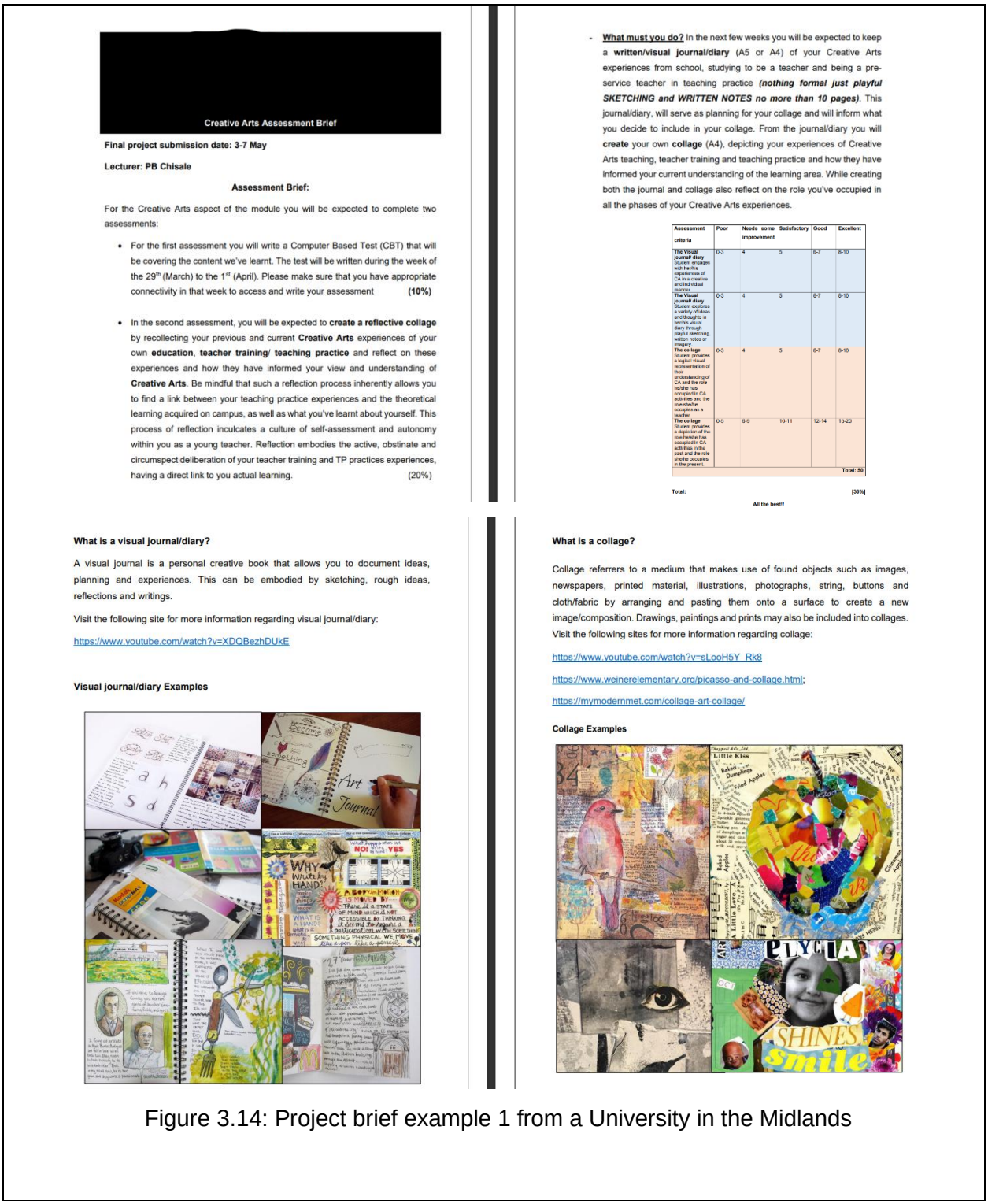
Students get actively involved in their learning by acquiring knowledge of pedagogical content, practical skills, and confidence. Assessment can also be used as vital feedback on areas to improve and help the students understand where they are in their learning journey, emphasising my understanding of the process-orientated nature of Creative Arts (Odendaal, 2016) and learning as a lifetime process (Westraadt, 2017). The second role of assessment, which is to inform the curriculum, how well it has been implemented and taught, and how well it has been brought to life for students (Boud, 2000; Odendaal, 2016; Westraadt, 2017), underscores the importance of educators in shaping the learning experience.

The third role of assessment is to inform and improve my teaching continuously. The evidence or information gathered from the assessment provides me with suggestions on how learning activities and class engagement can be adjusted to meet the needs of students (Black et al., 2004; Boud, 2000; Odendaal, 2016; Westraadt, 2017). Based on the three different roles assessment takes on in my practice, I understand assessment as an integral data-gathering tool to inform and improve student learning, curriculum and teaching, focusing on developing nodes for informing practice from assessment.

Drawing on rhizomatic pockets from the University in Gauteng and my assessment background, I sought to use the three different roles of assessment to help inform student learning, curriculum and teaching. I sought to re-develop assessments to focus on students demonstrating what they have learnt and reflecting on their learning at the University in the Midlands. This is supported by Odendaal (2016), who argues that critical thinking and reflection are imperative components to integrating assessment and the curriculums we teach. Students need to be provided with opportunities to reflect on their learning (Westraadt, 2017). Over time at the University in the Midlands, I slowly abandoned sitting examinations and tests. I replaced them with practical assessments and theoretical projects that focused on problem-solving and reflexive assessments. I wanted to see how well students would apply what was taught and the components of academic agency and creativity as a Creative Arts teacher educator during this phase of my career benefited substantially from the academic freedom the space allowed. However, it is important to consider how this academic freedom is used and whether it also caters to our students' needs once they enter the workforce (Steyn et al., 2012).

Using the academic freedom provided in the space, I developed assessment opportunities that allowed for practical application and reflexivity. Project brief examples 1-3 from the University in the Midlands provide an example of the types of assignments I developed for my students. Much of how I develop assessment briefs is mainly influenced by the same type of structure and format I learnt and started using at the University in Gauteng. These assessment briefs often provided a detailed and clear communication of what students would expect when completing the task. This was my way of providing

students with their own map of how to navigate completing the task and a tool I also used to guide them through the tasks they needed to complete.



Creative Arts Assessment Brief

Final project submission date: 3-7 May

Lecturer: PB Chisale

Assessment Brief:

For the Creative Arts aspect of the module you will be expected to complete two assessments:

- For the first assessment you will write a Computer Based Test (CBT) that will be covering the content we've learnt. The test will be written during the week of the 29th (March) to the 1st (April). Please make sure that you have appropriate connectivity in that week to access and write your assessment **(10%)**

- In the second assessment, you will be expected to **create a reflective collage** by recollecting your previous and current **Creative Arts** experiences of your own **education**, **teacher training/ teaching practice** and reflect on these experiences and how they have informed your view and understanding of **Creative Arts**. Be mindful that such a reflection process inherently allows you to find a link between your teaching practice experiences and the theoretical learning acquired on campus, as well as what you've learnt about yourself. This process of reflection inculcates a culture of self-assessment and autonomy within you as a young teacher. Reflection embodies the active, obstinate and circumspect deliberation of your teacher training and TP practices experiences, having a direct link to you actual learning. (20%)

- **What must you do?** In the next few weeks you will be expected to keep a **written/visual journal/diary** (A5 or A4) of your Creative Arts experiences from school, studying to be a teacher and being a pre-service teacher in teaching practice ***(nothing formal just playful SKETCHING and WRITTEN NOTES no more than 10 pages)***. This journal/diary, will serve as planning for your collage and will inform what you decide to include in your collage. From the journal/diary you will **create** your own **collage** (A4), depicting your experiences of Creative Arts teaching, teacher training and teaching practice and how they have informed your current understanding of the learning area. While creating both the journal and collage also reflect on the role you've occupied in all the phases of your Creative Arts experiences.

Assessment criteria	Poor	Needs some improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
The Visual journal/ diary Student engages with her/his experiences of CA in a creative and individual manner	0-3	4	5	6-7	8-10
The Visual journal/ diary Student explores a variety of ideas and thoughts in her/his visual diary through playful sketching, written notes or imagery	0-3	4	5	6-7	8-10
The collage Student provides a logical visual representation of their understanding of CA and the role he/she has occupied in CA activities and the role she/he occupies as a teacher	0-3	4	5	6-7	8-10
The collage Student provides a depiction of the role he/she has occupied in CA activities in the past and the role she/he occupies in the present.	0-5	6-9	10-11	12-14	15-20
					Total: 50

Total: **[30%]**

All the best!!

What is a visual journal/diary?

A visual journal is a personal creative book that allows you to document ideas, planning and experiences. This can be embodied by sketching, rough ideas, reflections and writings.

Visit the following site for more information regarding visual journal/diary:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDQBezhDUkE

Visual journal/diary Examples

What is a collage?

Collage referrers to a medium that makes use of found objects such as images, newspapers, printed material, illustrations, photographs, string, buttons and cloth/fabric by arranging and pasting them onto a surface to create a new image/composition. Drawings, paintings and prints may also be included into collages. Visit the following sites for more information regarding collage:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLooH5Y_Rk8

https://www.weinerelementary.org/picasso-and-collage.html;

https://mymodernmet.com/collage-art-collage/

Collage Examples

Figure 3.14: Project brief example 1 from a University in the Midlands

[redacted]

Teacher Training Manual Project

Project Brief: (Final submission date: To be announced)

Lecturer: PB Chisale

Project Topic:

Reflections: Unmuting the voice of the Pre-service teacher experiences, lessons learnt, informing practice.

Our experiences give birth to knowledge and often inform how we navigate and make sense of the world around us. However, for us to make sense of our experiences we need to be provides with time and spaces to reflect so that we can understand how we have come to construct our newfound knowledge. The above-mentioned is also no different for you as pre-service teachers. As we look back at three years of preservice training and teaching practice, I am quite certain that there are many experiences that you as a young teacher have drawn from and used as sources of learning and development.

Upon the exploration of research and classroom discussions it is quite clear that teaching and incorporating creative arts **(CA)** in the South African classroom remains a challenge for many pre- and in-service teachers. Drawing from your rich classroom-based experiences, work with the group members assigned to you to compile a teacher training guide from both pre-service and in-service teachers to effectively teach and incorporate **CA** in their classrooms. Make use of both your experiences and research to inform your manual.

Work in groups of 3-5 to engage on your experiences as pre-service CA teachers, by firstly engaging in a **reflective discussion** and taking rough notes of the discussion on your experiences. Which should be submitted as proof of discussion in the appendices section ***(nothing formal just handwritten notes and mind maps)***.

Proposed Creative Arts Teacher Training Manual Structure

- **Introduction**

  Introduce your **Creative Arts (CA) Teacher Training Manual** by compiling an introductory (Narrative) discussion of your experiences of teaching and incorporating CA into teaching during your teaching practice (I want to meet all the group members here).

  Additional Help: Here you only introduce your different individual experiences as group members. You need to say how CA was taught and incorporated into teaching during your experience.

  Remember that a lot of the information you are providing here is from observations you have made during teaching practice at your schools. **(2-3 Pages)**

- From all your experiences, choose 1-3 of the schools you visited during teaching practice as a point of departure from where you can perhaps identify a **CA** teaching and/or integration challenge or improvement you can addressed in your teacher training manual. **(2 Pages)**

  Additional Help: this is where you and your group members can start choosing 1, 2 or 3 school/s from all your experiences. Starting from the next section, the focus of all your work will be on 1, 2 or 3 of the school/s you have chosen from your introductory discussion.

- **Situation analysis:**

  Community/ies: While preparing this **CA** teacher training manual it is essential to look at the broader needs of the community/ies and the relevant school's local community. Needs vary from those of a more physical nature to psychological ones, for example food, clothing, housing, education, values, cultures and un/employment.

  Additional Help: Here we look at the broader community surrounding the school. It is important for us to do so, as the makeup of the surrounding community often informs the culture and milieu inside the school. Remember that you can complete this part of the analysis from questionnaires, interviews, observations, document analysis and reading up about the community concerned.

  School/s: When moving to the school level it is important to remember to take the whole school into consideration, from the actual physical environment of the school to each respective classroom. Take issues such as leadership, language/medium of instruction, number of learners and teachers. Be specific about the classroom/s. Methods you might use to collect this data may include questionnaires, interviews, **observations and document analysis**. **(3-5 Pages)**

  Here we look at the specific school/s you chose and do an analysis on the physical environment of the school. This physical environment involves: the physical school setting involves the types of classrooms the school has, the playing areas/space, school resources, the amount of learners the school has, the leadership style you have observed at the school and the general makeup of the teachers.

  Also focus on the classroom context in which you found yourself during teaching practice. The amount of learners in the classroom, the class size, the ethnographic makeup of your learners. Remember to take into account issues such as CA resources in the class, the teacher's propensity to teach or withhold CA teaching based on the availability of resources, knowledge on how to teach CA. Also how CA was taught/integrated or not taught/integrated

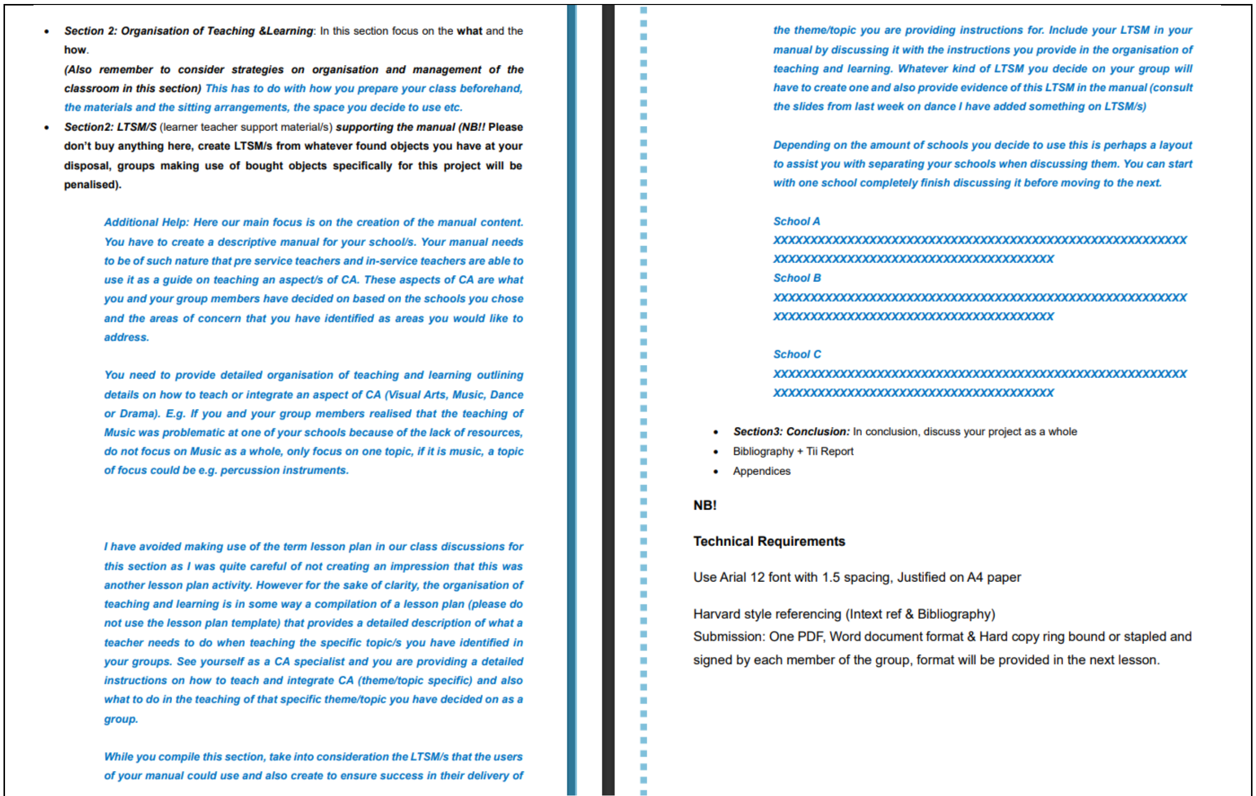
(Sections 1-3 minimum of 15 pages, maximum of 25)

- ***Section 1: Theoretical grounding:*** The theoretical point of departure from which you propose to compile the manual. ***(Use sources for this section)***

  In this section I need you to be mindful of what we did last year when we were creating our teaching philosophies and the discussion we had in class during lesson 3 on the slide about theoretical approaches. I hope you took notes during this lesson as I was somewhat providing clues on how to approach your assignment as I had been doing in the other lessons too.

  Now based on your classroom situational analysis of how CA was taught and/or integrated in the classroom, identify the theoretical approach you think is generally being used to teach/integrate CA (in cases where it was not taught or integrated, mention the general theoretical approach you have observed). From that you can argue whether this worked for the context of learning your found yourself in. I am also aware that in some cases the theoretical approaches the teachers used were applicable to the context and the teaching. In such cases provide ways to improve on what is already working.

  Remember that I introduced the three learning theories namely the Behaviourism (transmission), Cognitivism (transaction) and Constructivism (transformation). Use these as a starting point for understanding the theoretical approach used at your school/s and those you wish to employ in your organisation of teaching and learning. These theories are the general streams of learning theories however, there are many more out there that you can use to fit the learning situation you will be addressing in your manual. Make sure that the theory/ies you choose are linked to what you propose to do in your organisation of teaching and learning. (you can use one, two, three or even more theories to support your work. However make sure it is coherent and not just a general pasting of theories that are not even helpful to your manual)



- ***Section 2: Organisation of Teaching &Learning***: In this section focus on the **what** and the **how**.
  (Also remember to consider strategies on organisation and management of the classroom in this section) *This has to do with how you prepare your class beforehand, the materials and the sitting arrangements, the space you decide to use etc.*
- ***Section2: LTSM/S*** (learner teacher support material/s) ***supporting the manual (NB!!* Please don't buy anything here, create LTSM/s from whatever found objects you have at your disposal, groups making use of bought objects specifically for this project will be penalised).**

Additional Help: Here our main focus is on the creation of the manual content. You have to create a descriptive manual for your school/s. Your manual needs to be of such nature that pre service teachers and in-service teachers are able to use it as a guide on teaching an aspect/s of CA. These aspects of CA are what you and your group members have decided on based on the schools you chose and the areas of concern that you have identified as areas you would like to address.

You need to provide detailed organisation of teaching and learning outlining details on how to teach or integrate an aspect of CA (Visual Arts, Music, Dance or Drama). E.g. If you and your group members realised that the teaching of Music was problematic at one of your schools because of the lack of resources, do not focus on Music as a whole, only focus on one topic, if it is music, a topic of focus could be e.g. percussion instruments.

I have avoided making use of the term lesson plan in our class discussions for this section as I was quite careful of not creating an impression that this was another lesson plan activity. However for the sake of clarity, the organisation of teaching and learning is in some way a compilation of a lesson plan (please do not use the lesson plan template) that provides a detailed description of what a teacher needs to do when teaching the specific topic/s you have identified in your groups. See yourself as a CA specialist and you are providing a detailed instructions on how to teach and integrate CA (theme/topic specific) and also what to do in the teaching of that specific theme/topic you have decided on as a group.

While you compile this section, take into consideration the LTSM/s that the users of your manual could use and also create to ensure success in their delivery of the theme/topic you are providing instructions for. Include your LTSM in your manual by discussing it with the instructions you provide in the organisation of teaching and learning. Whatever kind of LTSM you decide on your group will have to create one and also provide evidence of this LTSM in the manual (consult the slides from last week on dance I have added something on LTSM/s)

Depending on the amount of schools you decide to use this is perhaps a layout to assist you with separating your schools when discussing them. You can start with one school completely finish discussing it before moving to the next.

School A
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
School B
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

School C
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

- ***Section3: Conclusion:*** In conclusion, discuss your project as a whole
- Bibliography + Tii Report
- Appendices

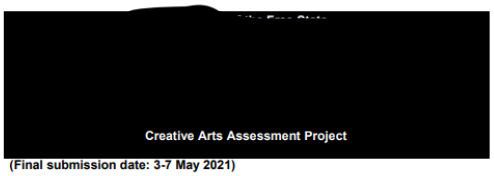
NB!

Technical Requirements

Use Arial 12 font with 1.5 spacing, Justified on A4 paper

Harvard style referencing (Intext ref & Bibliography)
Submission: One PDF, Word document format & Hard copy ring bound or stapled and signed by each member of the group, format will be provided in the next lesson.

Figure 3.15: Project brief example 2 from a University in the Midlands



Creative Arts Assessment Project

(Final submission date: 3-7 May 2021)

Lecturer: PB Chisale

Project Topic: Creative Arts Assessment Project

Design a Creative Arts assessment instrument/activity/tool for an Intermediate Phase grade of your choosing. This assessment instrument/activity/tool can be created for a lesson in any of the four disciplines we have done and will be covering: Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama.

Remember that in this task you are **NOT** creating a **lesson plan** but merely an **assessment instrument/tool/activity**.

In this assignment we are already assuming that you have taught a lesson and you want to create an assessment instrument/tool/activity to ascertain whether learning has effectively taken place. **Just to reiterate, we are not creating a lesson plan here, only an assessment instrument.**

You have more than enough time, be creative and play around with ideas, go through a process of planning and research.

- While creating this assessment instrument/tool/activity remember to state in detail **how** you will go about administering your assessment **(15)**,
- Provide reasons **why** you are administering the assessment **(10)**,
- Give measures on **how** you will ensure that it serves the purpose which you intended **(10)**,
- Provide a good quality example that you have created/built/designed yourself of the assessment instrument/tool/activity. **This can be a worksheet, a project brief, an instrument, a poster etc.** but do keep in mind that whatever you are-creating needs to advance learning and provide you as the teacher feedback on whether learning has takin place or not **(15)**.

"Passion at the heart of equipping the teachers of Africa for self-reliance"

Total: 50

Marker Comments

- Technical Requirements
- Ariel 12, 1,5 spacing, justified using
- Harvard referencing e.g.:

Your in-text reference

- Cumming and Kaplan (1991: 19) or (Cumming & Kaplan, 1991: 19)
- When you have a source that has three or more authors, mention all the authors the first time in your in-text referencing, you may use the abbreviation et al (this means 'and others') the second time you mention this source.
- Sometimes sources may have information missing from them and it is important to make use of the correct abbreviations to make reference to this missing information:
  - No date = sa (*sine anno* = without year): According to Smith ([sa]:16) ...
  - No page = sp (*sinopagina* = without page): According to Smith (2002:[sp]) ...

This is how to use these abbreviations in the reference list/bibliography

- Smith, J. [Sa]. *How to write an assignment*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria Press.

"Passion at the heart of equipping the teachers of Africa for self-reliance"

Figure 3.16: Project brief example 3 from a University in the Midlands

Figure 3.14: Project brief example 1 from a University in the Midlands focused on students' reflections on their Creative Arts experiences, how the theoretical knowledge learnt in the past and in the Creative Arts classes I taught, and how they witnessed this practically during their teaching practice. This project served as part of an exit exam for the fourth-year students. This was to gauge their understanding of Creative Arts and provide them with the space to reflect on their learning as they are about to conclude their Teacher Education journey. The feedback provided by the students in their visual journals and collages was also meant to inform curriculum development, evaluate my teaching for the following year, and inform teaching. However, I also wanted to understand if student learning had indeed happened in the programme I was teaching, as their reflections and experiences would be valuable rhizomatic pockets I could learn from and inform my practice.

I also created opportunities for students to work together and collaborate in groups. This was particularly valuable during my time at the University in the Midlands. Figure 3.15: Project brief example 2 from a University in the Midlands illustrates one such group collaborative assessment that encouraged students to work collaboratively to develop a teacher training manual for Creative Arts teaching. This also made marking many assessments less, and I believe the feedback on the assessments was of good quality. I enjoy and value this type of academic freedom. However, it also requires me as a scholar to be vigilant and aware of what is needed in practice for students to successfully teach Creative Arts and the needs of the communities they will be teaching (Steyn et al, 2012). However, academic freedom at a private institution in Pretoria looked a little different.

Figure 3.16: Project brief example 3 from a University in the Midlands provides an example of how I incorporated assessment as part of the third-year curriculum as I had noted from the previous year that it had not been covered in the Creative Arts module but also, that students did not have a comprehensive understanding of how to make use of assessment in their teaching. Therefore, I taught them about assessment, how, why and when we assess. As part of concluding the module's assessment component, students were given a task where they had to develop an assessment instrument that would make them mindful of the value of assessment when used appropriately. In this case, assessment was used to inform my teaching of assessment and gauge if my teaching of the topic and developing the assessment instrument fostered student learning.

In the teaching of Creative Arts as it is evident from, the Project Brief Example from 2018 and Project brief examples 1-3 from the University in the Midlands I believe that students need to be provided with opportunities to participate in performance assessment as this provides the students with an opportunity to showcase what they can do with the knowledge and skills they have acquired (Ernst, Glennie and Li, 2017; Odendaal, 2016). I base many of my assessments on requiring students to demonstrate to me the extent of their pedagogical content knowledge and practical skills and confidence (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015) to teach and apply what they have been taught. Moreover, I acknowledge the multipurpose

nature of assessment as a feedback and information-gathering tool in informing student learning, curriculum and teaching (Gareis and Grant, 2015). When I moved to the private Institution in Pretoria in 2022, I had less room for academic freedom to adapt and adjust assessments due to the institution's structures; I will share more about this in the next section.

This memory is from 2022- 2023 at a private institution in Pretoria…

> *The private institution in Pretoria was much more rigid in its structure, with many processes and procedures for developing assessment instruments and scheduling such assessments. We made use of a system where you could book out your assessment date, and you had to keep to it as much as possible as moving the assessment date would require following a lengthy administrative process that would require your HoD's signature and the head or school (the dean) in many ways. This type of system took much of the academic freedom and flexibility of adapting assessments based on what I was learning about my students in practice.*
>
> *The development of assessment instruments, such as assignments, needed to be ready by the end of the previous academic year, and its multi-campus structure required students to be taught the same content across four different campuses. The first of these challenges meant that how you decide to assess students would be highly dependent on what you learnt about how well the assessment works based on the current year group and would not be able to adapt this assessment for the following year. This, however, was different for written tests and examinations as one would develop these assessment instruments during the current year as students were in the learning process. The second of these aspects referring to the multi-campus approach required that all the respective campuses be on par, meaning planning and preparation of assessments needed to be pre-planned in advance and disseminated to colleagues in time and printed on the assessment plan for the year.*
>
> *In a conversation with a colleague who had also come from a public institution, we discussed how this was a challenge for academic freedom, particularly adaption*

assessments based on what you were learning about your students in teaching and learning. This is in direct contrast to what Steyn et al., (2012) note as a privileged position of academics to have the space to research, teach and make decisions about the selection, development and implementation of educational programmes free of any external interventions. However, in this case, the institution had internal systems and structures that were put in place to safeguard the programmes, uphold the integrity of the qualifications offered by the institution and ensure they adhere to the Council on Higher Education (CHE) accreditation standards. A reasonable consideration from the institution as we saw in early 2024 how the Higher Education, Science and Innovation Minister, Blade Nzimande announced the deregistration of City Varsity (Pty) Ltd, Damelin (Pty) Ltd, Icesa City Campus (Pty) Ltd and Lyceum College (Pty) as they failed to adhere to the regulations set out for Private Higher Education Institutions (South African Government News Agency, 2024).

While I will be the first to mention that the institution did not allow for much academic movement and freedom, from an institutional perspective, I can understand why they chose to keep such tight measures in place to ensure there is compliance. However, these measures were put in place by the institution ensured that in my view the institution's Creative Arts programmes for both Foundation and Intermediate Phase programmes which were already in place when I arrived at the institution, were in my opinion from all the higher education institutions where I have served as a Creative Arts teacher educator, the programmes offered at a private institution in Pretoria were the most comprehensive. They provided students with a well-rounded approach to learning about teaching Creative Arts and included assessment opportunities specifically designed to meet the needs of our students. The class sizes for contact learning were also more manageable, with the largest class I had at the time being 30 students in a class, while distance learning students were about 300.

To illustrate this, I present Project Brief Examples 1-4 from the Private Institution in Pretoria as examples of how students are assessed there. Figure 3.17: Project Brief Example 1 from a private institution in Pretoria is for a second-year module that focuses on preparing students for the specialisation of teaching Creative Arts. The assessment

brief required students to demonstrate their understanding of the Creative Arts curriculum, requiring students to reflect on their lived experiences of the written and enacted curriculum. Students had to draw from various sources including policy documents, literature and personal experiences from teaching practices. This assessment was very good as it allowed us to assess how well student learning had taken place and if there were areas for strengthening in the curriculum provided by the institution. However, I often found that students struggled with its complexity as an NQF level 7 module at a second-year level, and students needed help in addressing some of the module's requirements, which I thought would become more accessible to grasp if the module was provided at a 4th fourth-year level.

Figure 3.18: Project Brief Example 2 from a private institution in Pretoria from the same module as indicated earlier. Students were required to demonstrate their ability to apply their music and movement/dance skills by applying them in practical performance. The music performance was completed as a mid-year assessment, while the movement/dance was done as an exit exam. It is important to note that the assessment only focused on music and movement in the second year as Visual Arts and Drama were completed during the first year. Figure 3.19: Project Brief Example 3 from a private institution in Pretoria conducted with students preparing to teach Grade R Foundation Phase students were here required to apply both their practical skills and theoretical knowledge by creating a fantasy area and drawing on literature to demonstrate their understanding of why creating opportunities for such child initiated dramatic play would be important in the Grade R classroom.

Research Assignment

Write a research paper in which you compare and contrast the written and enacted creative arts curriculum.

In this paper you will be expected to:

- consider all of the art forms we have already covered – music, visual art and drama. You may also choose to discuss movement, but this is not a requirement;
- offer a definition of the written and the enacted curriculum;
- engage with the CAPS document as it pertains to the creative arts;
- engage with literature as to what should be included in the written curriculum;
- engage with what you observed during your 2022 Teaching Practice; and
- include a journal in which you reflect on the creative arts lessons you have seen at the school where you completed your 2022 teaching practice.

General guidelines

- Your Research Assignment should be 1 800 to 2 000 words long.
- Your response paper should be written in an essay format – it should have an introduction, body (in paragraphs) and a conclusion.
- Reference all research by use of both in-text references and a reference list. Please be guided by the Embury Referencing Techniques Guide 2016.
- The journal can be typed and added to your assignment as an appendix or handwritten and submitted to your lecturer in hard copy (please note that the journal with your reflections does not form part of the word count).
- Use the correct Embury assignment format: Arial, size 12, 1.5 spacing. Please do not include a border.

Figure 3.17: Project brief example 1 from a Private Institution in Pretoria

Practical Assessments

You will have two practical assessments over the course of the year.

1. Music practical assessment
2. Movement / Dance practical assessment.

These assessments will count for a total of 30% of your final mark. Thus, each practical assessment is worth 15%.

Music Practical Assessment

This practical requires you to complete two tasks:

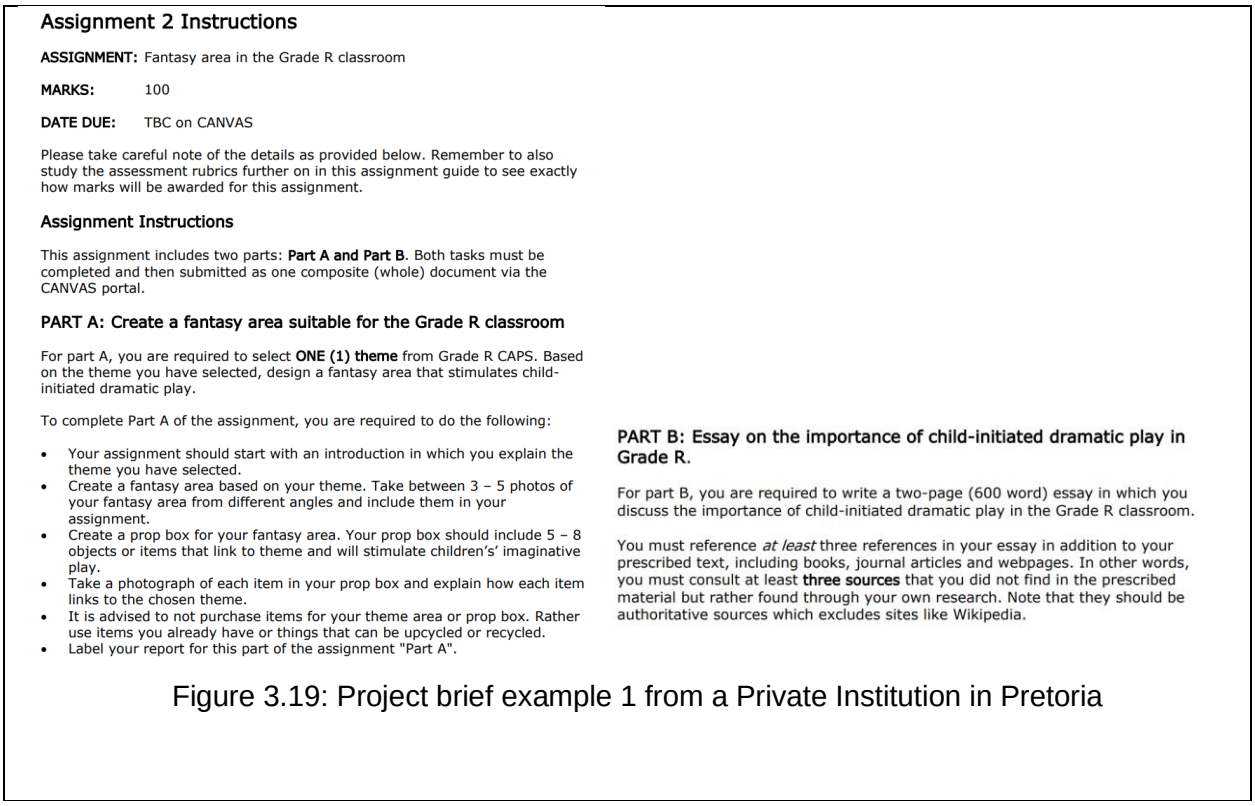
1. Play a C Major scale on your recorder.

2. Select one of the following pieces. Learn to play this piece on your recorder.

    - Shosholoza
    - Under the Sea
    - Scarborough Fair
    - Oh Danny Boy

When you have practiced the scale and your piece and are feeling confident, ask someone to record you playing the piece. Upload your recording to One Drive or You Tube and submit the link to the portal on the LMS page.

Figure 3.18: Project brief example 2 from a private institution in Pretoria



Assignment 2 Instructions

ASSIGNMENT: Fantasy area in the Grade R classroom

MARKS: 100

DATE DUE: TBC on CANVAS

Please take careful note of the details as provided below. Remember to also study the assessment rubrics further on in this assignment guide to see exactly how marks will be awarded for this assignment.

Assignment Instructions

This assignment includes two parts: **Part A and Part B**. Both tasks must be completed and then submitted as one composite (whole) document via the CANVAS portal.

PART A: Create a fantasy area suitable for the Grade R classroom

For part A, you are required to select **ONE (1) theme** from Grade R CAPS. Based on the theme you have selected, design a fantasy area that stimulates child-initiated dramatic play.

To complete Part A of the assignment, you are required to do the following:

- Your assignment should start with an introduction in which you explain the theme you have selected.
- Create a fantasy area based on your theme. Take between 3 – 5 photos of your fantasy area from different angles and include them in your assignment.
- Create a prop box for your fantasy area. Your prop box should include 5 – 8 objects or items that link to theme and will stimulate children's' imaginative play.
- Take a photograph of each item in your prop box and explain how each item links to the chosen theme.
- It is advised to not purchase items for your theme area or prop box. Rather use items you already have or things that can be upcycled or recycled.
- Label your report for this part of the assignment "Part A".

PART B: Essay on the importance of child-initiated dramatic play in Grade R.

For part B, you are required to write a two-page (600 word) essay in which you discuss the importance of child-initiated dramatic play in the Grade R classroom.

You must reference *at least* three references in your essay in addition to your prescribed text, including books, journal articles and webpages. In other words, you must consult at least **three sources** that you did not find in the prescribed material but rather found through your own research. Note that they should be authoritative sources which excludes sites like Wikipedia.

Figure 3.19: Project brief example 1 from a Private Institution in Pretoria

As indicated earlier, the assessment practices at a private institution in Pretoria demonstrate a well-rounded approach to Creative Arts Teacher Education. Effectively combining theoretical knowledge and practical skills and approach supported by Westraadt (2017) and Odendaal (2016) allows the programme to prepare students for the complexities of teaching Creative Arts. However, the difficulty of the first assessment called for the adjustment of the curriculum towards the end of my time at the institution was in progress and the programme was being revised to ensure optimal student learning (Black et al., 2004; Boud, 2000; Andrade et al., 2014; Gareis and Grant, 2015).

Assessment holds great potential as a feedback tool that informs both teaching and learning (Black et al., 2004; Boud, 2000; Gareis and Grant, 2015). However, it plays a multipurpose role in my practice, continually informing student learning, curriculum, and teaching. I use assessment to gather data on how effectively student learning, curriculum, and teaching are being enacted in my classroom, which, in turn, informs improvements in these areas, creating new nodes that enhance practice and ways of thinking. An important aspect to consider is how my approach to assessment in the classroom has

often been shaped by the rhizomatic pockets of my Creative Arts experiences across all four art forms: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama. Additionally, the space in which learning occurs; encompassing the physical environment, internal structures, and regulations on learning and assessment, also influences how engagement with assessment experiences may evolve over time. In the next section, I draw on these experiences as valuable rhizomatic pockets that inform my understanding of Creative Arts Teacher Education and the lessons I have learnt from teaching all four art forms.

Teaching Creative Arts; Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama

In my experiences as a Creative Arts teacher, I have taught all four aspects of Creative Arts. Initially, I found this challenging, making many mistakes along the way, being very hard on myself, and learning through the process. In this section, I would like to pause and share my experiences across all the Creative Arts forms, using ABR to help me make sense of these experiences. According to Greenwood (2012), ABR stems from the understanding that life and our experiences of the world are multifaceted and that ABR provides ways of knowing and understanding the world that involve sensory perceptions, emotions, and intellectual responses. Between December 2023 and April 2024, I employed ABR to create a data collection and reflection tool to illustrate how I have experienced the different Creative Arts forms and how I relate to them. Here, I share memories through a body of reflective artworks and narrate the stories of my experiences. I hope these artworks will help me reflect on and understand how these various Creative Arts experiences inform and impact my practices (Müller, 2023).

The scribble sphere

Figure 3.20: The scribble sphere: Oil pastel, 2024

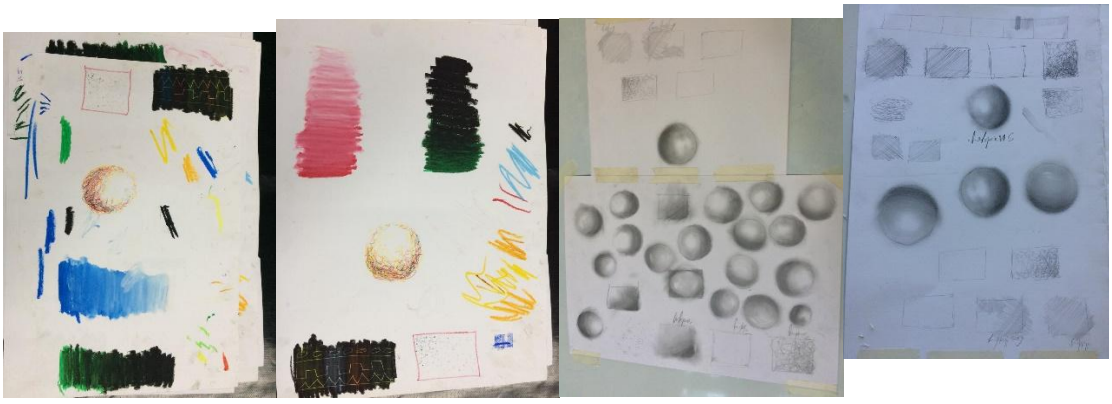


Figure 3.21The repetitions of examples in practice

In early 2024, I sat in the Art Studio where I currently prepare pre-service teachers to teach Visual Arts. Not having taught visual Arts in two years, I wanted to play with and explore the material I would be exploring with the students beforehand to ensure I provided the best possible examples for experimenting with the different drawing techniques. Figure 3.20: The scribble sphere is a product of, I don't know, how many repetitions of

experimenting with the students, from the simple pencil to now exploring with colour. I do not know how many spheres I drew in class as examples. Still, I repeatedly used them as examples.

I experimented with them before to see how well they worked, if at all and if I could model them in class for my students over and over, over, just as the different lines, scribbles and colours, seem to go over and over each other. Still, each has an identity that is valuable to experimentation and making marks that tell a story. But maybe in the spheres lay an assemblage of becoming and challenging my role as a Creative Arts teacher educator as I knew it. I think for the first time in my career; I started seeing my role shift from a teacher to a researcher who was in a constant act of collecting data that would inform both my roles as an artist and teacher. My ART roles no longer existed in silos. Still, they were in constant dialogue, with research initiating this dialogue and informing my assemblage of my ART roles.

There are two issues in my practice that I need to address here. I used the sphere example as what I thought would be the most accessible way for students to challenge themselves with the instructions, “You do not have to use my example,” which is just for demonstration purposes. When students were doing their work, most of them used the example I used to do their work; I then wondered if I limited their thinking and possibilities by only showing them how I could do it and not guiding them to explore how others had done it. Perhaps I had been a deterrent and limited the development and the creation of the students’ minds, limiting what they could possibly do in their practice (Brandt,1987; Eisner, 2002) by not emphasising, guiding and showing them more examples that are out there, even in the examples of everyday life (Dewey, 1934; Odendaal, 2016). Now that we have discussed Visual Arts, in the next section, I wish to move over to the first performing arts, the art form of music. In this section, I share two artworks embodying my experiences of Teacher Education and teaching.

The music theory classroom where, we wrote many tests

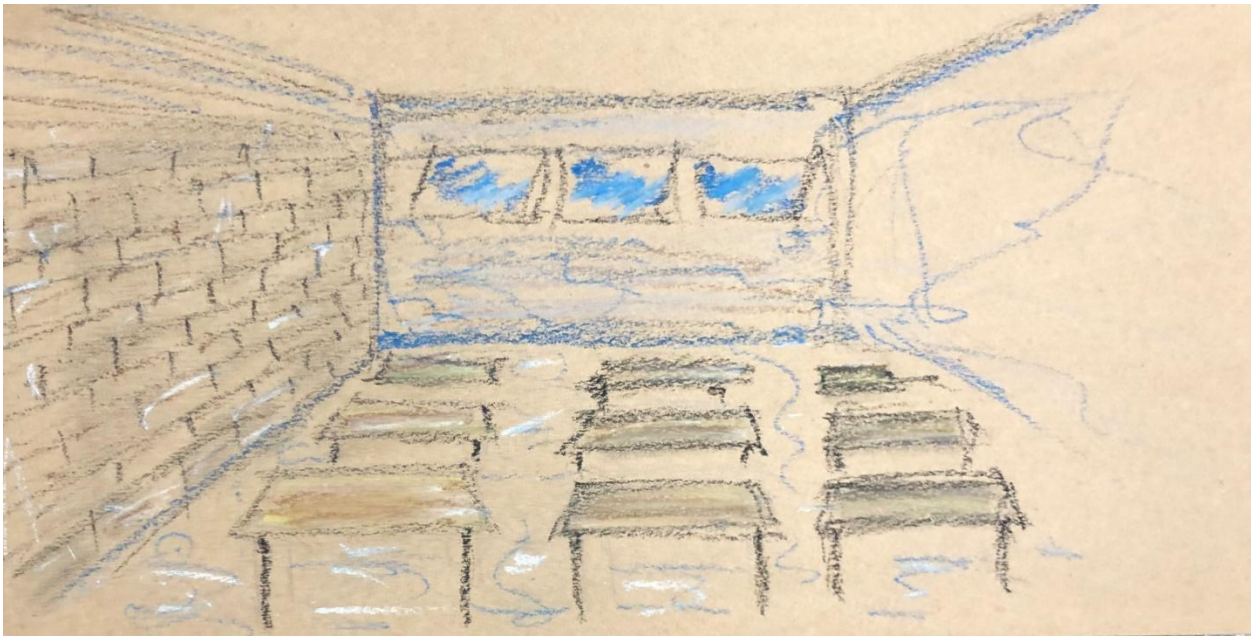


Figure 3.22: The music theory classroom where, we wrote many tests: Paseka Blessing Chisale, Oil pastel, 2024

In this memory, I go back to my primary school and Teacher Education experiences, where I had my educational exposure to music. My music teacher, Juffrou Bets, was exceptionally skilled and introduced us to the music of different cultures. Her ability to play the piano allowed her to lead us with melodies to sing, which was always a captivating experience…

It was not until I began studying to become a teacher that I reconnected with music in Dr D's class, also very strict but an exceptional teacher educator. Discovering that I had been incorrectly referring to the Djembe throughout my life, learning to play it, and mastering the classical guitar were undoubtedly the highlights of my musical journey as a student; it brought notation to life. Sitting in a half-moon formation as we played, we broke down the rigid classroom structure and created a space for dialogue as we learnt how to play the different instruments. Time spent in class with the lecturer providing direction and time to practice puts the responsibility back on you as a student to practice the instruments in your own time. I learnt how to play the acoustic guitar and mastered it with the guidance of our lecturer. What an amazing experience!

However, as I reflect on this memory at the back of my mind, there lingers a dreaded deep sinking feeling of the music theory classes; the difference was as clear as day and night. While I was reflecting on this memory in early 2024, I had been exploring the use of oil pastels with my students. So, I got distracted for a while, as I often do when preparing for classes, and I created Figure 3.22: The Music Theory Classroom, where we wrote many tests. A depressing cold room that had no melodic sounds or any kind of interactive play. The answers were either right or wrong; it felt like I was back in the mathematics class in school, and I did not enjoy maths in the slightest; it made my stomach turn from the anxiety it ignited. It was as if the module took on a completely different personality during theory lessons: cold, aloof, and even how we sat screamed, it's time to get serious here! No talking…

The anxiety associated with those late afternoon music theory lectures and tests probably still informs how I engage with students and create assessment opportunities. As an outsider to the music scene then, I questioned whether the programme intended to discourage students who don't "belong" to leave the module...

Figure 3.23: The half-empty glass: Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2023 oil paint and ink

So, because of my experience of music during my Teacher Education, even in my teaching of music, it has always felt like there was a missing sense of belonging to this world of music, almost as if my confidence to teach music was Figure 3.23: The half-empty glass as though it felt like those music theory classes that I did not enjoy are what caused me

to feel like my glass as a music teacher is half empty and needs to be filled up with that theoretical knowledge. In many ways, I often ask myself; maybe I should have just not been so bothered by how the music theory classes and tests made me feel; I would be very comfortable with music now.

The practical component of my music experiences in Teacher Education is associated with a positive experience in the space where I studied. However, I experienced that the theoretical component had adverse effects on my music teaching and how I saw music as a very terrifying thing to do. I did not enjoy how the music knowledge was conveyed in my Teacher Education; it created too much fear for me as an individual and shaped my position where I teach music as a Creative Arts component. The theory component felt in many ways as if it was developed to catch you out; it did not cater to the needs of all the students by trying to understand the student through interaction and building a pedagogical relationship (Müller, 2023; Odendaal, 2016). Bringing the importance of Creative Arts experiences to the Art Education classroom requires providing safe spaces for engagement with art forms (Odendaal, 2016). Moreover, it highlights the importance of creating an environment that will allow for the development and shaping of the mind Brandt (1987) Dewey (1934) Eisner (2002) in such a way that students feel competent and confident enough to teach Creative Arts (Alter et al., 2009; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015).

In my experience with teaching music as a Creative Arts component in various programmes and in building pedagogical relationships with my students, I have noticed that students often express their apprehension about teaching music because they feel that they do not have sufficient knowledge to teach it (Jansen van Vuuren and Van Ni e k e r k, 2015). Teaching music can be daunting, especially for non-specialist teachers. Rossouw and Delport (2016) further emphasise that music can be an overwhelming subject to teach, particularly for non-specialist generalist teachers who find practical music skills, general music knowledge, reading notation and the creative aspects of the subject intimidating. Sirek and Sefton (2023) posit a similar sentiment but expand on this based on their observation from their practice and explain student teacher apprehension

to teaching music based on their perception of their abilities, such as "I'm not good at music;" "I'm not musical;" or "I can't sing!" These words reflect the students' perceptions of themselves in relation to music. Drawing from Booth's work (2021), I understand the importance of "tapping into people's competence" and engaging students based on the narratives they have created about themselves, using familiar life experiences to connect with music.

Viewing both "*The Music Theory Classroom Where We Wrote Many Tests and The Half-empty Glass", I look at the influence of Teacher Education experiences that* have informed my own perceptions about teaching music. From my experiences, the physical space is cold (literally and figuratively) and devoid of any warmth, resulting in my perceptions of how I am perhaps half able to teach music. However, it is, after all, my perception of how I look at the space in "*The music theory classroom where we wrote many tests"* has informed my practices. The perception of my practices is cognitive, emotional and attitudinal views and beliefs that I hold regarding my role and abilities as a teacher informed by the spaces I have learnt in and how I take that learning into the spaces where I teach (Ngao, Sang and Kihwele, 2022). *"The half-empty glass" helps me now also question my perceptions of my music teaching and if it is not a half-full glass, with the potential for nodes of being intentional, self-directed ways of developing my knowledge and skills further* (Sirek and Sefton, 2024) and viewing this memory as a rhizomatic pocket that can inform my assemblage of becoming. After discussing music, I think responding to it through dance is important. I centre my experience of dance around one object that provides me with new nodes for what is possible for a Creative Arts teacher educator who is a non-dance specialist.

A needle pillow

At the end of 2023, now that teaching and all the assessment administration were done, I thought, Phew! Now I can work on my studies; it felt like this was the only time I could dedicate to my studies without feeling guilty that another activity in my teaching role needed my URGENT! attention. While I was walking around at home looking for an object that would best embody my dance experiences and how I relate to them, I walked into my Dad's sewing room; there were all his sewing machines, containers filled with threads of all the colours you can think of.

The wooden floor had a map drawn from the different threads and materials cut off from his previous sewing projects. While scanning through the room, I saw what I was looking for. Ah, I found it I thought! "A needle pillow." It aptly described how I felt about dance. The red base is strong and sturdy, like the history and theoretical underpinning of dance/movement, and even though some of it might be "outdated" or "not relevant" to teaching, you better not touch it; let's keep it in the curriculum.

The soft and delicate pillow is a reminder of the aesthetic beauty that is produced during the process. Still, it also symbolises the comfort derived from the theoretical knowledge I have gained. The needles, which represent self-imposed limitations because of my perceived abilities to teach Dance, have in many ways limited and inhibited my movement in the art form, almost a self-inflicted limitation of what is possible when teaching dance. Let me pause here for a moment as I go to a memory about dance, I want to connect it to my artwork…

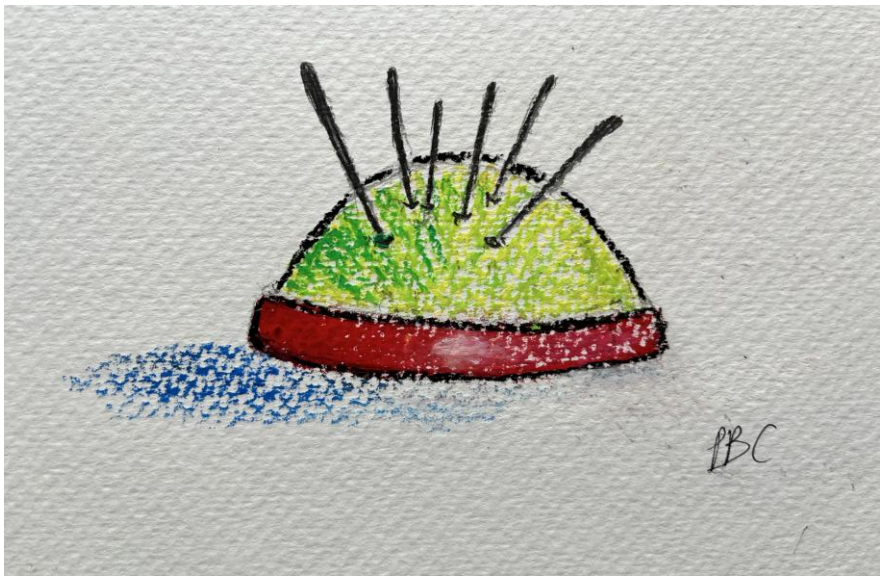


Figure 3.24: A needle pillow: Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2023, Oil Pastels.

Three years (April 2022) into being a self-taught dance teacher educator at the University in the Midlands, I moved to a private institution in Pretoria. The very first lecture I presented was a dance lecture, during which I needed to demonstrate the movements to the class and have them follow along. Over the past three years, I have developed some confidence, but not enough confidence to dance with my students. Drawing on what I had done with my experience of teaching Visual Arts, I went through the dance moves we had to do with the students so I could do this again in class. After the lecture, one of my students came to me and asked "Sir, are you a professional dancer?"

My initial thought was to try and explain. Still, I decided to respond with a "No, ma'am, why do you ask?" she responded by saying, "Well, I take professional dance classes, and the way you were executing the movements looked like how we would do them in the professional classes I take." For me, that was a great sense of achievement, the students that I am laying bare all my practices to acknowledging my ability to "show and demonstrate" in an area that I perceive as an area where I do not have sufficient expertise because of my experiences and lack of formal training. However, I acknowledge the responsibility expected from my students to be an insider to the Art Education world. So, self-teaching in dance formed a large part of my knowledge of dance training and dance education, and the emphasis of my role as a dance educator.

An important takeaway from this memory is that the curriculum challenged me to leave my comfort zone. I was there to create a space for learning to happen and to be part of and actively involved in the learning activity. The lack of control over the content of what could be taught removed the bad practice of curating what students learn and how they learn based on what I found comfortable. The space, with its structures and governing practices, made it possible to slowly remove the needles of my perceptions about my abilities to dance. Had it not been for my experience at the private institution in Pretoria, I may have never pushed myself to see how to demonstrate dance actively.

Perhaps what I need to remember as a Creative Arts teacher educator as I reflect on this experience, is that my students are also not always comfortable. Still, it is my way of presenting myself to them, also creating the barriers the needle created on my needle pillow. I may need to ask, am I the barrier to student learning, or am I providing a space for students to explore, experiment and experience by not taking the risk of feeling discomfort for a little while? In the next section, I wish to discuss the last art form that I have come to associate with representing Creative Arts: Drama. It is represented by one central object that has many objects inside that have the potential to inform better practices.

A box full of tricks

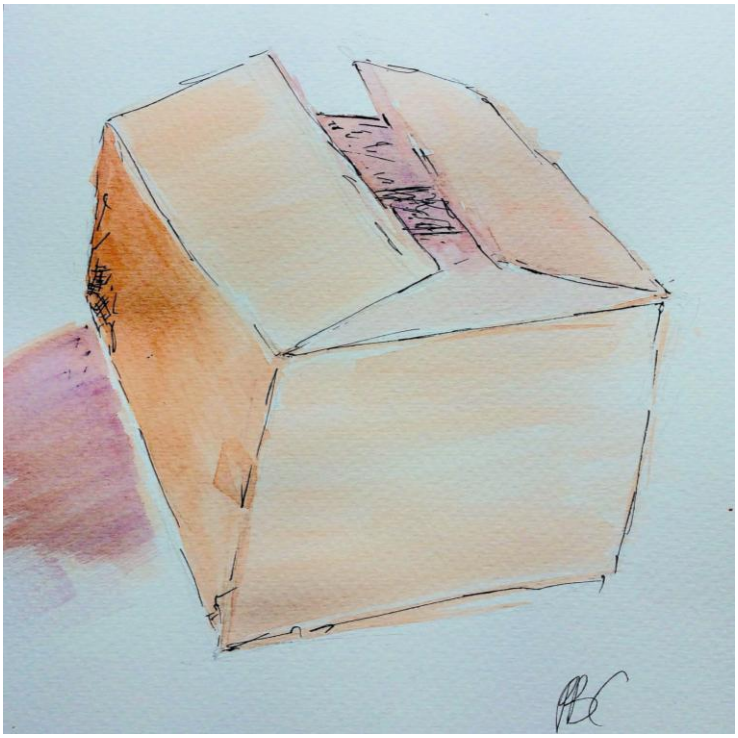


Figure 3.25: A box full of tricks, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2023 watercolour and ink

The box before I played around with paint

Early in 2024, once again, while sitting in the Art Studio, a few boxes remained after they had come to drop off some art supplies, I ordered earlier in the year. I already had a function for one of the boxes; I used it to transport all the supplies I would need for my study and teaching between my apartment and campus daily. I put my box on the shelf where the light from the window could shine. I looked at it for a moment, satisfied with how it was positioned. I picked up water paint and started playing around with it, mixing it and

trying to get the right consistency. Unconsciously, I also tried not to make a mistake, which was odd since I always tell my students there is no such thing as a mistake. Why on earth was I being so hard on myself?

The box I was painting was filled with a few items I was using at the time for my study and my teaching it was a box filled with what I would need to teach and my research, essentially "A box full of tricks" as it contains all the tools I needed to teach and do research about Creative Arts. Still, more importantly, Figure 3.25: A Box Full of Tricks" represents the rhizomatic pockets the potential drama holds in teaching Creative Arts.

In 2019, when I taught Drama for the first time, I found myself overwhelmed by the multitude of theories and teaching strategies presented in the slides left by the previous lecturer. I was concerned about whether my students could digest all the theoretical content, especially since I was struggling with it myself. In my efforts to prepare for class, I made the decision to condense the material, focusing only on what I believed my students could comfortably absorb in one session, while also ensuring that it was relevant and beneficial to their learning.

Over time, through discussions with experienced drama teachers, I realised the importance of understanding the theoretical foundations of Drama Education (Wood in Naude and Meier, 2016). This led me to structure most of my programme around gradually introducing students to content and actively involving them in the learning process, drawing on their existing knowledge to engage them in this art form. Inside the box, all the art forms meet, Drama is truly the culmination and a mixing pot for all the art forms. The Visual Arts was no longer just about drawing, painting, creating sculptures and learning about art theory. It could be noticeable through visual features like the set design and the actors' costumes.

The Visual Arts became the source of aesthetic and visual pleasure of the Drama that is often noticed when an audience enjoys the final product. Music moved away from the challenging theory and rules that needed to be followed, but now, it could be used to create a mood and atmosphere in the Drama; if you don't believe me, try watching a play with suspense and drama without the sound of music.

> *Dance/movement for me with my two left feet becomes a response to the sound of music in drama. I found drama to be the most versatile and inclusive of all art forms as it accommodates all art forms within itself. When providing and creating learning opportunities, its versatility can tap into the strengths of individual students, but as Ash, my colleague had said as we were discussing re-working the Creative Arts curriculum for a private institution in Pretoria: Better yet, it also provides opportunities to step out of their comfort zones.*

Drama is the art of performing a story or sequence of events, which can be emotional, sad, or funny, written as a dialogue and performed for an audience in combination with other art forms such as Music and Dance and Visual Arts (De Jager, 2016). inside Drama Education, it represents the opportunity for process-oriented learning that is more concerned with the student's experiences during the learning process. *The box full of tricks* serves as a metaphor for nodes of what is possible by using Drama in Creative Arts Teacher Education and guides me to new ways of thinking about how it can best be utilised in practice (Müller, 2023).

It is the meeting place of all art forms and serves as a culmination and synthesis of Creative Arts learning in Visual Art, Music, Dance, and Drama. This challenges my belief and positionality that each art form must exist as a sacred area of specialisation. What I propose for Creative Arts teacher educators and Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes is to consider this integrated view of Creative Arts within the context in which we are preparing teachers. Drawing on Athiemoolam (2016), who advocates for the development of teaching that uses dance as a consolidative tool, preceded by the other art forms: Visual Arts, Music, and Drama, this approach suggests that we guide our students through the different art forms, drawing connections as we progress towards the final engagement in Drama (Athiemoolam, 2016).

This approach to Creative Arts allows for a shared responsibility in the learning process, where students can actively map out what they envision their consolidative product to look like as they work through the various art forms (Athiemoolam, 2016). I believe this method could equip students with the necessary tools to enter the world with a diverse

range of techniques in their arsenal for teaching Creative Arts. Moreover, students tap into the rhizomatic pockets of their experiences to engage with Creative Arts, allowing their personal histories to intertwine with artistic exploration. This process plays a crucial role in transforming their perceptions of the arts (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002).

However, the poignant question I am left with here is, is it what is best for the student in my Creative Arts class or the programme I teach in, or is it my old and archaic ways of thinking of Creative Arts experiences as esoteric and exclusive to their specialisations (Dewey, 1934) that compounds the problem of Creative Arts teachers not being adequately prepared (Alter and Hays, O'Hara, 2009: 28; Buekes, 2016; Power and Klopper, 2011). Perhaps this thinking allows us to see the true intention of the South African Creative Arts Curriculum document, highlighting the purpose of Creative Arts to develop learners into creative and imaginative individuals who appreciate the arts and can actively participate in artistic activities. Perhaps the box filled with tricks, weird and wonderful things, is what will allow our students to feel better prepared and use the tricks to know how to adapt to the demands of their roles as Creative Arts teachers.

What I have learned from my rhizomatic pockets

As I reflect on my journey as a Creative Arts teacher educator, it feels like I've embarked on a time-travelling adventure, much like the Avengers in "Endgame." I've delved into pivotal moments, exploring the rhizomatic pockets of my experiences and their intersections. In Endgame, the Avengers' mission was shaped by the different realms and timelines they visited. Similarly, my teaching has been influenced by the various institutional contexts I've worked in. Each institution's unique blend of academic freedom and structural constraints created distinctive experiences that have shaped my approach to assessment and curriculum design. These experiences are akin to the diverse dimensions the Avengers encountered, each offering new insights and challenges.

Using ABR for reflection is like the Avengers' exploration of time travel. It allows me to delve deep into these experiences to understand how they influence my current practices. This reflective process helps me trace the connections between different moments in my career, revealing the interconnectedness of my personal journey with my pedagogical practices. Just as the Avengers navigated a complex web of past events to shape their future, I have traversed various experiences across different art forms. Each experience, whether teaching Visual Arts, dealing with Music theory, or venturing into Dance, has contributed to a broader understanding and adaptability in my teaching practice. These experiences are not linear but interconnected, each influencing and informing the other.

In conclusion, my journey in Creative Arts Teacher Education, like the Avengers' saga in Endgame, is a complex and evolving narrative woven through a network of interconnected experiences. These experiences, filled with memories and reflections, highlight the importance of continuous reflection, adaptation, and learning. They demonstrate how integrating personal experiences, student feedback, and contextual influences is crucial in preparing future Creative Arts teachers. Just as the Avengers' journey was about more than winning a battle, my journey is about understanding the interconnectedness of these experiences and using them to foster holistic and effective teaching practices.

Chapter 4: Reflections on Rhizomatic Pockets: Shaping My Journey to Becoming as a Creative Arts Teacher Educator

"To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly."

Henri Bergson

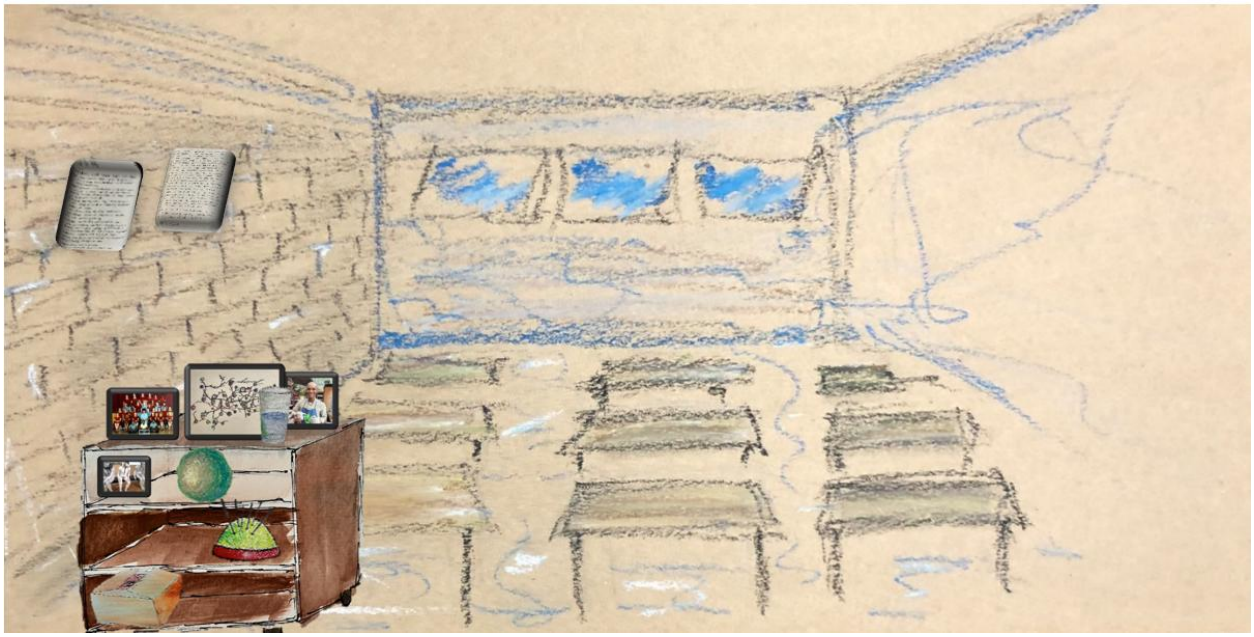


Figure 4.1 What I have learnt from my Rhizomatic Pockets, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2024

Figure 4.1 What I have learnt from my Rhizomatic Pockets provides a snapshot of what my assemblage of becoming looks like now, with what I have learnt from my rhizomatic pockets of my school, Teacher Education and career as a Creative Arts teacher educator. It is imbued with non-living entities, including environments/spaces of learning and work, interactions with others and memories. The shelf no longer sits alone, nor is it the centre of attention; there are other non-living entities in the surroundings it interacts with. Highlighting the profound impact of environments on our learning as individuals. There is a clear indication that the different environments/spaces I have been in have greatly

influenced my teaching practices (Dewey, 1924; Eisner, 2002). However, based on how I also viewed myself concerning my autonomy in the spaces I occupied, I used resources from my rhizomatic pockets to inform my practices and influence the spaces Kruger (2021). However, these spaces also influenced me, particularly the ones where I only sometimes felt like I had control, and the effect of those spaces was not always negative. In this chapter, I expand on my assemblage of becoming and consider my role and how I identify myself concerning the ART roles (Meyer, 2018; Thornton, 2013)

I am currently employed at a university in the southern tip of South Africa. For the first time in my career, I feel like I have reached a place where I can make use of my experiences in practice more effectively, and it has, in many ways, reshaped how I view myself. I want to reflect on a memory from mid-2024 during a conversation with my colleagues…

> *During mid-2024, while sitting at a round table during lunch at a writing retreat, we had an exciting conversation as colleagues about the roles that we thought we occupied. A colleague spoke about how she saw herself as a teacher starting from where she taught at primary school and how she struggled to get to her research. The round table broke any hierarchy, allowing everyone to talk about how they viewed their identity as scholars. The Dean of Research, who had arranged the writing retreat, added that I see myself as a researcher first, which then informs both my teaching and engaged scholarship. Everything comes from my research. Those words sent lights buzzing in my head. Was I looking at my roles in the wrong way? For the longest time, I thought of myself as a creative arts teacher educator, often seeing research as an add-on to my work and not as a fundamental pillar of being an art educator. This could explain why I struggled all these years with being productive with research because I view my research as separate from my teaching. The teaching comes first, and then everything follows.*

Perhaps this thinking is what was wrong with my practice. Thornton (2013) notes that within the array of intersecting roles we occupy as ART educators, our identity as an Artist, Researcher or Teacher is primarily influenced by what we value in our work and for those of us working in the higher education space, the requirement from the employment structures “require us” to seriously consider our Researcher role as central to the Artist and Teacher roles. For the entire duration of my study and even before

embarking on this transformative journey, I mainly related to my role as a teacher, specifically, a Creative Arts teacher educator; I regarded the research and artist roles as add-ons to the already full plate of teaching. Teaching was important for me and took priority over all other roles (Thornton, 2013). However, due to the complex nature of the Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape, we find ourselves in, as I have discussed in the previous chapter, I have had to reformulate my identity in the process of this study and reconsider shifting my focus and being more deliberate with the conversation that took place at that round table.

While I might not have termed it as such, nor did I view it that way, research had been central to my role as a Creative Arts teacher educator. My role as a researcher is a central and informative aspect of my ART theory as it connects the artist and teaching role. As a lifelong learner, I have taken a keen interest in experimenting with my teaching for improved pedagogical practices, discovering new ways of teaching, and creating a space where I can use feedback opportunities to inform my practice (Thornton, 2013). However, the researcher's role concerns students learning to use the knowledge, skills and techniques acquired to open the world to others. Within my role as an artist, I come from identifying myself as an insider to the art world and having the power to share and interpret the Art world for my students through my practice Thornton (2013) and turn my artistic knowledge and technical skills into practical classroom activities (Meyer and Wood, 2020). As a teacher, I move from the premise that my roles as a researcher and artist (experimenter/researcher) inform my teaching (Thornton, 2013). These two roles make me aware of my impact on my students and use the teaching experience as a relational space or pedagogy. As indicated in the previous chapter, my students become imperative stakeholders in my practice, and informal and formal feedback informs how I continue to shape my pedagogical practices.

As I began to develop my studies further and have some thought-provoking conversations with others, I often wondered which cap I should wear as a Creative Arts teacher educator in higher education. I sought help from Meyer (2018) and Thornton (2013). Within my role as an artist, I come from identifying myself as an insider to the art world and having the power to share and turn my artistic knowledge and technical skills into practical classroom

activities (Meyer and Wood, 2020). The researcher's role is essential to my ART theory as it connects the artist and teaching roles. As a lifelong learner, I take a keen interest in investigating my teaching for improved pedagogical practices, discovering new ways of teaching, and creating a space where I can use feedback opportunities to inform my practice. However, the researcher's role concerns students learning to use the knowledge, skills and techniques acquired to open the world to others. As a teacher, I move from the premise that my roles as an artist and researcher inform my teaching. These two roles make me aware of my impact on my students and use the teaching experience as a relational space (Tomljenovic, 2015; Tomljenovic and Tatalovic, 2020). My students become imperative stakeholders in my practice, and informal and formal feedback informs how I continue to shape my pedagogical practices.

As a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education, I move from the understanding that my experiences in Art Education have profoundly influenced the preparation of my students to teach Creative Arts. As I have embarked on this journey, I have chosen to employ the combination of collaborative self-study research and ABR. Through this approach, I aim to explore the intricate interplay between my personal experiences of art education and the implications of this on my pedagogical practices and the socio-cultural realities of where Creative Arts Teacher Education happens in South Africa. As Chapter One mentions, it is crucial to acknowledge that my positionality has significantly influenced the philosophical lens through which I view the world and approach my research.

Moving from a quality education perspective aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (2015). In my practice, I aim to deliver high-quality Creative Arts education and prepare teachers to provide quality education in their classrooms. My research focuses on Creative Arts Teacher Education programs and emphasizes the importance of delivering quality education in the Creative Arts. I firmly believe that access to quality Creative Arts Education is a fundamental human right. It provides opportunities for children and young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures to showcase their learning, express themselves, and participate in meaningful artistic activities (Kerby et al., 2021).

Taking this position shapes my research approach and underscores the importance of preparing educators who can foster inclusive, engaging, and transformative experiences in Creative Arts classrooms. I emphasize the role of Creative Arts Teacher Education in achieving quality Creative Arts teaching, hoping that my work can, in some small way, contribute to the broader goal of ensuring quality Arts Education for all learners and students.

Self-studies, Rhizomatic pockets, and Assemblages of becoming are all arduous work!

Moving from a post-qualitative research stance suggests that research should move beyond the traditional stance of research in understanding the influence of environmental, space, and time factors on human existence and knowledge (Le Grange, 2018; St. Pierre, 2019). The post-qualitative research approach moves beyond the traditional qualitative methods towards incorporating new and innovative approaches to research (Müller, 2020). The process of research is focused on experimentation for the creation of the latest (St. Pierre, 2021)

Concerning my study, post-qualitative research is in harmony with the two concepts which I borrow from Deleuze and Guattari (1987),

- **Rhizomatic** pockets hold a storehouse of knowledge in the form of stories of memories, artworks, memory objects, and dialogue with my colleagues. It informs my practices as a Creative Arts teacher educator, seeing what I can learn from my experiences and forming the capacity for new nodes.
- The **assemblage** of becoming is in a continuous state of assembly informed by my rhizomatic pockets taking on an anti-method that considers the research process as what Lather (635) in Le Grange (2018) refers to as “a thousand tiny methodologies.

St. Pierre (2021) explains that post-qualitative research is characterized by multiplicity (rhizomes) and becoming (assemblage), each with its own history. Using Müller (2023) and St. Pierre (2021) as a guide for my thinking, I also consider data not as something separate from human existence that needs to be "gathered and collected out there" or that needs to be harvested. Instead, it is already available if you pay attention to it, and how you respond to it opens new possibilities of being and becoming (Müller, 2023).

In my role as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education, I have gained insight into how my experiences within interconnected educational environments have shaped my teaching methods and beliefs regarding Creative Arts and how they impact my students. As a result, I decided to analyse my practices to enhance my teaching through self-study research. Self-study research, as suggested by scholars such as Chiliza (2015), Pithouse-Morgan (2009), and Samaras (2011), is a reflective approach that involves examining my professional practices in depth based on personal experience. This introspective aspect of self-study research enriches my methods and provides opportunities to share and learn from my students and colleagues (Madondo, 2014).

Samaras and Freese (2006) define self-study as…

> a component of reflection in which teachers systematically and critically examine the actions and context of those actions to develop a more conscientiously driven mode of professional activity.
>
> (Samaras and Freese, 2006)

Pithouse-Morgan et al., (2009: 45) define self-study as a process that involves using methods to step back and reflect on our own experiences within the larger socio-political and historical context that shapes our thoughts and actions, as well as our worldview. Similarly, Madondo (2014) defines self-study as a process of analysing one's teaching practices, drawing from personal observations and experiences, and trying out new techniques to enhance student learning. Furthermore, Madondo (2014) argues that self-study has implications beyond personal growth; it can also be used to inform educational program changes and policy decisions and contribute to educators' collective knowledge and practices. Through my research, I have found that self-study is a powerful tool for

personal reflection and a robust technique with the potential to influence my teaching methods on multiple levels.

My intention to engage in self-study was not aimed at narcissistic navel-gazing (Garbett and Ovens, 2016) but at informing and improving my practice (Fitzgerald and Heston, 2016; Pithouse Morgan, 2020). However, I have come to find that it is not for the faint-hearted; it is arduously hard work and, to an extent, uncomfortable (Butler, 2016; Garbett and Ovens, 2016). I have found that it is challenging work, a process of deep introspection and reaching into the rhizomatic pockets of my experiences to inform my ever-changing assemblage of becoming. In acknowledging the hard work of self-study research, Foucault (1980; 1983) in Besley (2012) provides further avenues for my thinking about self-study research…

> You see that's why I really work like a dog, and I worked like a dog all my life. I am not interested in the academic status of what I am doing because my problem is my own transformation … This transformation of oneself by one's knowledge, one's practice is, I think, something rather close to the aesthetic experience. Why should a painter work if he is not transformed by his own painting?
>
> (Foucault. (1997 [1983]: 131).

> I am an experimenter and not a theorist. I call a theorist someone who constructs a general system either deductive or analytical and applies it to different fields in a uniform way. This isn't my case. I am an experimenter in the sense that I write in order to change myself and in order not to think the same thing as before.
>
> (Foucault, 2000 [1980]: 240)

Just as Foucault was dedicated to the lifelong project of his own transformation, I engaged in the arduous work of self-study research to transform my practices (Garbett and Ovens, 2016). Self-study research gives me the space to be an experimenter who is continually interested in learning and becoming. As an experimenter (researcher) working in Creative

Arts Teacher Education, I seek to engage with my research to foster a continual process of transformation and understanding of my practices. Within the context of my study, I understand this process as being characterised by exploring experiences and learnings inside rhizomatic pockets that inform my assemblage of becoming. Here, I scrutinise my own being (Müller, 2020), considering how my being can inform better practice and where it can hinder those with whom I share pedagogical relationships. This work of being an experimenter echoes the words of St. Pierre (2015): “Scholarly work is personal and not just academic.” However, self-study research is not an easily paved scientific road with an answer at the end; it is messy and complex, involving vulnerability and loss (Müller, 2016). In this sense, for any transformation, regardless of how little, to happen, I am compelled to take moments of doing the arduous work of stepping back and looking into my rhizomatic pockets to see and discern what I can learn from them.

My ethical considerations as I was building my assemblage of becoming

Ethical clearance for my study was obtained from the University of the Free State’s General/Human Research Ethics Committee, under clearance number UFS-HSD2022/0655/23. Moving from the premise that data is not something to be gathered or "harvested" externally, it is instead already present if one chooses to pay attention to the "pencil shavings" and the daily occurrences in our experiences (Müller, 2023). My self-study and ABR approaches presented unique ethical challenges, particularly in balancing personal reflection with academic inquiry. Throughout the study, I remained conscious of the ethical considerations surrounding introspection and sharing personal memories and experiences that include both my own and those of others. This reflective practice was guided by the understanding that the research was a transformative process for both myself and the participants. However, it requires ongoing ethical mindfulness of protecting the identity of those who have formed part of my reflexive journey.

In using artefacts and memory objects within my study, I incorporated personal photographs as memory objects, ensuring that the identities of any individuals featured in the images were protected. Similarly, I anonymised the identities of those who had written letters or emails to me. As this study was a collaborative self-study, I worked with three colleagues: Jay, Ash, and Lina, whom I met at the Private Institution in Pretoria. Moreover, in upholding the ethical integrity of my study, I considered protecting the identity of all living and non-living entities in my study; I also ensured to anonymise the identity of the organisations, institutions and schools that could be identified in written documents and artefacts during the engagement of my study.

My colleagues were fully informed of the study's aims, procedures, their right to withdraw at any time, and how their data would be used and protected. Consent forms (Addendum A) and data collection schedules were designed to provide transparent information about the research, and both written and verbal consent were obtained where appropriate, particularly in informal discussions or interactions related to the collaborative self-study.

As a Creative Arts teacher education researcher, I aimed to create a safe, collaborative space for my colleagues to share their experiences and insights as valuable sources of learning and provide alternative lenses from their point of view. This relational approach aligns with my practice of self-study and ABR, where the research process is not merely extractive but a shared learning experience for all involved. In fostering this shared learning experience and maintaining ethical practices and transparency, I shared my study with my colleagues to provide a space for transparency and integrity of the information they shared with me. To maintain my colleagues' anonymity, pseudonyms were used, and identifying markers were removed from any material to be made public. All data collected were stored securely, with access limited to my supervisor and me, ensuring confidentiality was upheld throughout the research process.

How I used Arts Base Research to inform and build my assemblage of becoming

I conducted self-study research using ABR methods. According to Weber (2014), arts-based approaches, including visual, creative writing, and performance, are particularly beneficial in self-study research in education. Weber (2014) asserts that these methods allow researchers to collect a wide range of data and analyse experiences meaningfully, tying back to ethical behaviour. ABR broadens our knowledge base by incorporating significant ways in which humans generate meaning through artistic forms of expression.

Pithouse-Morgan and Van Laren (2012) note that self-study researchers frequently use a variety of artefacts; the chosen objects are often selected by the researcher for their reflective value, stemming from lived experiences and carrying personal significance. Generally, the objects would have neither been recently purchased nor are they out there to be “collected” but already exist within the researcher's environment and hold an emotional connection for the researcher (Müller, 2023; Pithouse-Morgan and Van Laren, 2012). The reflection on such objects allows the researcher to uncover experiences and emotions linked to or evoked by the tangible object, enabling reflexive practice that can lead to change.

The objects I have used and created in my Arts-based self-study research are significant ontological tools that mark a particular space and time within the process of experimentation in my research. Therefore, in my study, I used ABR to extract introspective accounts of memories from experiences that have informed my Creative Arts teaching. By thinking about the chosen objects and creating artwork, I have figuratively travelled back in time to relive certain memories inside lived experiences and emotions associated with or evoked by the tangible objects. Then, I use these objects as time machines to travel to the intended time and space. Furthermore, the ABR process in the culminating chapter will also be used as a tool for analysis and interpretation

(Weber, 2014; Müller, 2023). In many respects, I must take a step back and reflect on my practice to see what I may learn (Weber, 2014).

In this self-study, I consider memories from my experiences as rhizomatic pockets of knowledge that shape my practices as a Creative Arts Teacher Education researcher. In chapters one, two and three, I used artworks and memory objects to explore these pockets, discovering new insights and forming connections in my becoming. This process has helped me start constructing my evolving assemblage of becoming. Inspired by Pithouse (2007), I also consider field texts in my experimentation process, helping me realise that my self-study research aligns with the characteristics of narrative inquiry.

In my research, I drew on sources such as Pithouse (2007) and Wei (2023), and I learned that in narrative inquiry, data sources can include observations, interviews, field notes, journal records, transcripts, letter writing, documents, pictures, metaphors, personal philosophies, autobiography, biography, and storytelling. Therefore, I incorporated pictures, descriptions of lived experiences, letters, teaching reflections, assessment briefs, module guides, and interviews. These sources helped me engage in conversations with my colleagues about their experiences. I used a variety of sources to gather information from different aspects of my experiences, which will contribute to my overall development.

Stories from my colleagues and feedback from my critical friend

Just as my research draws on incorporating a narrative approach, I was also interested in the stories of others (Creswell, 2013; Wei, 2023), particularly my colleagues. According to Creswell (2013), these stories emerge from the story told to the researcher and co-constructed between the participant and researcher. This entails incorporating a vital collaborative feature into the research as stories emerge from interaction and dialogue between the participant and the researcher. Fartch (2017) further introduces an alternative view on narrative interviewing where the focus moves away from the question-and-answer format where the participant can now narrate their experiences for the researcher. This approach breaks down the conceptualisation of roles from interviewer to

narrator-listener (Fartch, 2017) and participant to collaborator-storyteller (Creswell, 2013). Their stories are important as they happen within specific spaces, time and contexts that give life and meaning to their experiences (Creswell, 2013).

In my study, I incorporate interviews as opportunities for storytelling for my colleagues. As my collaborative self-study takes on a multimethod stance informed by a narrative inquiry, I further considered the use of the stories of my colleagues who are also in the Creative Arts Teacher Education space valuable to my thinking and constructing new ways of being and thinking. As I draw on the inclusion of narratives to guide me through my study, including my colleagues, I consider it an opportunity to retell stories (Müller, 2016). Initially, my study sought to use a collaborative workshop to engage colleagues in the form of my supervisor and willing Creative Arts educators from other universities. This was to assist me in shaping alternative perspectives and guiding my thinking to make sense of my experiences and informing future practice (Chiliza, 2015: 24). However, as I developed my study further, the logistics of getting all my desired participants involved became a challenge.

I then focused my attention on the context in which I was teaching at the time in 2023 at the private institution in Pretoria. I approached seven colleagues within the institution with whom I taught Creative Arts. Of the seven colleagues, only three indicated that they would be able to participate in my study. I provided my colleagues' pseudonyms, Jay, Ash, and Lina. During our collaborative storytelling, I took on the role of a narrator, providing them with the space to share their experiences and practices of teaching Creative Arts. I also asked them to share four objects representing the aspects of Creative Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Dance and Drama) that best describe or represent the different art forms, as I have done with my art at the end of Chapter Three. Let me introduce them...

> *Jay, a PGCE Creative Arts teacher educator, demonstrated innovation and involvement in engaging teaching methods. I invited her to participate, recognising that her experiences and unique approach to student engagement could provide valuable insights into effective teaching practices. I always heard how the other colleagues who had long known her sang*

her praise. Did you see what Jay's student did for this or the other project? All I know is that I wanted to hear her thinking. She was innovative and not afraid to try new things.

Regarding my colleague, Ash, I've consistently admired her exceptional organisational skills and ability to connect with students; she gets them. Her work has transformed my understanding of the possibilities for online Creative Arts Education, from fun, quirky and engaging videos for students to use when learning about Creative Arts. Whether online or in person, she knew how to adapt to what was needed at the time.

Lina, my former mentor teacher, profoundly impacted my development as an educator during my studies. It was good crossing paths with her again. When we reconnected as colleagues, she noted my significant professional growth, *offering a perspective on my progress that I sometimes struggled to see by myself.*

However, as I engaged with my study, I grappled with this component of critical friendship while conducting my study. I initially thought of my three colleagues as colleagues with whom I wanted to have a dialogue regarding their experiences of Creative Arts as my critical friends. In ensuring a critical engagement with one's practice, a self-study requires collaborative inquiry with critical friends (Samaras, 2011:43). The term critical friend refers to an individual who can ask vital and complex questions and examine your practices through a different worldview. According to Alan, Sariyev and Odabasi (2021), this is a partner or colleague that provides suggestions to the teacher researcher in educational action research. Critical friends also offer a critique of work as friends (Fletcher, Ni Chroinin and O'Sullivan, 2016: 20).

I quickly realised that although their voices were valuable, my colleagues were not my critical friends but rather valuable sources that would give me glimpses into their perspectives, allowing me to view my own experiences from fresh angles (Meskin and Van der Walt, 2022; Van Laren and Mudaly, 2022). As I engaged more meaningfully with my study, I started to see Dr M, my supervisor, occupying the role of a critical friend. She supported and questioned my practice, and as I had indicated in Chapter One, I wish I had been more mindful earlier in my study about engaging her as a critical friend (Fletcher et al., 2016). She was critical of me and asked me tough questions, which I did not always

find comfortable, nor did I always have an answer to her questions. However, she always guided me to think more extensively and read, always, Uh! This makes me think of Angry Hulk being told to use the stairs in Avengers: Endgame. I hate stairs! He said. I don't always enjoy the reading process; I love the research process, but I don't always enjoy reading.

In the next chapter, I take a break from reading, phew, or so I thought! I include the voices of my colleagues in my assemblage of becoming. I aim to understand the various aspects of my experiences by tapping into discussions with three colleagues: Jay, Ash and Lina, whom I met at the Private Institution in Pretoria. Through our conversations, I integrate their stories as tools for understanding the multifaceted perspectives of our experiences and allowing me to explore improving my practices as I learn from their refreshing angles.

Chapter 5: From the Rhizomatic Pockets: In my role as A researcher informing the artist and teacher

All the best ideas come from the process and the work itself.

Chuck Close

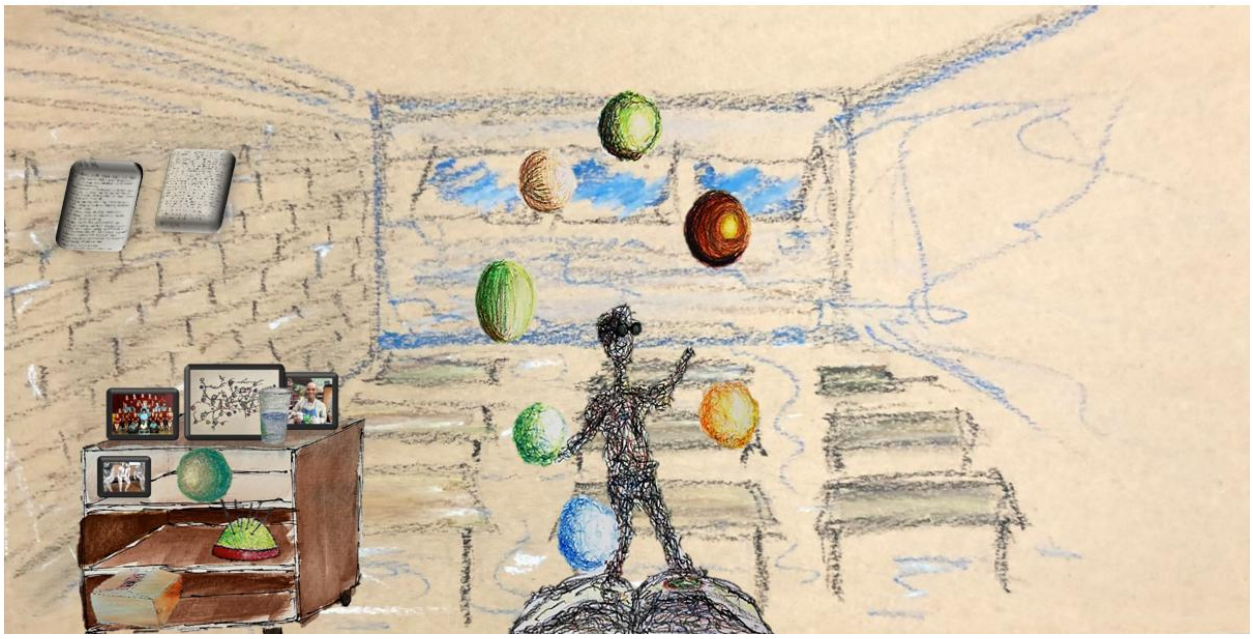


Figure 5.1 Lessons learnt from the Rhizomatic Pockets: Acknowledging my role as a Researcher informing the Artist and Teacher, Paseka Blessing Chisale, 2024

I have realised the significance of being a researcher in informing my roles as an artist and teacher. As I continue to create my assemblage of becoming, I draw from my extensive knowledge and experiences. In Figure 5.1, the first living entity represents me juggling the roles of researcher, artist, and teacher. The four orbs below symbolise the different aspects of Creative Arts: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama, which are integral to my ART theory roles. The book on which the figure stands, represents the grounding of my practice in the researcher role.

In "Avengers: Endgame," each Avenger brings unique skills and experiences, combining their strengths to overcome challenges. Similarly, in this chapter, my colleagues Jay, Ash,

and Lina share their stories and insights, much like the Avengers collaborating to achieve a common goal.

However, I had to confront my past for this colleague engagement. In Avengers: Endgame, the Avengers face Thanos, who had previously killed half of all life in the universe with a single snap of the Infinity Gauntlet. This clash is more than physical warfare; it signified a more profound struggle with the past, as the Avengers had to confront their perceived previous failings and the loss they experienced. They must face the trauma and devastation Thanos caused to forge a path forward, reclaiming the future they once thought was lost.

I draw on this narrative in this collaborative self-study, where I confronted my past to inform my present and future as a Creative Arts Teacher Education researcher. Just as the Avengers cannot move forward without first confronting the pain and mistakes of their past, I, too, must also engage with my own history, acknowledging and learning from past experiences.

From our dialogues, I incorporate their stories as meaning-making tools while they retell their experiences. These stories provide me with alternative perspectives as I develop my assemblage of becoming. It is akin to putting all the Infinity Stones on the Infinity Gauntlet to undo the devastation of Thanos in Avengers: Endgame; however, in our case, it is to inform practices. Drawing on Meyer's (2018) ART theory, I have started to see myself as a Creative Arts teacher educator and a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

At the start of 2024, reflecting on all my Art Education and Creative Arts experiences, I realised that I had come to a place where all these experiences had now come to inform how I saw myself. For the first time in my career, I was able to make sense of all my experiences and how they exist in multiple spaces, places, and times and could be used as valuable rhizomatic pockets to inform my present self (Bergson, 1889; Müller et al., 2022). They were storehouses for going forward and not places to get stuck but to learn from, as I had done before (Bergson, 1889). Learning and understanding the significance

of these different spaces and places I have been in overtime are primarily informed by the meaning I attribute to them based on my interactions and experiences with various spaces and places Kruger (2021).

Taking on my role as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education (The Studio as a Research Site)

As a Creative Arts Teacher Education researcher, I have understood how everyday life experiences are not separate from the arts but integral to art education (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002). Quality education in Creative Arts depends on how I view myself in everyday experiences and whether I can see and pay attention to what Müller (2023) calls “the small detail of a pencil shaving” of everyday rhizomatic pockets. I have come to understand that the everyday experiences of interaction and communication with my colleagues and students and the environment I find myself in are simple sources of “data” in my role as a researcher involved in Creative Arts Teacher Education Thornton, 2013). The implication is that every day experiences, interactions, actions, and objects can potentially be research sites (Müller, 2023).

The first research site and memory I wish to consider is the Visual Arts studio where I teach Creative Arts as part of a Life Skills programme…

> *In early 2024, I arrived at the University excited about the work ahead and the potential of what I could do in this new space. I thought this was where I could build my career. The gentleman responsible for showing me around that day was friendly, showed me the staff room, walked me around the faculty building and finally took me to the art studio. I felt like I had walked into Visual Art heaven; I had never had a visual art studio dedicated to being used by me; I had always shared it. I said, "Wow, this is great, " and walked; a giant metal frame caught my eye as I looked around. I had never felt so much happiness over a teaching space… The studio had a kiln! I can explore clay with the students, I thought. The storeroom has many fantastic items dating as far back as before I was born.*

I used this space to become what Foucault (1980) called an experimenter. In Figure 5.2, “The Visual Arts Studio: A Research Site”, I depict the scene of an afternoon I used to play and experiment with materials as I was preparing for the coming week. My mind as a researcher works with a multiplicity of thoughts that I need to put on a surface and make sense of, similar to the scattered papers and materials on the tables. The data I gather from the experimentation with materials can have different outcomes. Preparing, investigating and being an experimenter for my teaching role can be considered “research” (Thornton, 2013). It is here where I consider those I am in a pedagogical relationship with and the impact my research will have on them (Müller, 2023).

Moreover, I used the visual arts studio space as a research site Müller (2023) to collect data from interactions, conversations and the environment that would inform my teaching, which also influences my students (Eckhoff,2012; Eisner, 2002; Tomljenović, 2015). Data gathering and research also involved experimentation in my artist role through the play and manipulation of materials (Thornton, 2013). I consider this act of preparing and planning for the lesson to be research; this simple act of a Thursday afternoon allows me to gather data about what would work with the materials and what the limitations and problems students might face.

Figure 5.2: The Visual Arts Studio: A research site

In my practice, I research proposed mediums and materials before introducing them to my students. During this time, I explore the possibilities of what I am looking to teach. This process involves starting with existing knowledge, or in some cases, limited knowledge, researching what is possible and available in Creative Arts Teacher Education, creating and preparing based on what is known and researched, and then creating a space for engagement, learning, and concluding the process by teaching what I have learned from this research and experimentation. This process has also informed my role as a researcher. I utilise what I know from interacting with my students and what we bring into our pedagogical relationship to improve my teaching practices. Additionally, I share what I have learned with other Creative Arts teacher educators. In my conversation with Jay, she considered research crucial for informing her teaching, which has formed the foundation of her teaching, particularly for the art forms in which she was not a specialist.

Jay: *As teachers, we're often in positions where we don't know the right (way). We don't know what we're supposed to be teaching. We're supposed to teach this, but we don't know anything about it. So that's OK. You must be able to research to teach it effectively. So, I guess I'm comfortable in that space…Yeah. I do not know all the answers, but I also love research. So, I love learning…Good teaching is when you've done all the research behind it; you've created this learning experience that needs to happen now, and it's done. And then you're, you're like, prodding them along, but you're not in the centre, you're just providing, facilitating the learning, whatever the learning goals are, you're aiming in that direction, and you're kind of like shepherding them towards that.*

Jay highlighted the importance of research in teaching and the need to research to teach effectively, mainly when teaching new or unfamiliar content. Jay values the learning process inherent in research and views good teaching as facilitating learning experiences from the backdrop of engaging in research. Her approach aligns with my understanding and practices of research, emphasising the reciprocal relationship between research and teaching in Creative Arts education.

In my practice and past experiences, I consider research embodied in my role as an artist through experimentation with mediums, movements, sounds and materials before presenting them to my students. This process is crucial for understanding the possibilities

and limitations of the art form you will explore before students can engage in Creative Arts learning experiences. Moreover, through the presentation of such experiences, through the interactions, conversations, assessments and how my students engage with the learning experience, I put on my researcher role during the teaching process to gather data about my teaching from all these variables to understand the impact of my actions on my students as mind-altering tools (Eisner, 2002).

Mohr (1994) suggests that when teachers start valuing the researcher role, a shift in how they perceive their teaching starts to happen and teaching becomes an ongoing learning process and constantly refining your pedagogical practices. However, for those of us who are involved in the Teacher Education space, the tension of the competing demands from both the researcher and teacher poses a challenge (Smith and Flores, 2019). The competing interests of these roles are more accentuated in Art Education (Creative Arts Teacher Education) where we wear the hats of Artist, Researcher and Teacher (Meyer, 2018). How we formulate our identity as teachers depends on what is important to us Thornton (2013); however, the complex nature of Creative Arts Teacher Education requires that we rethink our positions and identities to engage our teaching better. By viewing the scenes of our classrooms and the environments as research sites, we may find innovative ways to engage with our students and solve the challenges of being a Creative Arts teacher educator.

Viewing myself as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education, I actively seek answers and best practices to the complex nature of Creative Arts Teacher Education and disseminate what I find while learning from others to improve my practice constantly. Through engaging in self-study research, the multiplicity of experiences and backgrounds my students bring into the classroom, together with my experiences, allow the Creative Arts classroom to be a research site with opportunities for building my assemblage of becoming. Thus, Creative Arts teacher educators should consider their roles as researchers integral to their artist and teaching roles in addressing the challenges of the Creative Arts Teacher Education space. In keeping with my role as a researcher, I also consider assessment a form of data collection tool due to the multipurpose nature of

assessment as a feedback and information-gathering tool in informing student learning, Gareis and Grant (2015). In the next section, I discuss assessment not only for assessment's sake but as a data-gathering tool and its implications for our students.

Assessment as a data gathering tool and rhizomatic pocket

Assessment is a vital information tool that guides teaching methods, evaluates learning, and informs curriculum improvement (Black et al., 2004). It also influences best practices in education (Gareis and Grant, 2015; Maphalala, 2016; Mikre, 2010) and varies based on activity type and subject-specific skills (Wood, 2016). In the Creative Arts Teacher Education field, assessment is a crucial tool for gathering data about learning related to key competencies such as pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills, and confidence. These competencies have been emphasised in literature as essential for teaching Creative Arts (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015). As supported by Russouw and Delport (2016), assessment plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, Creative Arts teacher educators should understand the assessment strategies they use to communicate the learning progress to the students and themselves.

Russouw and Delport (2016) emphasise the importance of accurate assessments, especially formal assessments. Poor assessment processes and practices can detract from the learning process and shift the focus to the end product rather than the learning experience itself. This can have implications for altering students' minds in how they view Creative Arts (Eisner 2002). I believe that while informal and formal assessments are both crucial, implementing them poorly could deter engagement in Creative Arts (Jansen van Vuuren and Van Niekerk, 2015; Sirek and Sefton, 2023), leading to perceptions of Creative Arts experiences as esoteric and disconnected from everyday life (Dewey, 1934).

Jay highlighted the importance of assessment in our conversation, she particularly spoke about conversations she has with her students about feedback and its power on the

individual receiving it; she shared how she included peer assessment during one of the assessments she had done with her students. She reminded her students about the (long-lasting) effects of feedback on those we share pedagogical relationships with and how we provide the messaging of how learning is progressing with how we communicate feedback around the work they have shared…

Jay: I tell them you know, that this is hard. It is hard for many people to put themselves out there. So, keep that in mind in your peer assessment. So, we use the tag, which is to tell them something, ask a question, or give a suggestion. And that is the feedback that they have to give. And there is a rubric as well. But I emphasise the negative effects of negative criticism… We talked about it, there was that teacher that said that thing. And, you know, we talk about the long-term effects of criticism because I think sometimes, as teachers, we forget how that one comment that you make that one day is going to last a lifetime for that person. So, to realise that we have this incredible power as teachers to help our learners feel amazing about their creativity or to really kill their creative dreams.

Jay's approach to assessment emphasises a thoughtful and constructive approach and the teacher's role in the assessment process. She uses peer assessment with her PGCE students to show the lasting impact of teacher feedback on confidence and creative development. Jay's understanding and practices highlight the importance of Creative Arts teacher educators being assessment specialists who can create assessment opportunities and provide detailed feedback while promoting critical thinking and reflection in a non-judgmental, process-oriented learning environment work (De Jager, 2016; Odendaal, 2016).

She refers to the ability to provide feedback or negative criticism as wielding great power to help those we are in a pedagogical relationship with to feel good about their creative abilities. However, we also have the same power to kill their creative dreams in what we say. Reinforcing the point of departure that how we organise and create spaces for learning influences how our students experience and engage with Creative Arts (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002). We need to be mindful of creating environments for intentional conversations as part of the Creative Arts experience (Eckhoff, 2012) and conversations

and feedback about student work do not create the assumption for our students that Creative Arts is an unattainable experience. When our lecture halls, studios and auditoriums fail to provide opportunities for interaction with Creative Arts, the invention/creation of the mind does not occur (Eisner, 2002). The inverse occurs, where atrophy in the appreciation and engagement of Creative Arts occurs. In Creative Arts Teacher Education, the risk of failing to create environments that allow for the appreciation for the arts is threatened by the class sizes that do not allow for the interactive nature of Creative Arts to fully occur (Beukes, 2016).

Scholars such as Beukes (2016), Boysen, Kelly, Raesly, and Casner (2014) Flodén, (2016), Kember, Leung, and Kwan (2002) have pointed out that with large student groups, there is a risk to the quality of teaching and learning when assessment plays a crucial role. Poorly formulated assessment opportunities can become administrative tasks to meet institutional deadlines, relying heavily on tests and online assessments (Beukes, 2016; Russouw and Delport, 2016). This can lead to students replicating these practices in their own classrooms (Beukes, 2016). It would be beneficial for Creative Arts teacher educators to encourage students to reflect on how their assessment practices as lecturers inform their own practices, providing insight into their impact on student learning. Reflecting on my own experiences during my Teacher Education years (2011-2014), as I have shared in Chapter Three, I resonated with Jay's highlighting of the long-term effects of assessment and feedback on students, and I felt the need to share with Jay a memory I had from my experiences while I was studying, of feedback that I felt had long-lasting effects on me and those I was studying with…

Paseka: I remember, while I was still studying, there was this professor who would come into class, because we would have, what do they call it again, where we just put up our artworks of the work we've done for the week. Yeah, we'd have all our artwork. And I remember he would walk in, and I remember how people would be so stressed because he would just look at the work and ask, whose work is this? And it would honestly break them down because before he comes in and says anything, as soon as he gets to that student's work, they would start crying because

they are waiting for that harsh feedback that would follow and that is the messaging that you give from comments or the messaging that you give from positive feedback or constructive feedback.

Jay had encountered a similar situation during her undergraduate studies and shared it in response to my experiences.

Jay: And those, because I had a lecturer like that as well, I think a lot, I think most people have a story of somebody who was like that. And that person is smaller and has a lower sense of self. It's almost like a bully who needs to make other people feel low. I'm looking for a better word than the one that was popping up because I remember we were being recorded. Low is the word we're going with. So, low self-esteem makes people behave in a way that tries to try and make the other person feel small. If we are strong in ourselves, then we can see the strength in others. If we are weak in ourselves, then we see the weakness of others. So, I think, you know, I, I wish I had the sense of self that I have now when my lecturers were pulling apart our work and our displays; I wish that I could have gone to them and said, Listen, dude, this is not effective teaching.

Thinking back to these feedback sessions, I remember how many of my classmates would be anxious to the point of crying; the repetition of this event during our preparation often reminds me of Edvard Munch's work, "The Scream," as it captures the moment of agony whenever we had these feedback sessions. I can vividly picture one of my peers as the embodiment of "The Scream" itself. Whenever our long-bearded professor, an imposing figure with a booming baritone voice, strode by to dissect our work, she instinctively raised her hands to her face. Her fingers would clutch at her cheeks, mimicking the iconic pose of Munch's tormented subject.

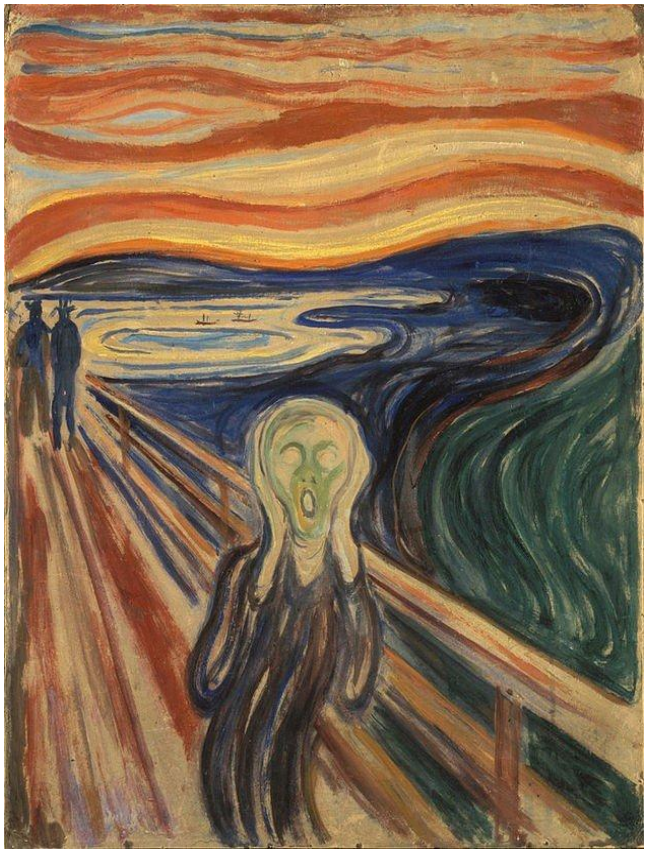


Figure 5.3: The Scream, Edvard Munch, 1893.

As Jay and I reflected on a similar experience of feedback or assessment not being used appropriately in our undergraduate studies, it brought up an important aspect that needs to be inherent in any art educator: the ability to create a safe space for those coming in to experience the Arts (Odendaal, 2016). Somehow, both our experiences of our undergraduate studies still have hushed reverberations on our current practices, and based on her response, where she was trying her best to find the kindest words to describe lecturers that break down students in that way and all she could come up with was… *Jay: You know, it's almost like a bully who needs to make other people feel low. I'm looking for a better word than the one that was popping up because I remember we were being recorded. Low is the word we're going with. So, low self-esteem makes people behave in a way that tries to try and make the other person feel small.* This highlights the significance of being mindful of the long-term impact of the messages we communicate to our students when assessing them (Russouw and Delport, 2016). Developing confidence should be one of the

fundamental principles in developing our Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes (Alter et al., 2009: 23; Westraadt, 2016).

Furthermore, when Jay discusses educators giving feedback from a place of low self-esteem, it highlights the importance of those involved in Creative Arts Teacher Education to embark on their own self-reflective journeys. This can empower educators to become more conscious of themselves and their impact on their students (Chiliza, 2015; Müller, 2023; Pithouse-Morgan, 2009; Samaras, 2011). While it's not a panacea for the challenges of Creative Arts Teacher Education, it can serve as a starting point for cultivating Creative Arts teachers who are more mindful of how their actions and words can have enduring effects on their students.

As we thoroughly explore our practices in collaboration with others, we can enhance our practices and impart our insights to others (Chiliza, 2015; Pithouse-Morgan, 2009; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2009; Samaras, 2011). This brings again to the fore the need to reconsider our mindset and think of ourselves not just as teachers, but as researchers of our own practice. This shift in perspective can help us improve our teaching and artistry in any context. In Creative Arts Teacher Education, being a researcher doesn't just mean publishing papers or presenting at conferences. It also involves spending time with different art forms, even those we're not familiar with, and experimenting to see what we can discover.

I want to think the consequence of not taking our transformation seriously is more scenes of “The Scream” replicated in our classrooms and our students' classrooms. Drawing on what Jay perhaps said would call us to action, realising the gravity of our task in preparing Creative Arts teacher educators. *Jay: So, to realize that you know, we have this incredible power as teachers to help our learners feel amazing about their creativity or to really kill their creative dreams.* Drawing on the work of Eisner (2002), when considering the environments we create as mind-altering tools and the art experience being accessible and relatable for our students (Dewey, 1934); as Creative Arts teacher educator researchers, we play a vital role in inviting students into the learning space of Creative

Arts and serving as translators of the complex and multi-layered world of Creative arts for our students (Thornton, 2013)

On an individual level, the key to improving our professional practice as researchers in Creative Arts Teacher Education is to engage in more collaborative self-studies, as this creates a space for heightened awareness of the surrounding environment and its impact on our practices in Creative Arts Teacher Education (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002; Mohr, 1994). Our classrooms serve as research sites where close attention should be paid to student interactions, conversations, and the diverse experiences they bring into the learning space (Müller, 2023). It is imperative to create a space that acknowledges and values students' diverse experiences within our classrooms (Müller, 2019). To tackle the complexities of Creative Arts Teacher Education's complexities, researchers must actively seek solutions and best practices.

Moreover, engaging in such practices of self-study research through ABR can provide valuable insights into identity formation by promoting a space for reflection, creativity, and the ability to approach challenges to our practice from multiple perspectives (McKay and Sappa, 2020). As researchers in Creative Arts Teacher Education, our work entails engagement in the arts and translating the art world for our students (Thornton, 2013). As we engage with the Creative Arts space, exploring ABR should also provide us with alternative perspectives of what is possible in our classes. Furthermore, as Creative Arts Teacher Education researchers, we should share our learnings and continually strive to improve our practice through knowledge sharing with others (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016). Moving beyond individual classroom spaces and engaging in knowledge exchange allows for valuable feedback to inform our practice (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016). The implication here is the potential for improving the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we teach, challenging our perspectives on curriculum development, teaching and enhancing assessment practices (McKay and Sappa, 2020; Mohr, 1994).

I have found that collaborating with my colleague Jay in Creative Arts Teacher Education has been invaluable. Working together has allowed me to learn from Jay and consider different perspectives (Müller, 2020; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016) on my teaching practices and the learning environments I can create for my students. Moreover, engaging with Jay provided a space for generating contextually relevant insights into practices that have the potential to strengthen my practices as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education. There is a lack of literature on ABR collaborative self-study efforts within the Creative Arts Education space, and there is potential for further development in our field. It is essential to recognize our colleagues as valuable sources of growth and as partners in sharing best practices (Mohr, 1994). In the next section, I bring another colleague into the conversation by exploring the potential of these relationships and communities of practice within the Creative Arts Teacher Education space.

The importance of communities of practice in Creative Arts Teacher Education: Seeing each other as rhizomatic pockets

Pyrko, Dörfler, and Eden (2017) delve into the concept of communities of practice, arguing that these environments are essential for identity formation. They suggest that interacting with others allows us to reorganise the meaning of our experiences. Additionally, communities of practice operate on the premise that learning occurs through social interaction, including interactions with living and non-living entities (Dewey, 1934; Pyrko et al., 2017). Essentially, the spaces where we come together to share knowledge and learn as researchers in Creative Arts Teacher Education have the potential to profoundly impact our identities and practices (Eisner, 2002). Engaging in communities of practice opens opportunities for others to help us make sense of our practices and provide alternative perspectives to the challenges we face (Mohr, 2014).

My interactions with my colleagues have emphasised the significance of embracing alternative perspectives in shaping and refining my pedagogical practices. Their insights have become rhizomatic pockets that inform my practices. Through these interactions, I have gained invaluable insights into the abundant resources within both me and my

colleagues. Furthermore, these exchanges have highlighted the essential role that collaboration has played in our shared journey as Creative Arts teacher educators. One striking example is Lina, who shared her developmental journey and the support she received from her mentor. Coming from a Fine Arts background, she too had her previous experiences embedded in Visual Arts…*As you know, I studied BA Fine Arts and did a bridging diploma in education*. In the face of daunting challenges, her mentor's guidance served as encouragement and guidance for her professional growth. This highlights the transformative power of collaborative spaces and communities of practice, as illustrated by Lina.

Lina: I moved to George, and I started there, and I had a wonderful mentor. Debbie was her name. And then I went into my first class without having any experience of teaching practice or anything. So, it was extremely daunting. So, I learnt to teach in class with sort of no educational experience. So, it was an extremely big challenge, but Debbie helped me quite a lot.

Drawing from Lina's experience, I think back to my memory from 2019 that I shared earlier in this study when I started teaching all four Creative Arts forms. Thinking back, I believe what made the experience overwhelming at times was the "isolation" of being the only person in our faculty at the time who was teaching Creative Arts. The longing to share ideas and interact with others highlights the importance of collaborative spaces in Creative Arts Teacher Education. It was only after Dr M and I started working on the PGCE Creative Arts module that the gap was filled, and the conversations we had about Art Education began helping me think in different ways about my own practices.

Pyrko et al. (2017) refer to this as thinking together. When we consider looking to our colleagues for learning, we can guide each other through the problems of teaching Creative Arts and work on addressing those challenges together (Pyrko et al., 2017). These spaces for shared knowledge and tapping into each other's expertise can be valuable for Creative Arts Teacher Education as we provide alternative perspectives for each other (Mohr, 2014; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016).

Jay highlights the significant contribution of her moderator as a colleague with whom she shares her ideas, acknowledging the pivotal role her moderator has played in her professional development. Beyond this, she emphasises the broader importance of recognising the wealth of knowledge and expertise present within her professional space. She highlights the value of using the diverse skills and experiences of those around her to foster growth, not only looking inward to the institution where she teaches but also outside her institution. She looks to her colleagues as resources, particularly in areas where she may lack specialisation as a Creative Arts teacher educator. In a sense, her colleagues become rhizomatic pockets. By embracing this collaborative approach to learning and drawing upon the collective wisdom of her peers, Jay ensures a rich and dynamic environment for continuous growth and development in her teaching practice as a Creative Arts teacher educator.

Jay: I've got an incredible external moderator. Her name is Mary, and she lives here in Port Edward, and we meet. She's got a doctorate in music and dance. And she's been amazing with resources and helping me build my knowledge over the last, I guess, three years in terms of drama and dance. And I'm surrounded by such talented people, so I'm growing. I've realised that music was the biggest one that I had the least amount of knowledge about. So, I got a little textbook from Grinnell. You know, I was talking to Grinnell about not really knowing much about music. And she's like, "Well, how great. Look, I've written a book." And I was like, "Perfect. That'll do." And it's like a little workbook that I've used now for the last two years.

Moreover, Jay also replicates this type of community of practice with her students…

A significant issue I see is the lack of support for newly qualified teachers after their PGCE. They are often sent into the challenging field of teaching without a support system. I am keen to focus on how to better support PGCE graduates once they enter the profession. While many dedicated individuals are working hard in teacher education, there is insufficient support for new teachers…

I am passionate about developing support programmes for teachers in such environments. I encourage my students to create communities of practice, such as WhatsApp groups, to share ideas and support each other. Despite the challenges, these young teachers are eager to make a difference, and I want them to persist even when faced with hardships. Our focus should not

only be on what students learn while with us but also on how we support them afterwards. Providing ongoing support and creating networks for them to stay connected and share experiences could be invaluable.

Through my interactions with Jay and Lina, I have come to understand the profound impact that collaborative spaces and communities of practice can have on our practices and the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we teach. The concept of communities of practice, as discussed by Pyrko et al. (2017), resonates with me as it emphasises the essential role of social interaction in shaping our identities and learning experiences. The examples of mentors and colleagues that Lina and Jay have drawn on highlight the transformative power of collaborative spaces and the valuable insights gained from engaging with others in the field (Mohr, 2014). Their experiences highlight the significance of embracing alternative perspectives and tapping into the wealth of knowledge present within the professional space of Creative Arts Teacher Education. Additionally, the notion of thinking together, as outlined by Pyrko et al. (2017), reinforces the idea of guiding each other through the challenges of teaching Creative Arts and working collaboratively to address these challenges.

Jay further offers a valuable perspective by suggesting the initiation and development of communities of practice for our former students who enter the Creative Arts teaching field. This approach provides students with a space to share experiences and stay connected with developments in Creative Arts education. She emphasises the potential benefits of integrating our students into this knowledge-sharing network, highlighting the valuable contributions that such a network can offer.

Most importantly, with glimpses into their experiences, Jay and Lina provide me with alternative perspectives to see other Creative Arts teacher educators embody storehouses and rhizomatic pockets from which we can draw and learn, especially in areas where I am not a specialist. This understanding of knowledge recognises the multiplicity of sociocultural and environmental factors that we can tap into as we negotiate our identities and practices in Creative Arts Teacher Education (Dewey, 1934; Deleuze

and Guattari, 1987). Communities of practice for Creative Arts Teacher Education allow us to work collaboratively in testing and sharing knowledge regarding our practices, holding the potential to inform our identities and practices, which makes us more mindful of the environments we create in the spaces where our practices happen.

The key to improving our professional practice through self-study research as Creative Arts Teacher Education professionals is to engage in collaborative self-studies with our colleagues (Pithouse-Morgan, 2022; Pithouse-Morgan and Van Laren, 2012; Samaras, 2006). This approach allows us to share and reflect on our practices, moving beyond our own narrow reflections to gain different perspectives, support, and new insights into our work (Samaras and Freese, 2006). By observing our colleagues' work, we can learn alternative methods, benefit from shared wisdom, and gain insights from different perspectives that may be hidden when we work in isolation (Müller, 2020; Pithouse-Morgan, Coia, Taylor and Samaras, 2016). Creating such spaces for our former students can also establish alternative networks for sharing knowledge and support structures for those new to Creative Arts teaching. This approach has implications for the Teacher Education programmes we deliver, as it helps us stay attuned to the activities and challenges in the classrooms for which we are preparing our students. In these spaces, we also benefit from learning about our students' experiences and the realities of their classrooms. Moreover, when we consider the opportunities ABR in self-study research to reflect, collect, and analyse data Weber (2014), as researchers in Creative Arts Teacher Education; we should maximise the opportunities that self-study research offers to engage with the arts as a form of research. These familiar spaces can provide us with new ways of thinking about our work (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016; Weber, 2014).

The implication of collaborative self-studies for the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we teach is that from strengthening our practices and the spaces for communities of practice, we share best practices among ourselves (Mohr, 2014; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016). As we engage in collaborative ABR self-studies, we are

doing work that implies personal transformation, Müller (2023); Pithouse-Morgan et al., (2016) the implication of such self-reflexive practices is the impact of our actions on those we share pedagogical relationships with and the programmes we teach.

Madondo (2014) highlights that the broader implications of self-study go beyond personal growth; this approach can inform the restructuring of educational programmes and influence policy decisions while contributing to educators' collective pedagogical knowledge and practice. This exploration revealed self-study as a tool for personal reflection and a robust methodology with the potential to impact pedagogical practices at multiple levels. For those of us preparing Creative Arts teachers, collaborative self-studies provide spaces for identity reformulation, viewing our daily practices as research sites, and sharing and reflecting on our practices to improve and inform student learning, curriculum, and teaching (Gareis and Grant, 2015; Pyrko et al., 2017). It also holds promise for the development of competencies highlighted in the literature as essential for teaching Creative Arts: pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills, and confidence, which are key to teaching Creative Arts (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015).

As we discuss the implications of collaborative self-studies for our professional practices and the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we teach, an important consideration is understanding the nuances of where our work happens as those who prepare Creative Arts teachers. Literature acknowledges that inadequate pre-service preparation of Creative Arts generalist teachers is a significant factor deterring effective teaching and learning (Alter and Hays, O'Hara, 2009: 28; Power and Klopper, 2011: 10). This is confirmed by Beukes (2016: 135), noting a detachment between teacher training and what is required for effective teaching and learning of Creative Arts in schools. In the next section, I delve into my conversations with my colleagues regarding the Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape within the South African context.

Creative Arts Teacher Education Landscape

Beukes (2016) offers a valuable starting point for understanding the South African Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape. In his doctoral dissertation, he argues that for learners in schools to fully benefit from Creative Arts, Teacher Education must prepare educators who understand the interrelatedness of all art forms. My position on Beukes' (2016) argument is that grouping Creative Arts with other Life Skills subjects has exacerbated teachers' lack of preparation to make these connections (Alter, Hays, and O'Hara, 2009; Power and Klopper, 2011). Jansen van Vuuren (2018) further explains that integrating Arts and Culture with Life Orientation to form Life Skills has posed challenges for many teachers due to the curriculum's inclusion of highly specialised topics. Most educators do not possess expertise in all the required fields (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Schneider et al., 2018). In my conversation with Lina, I asked her about her understanding of the current experiences in Creative Arts Teacher Education within the South African context. Lina expressed that she has limited interaction with other Creative Arts teacher educators. However, she drew on her own lived experiences to inform her understanding of the Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape:

Lina: I'm not sure if I'll be able to answer that question in such depth because I haven't had much interaction with many other Creative Arts lecturers. But I do believe that if you look at the outcomes of teachers currently, and my experience comes from my daughter's school and the schools where I've taught, the focus is often pushed aside. I don't think enough is being done. Even when considering the spaces where we currently teach and the facilities available to us, it's challenging. How are you supposed to create a love for the arts if you don't have a proper space to do it, to show learners how to set up a class, how to plan it? Talking about it isn't always enough; I think you need to show them. So, I think a lot more can be done, and it feels as if it's rushed.

Lina's reflection highlights the systemic challenges inherent in Creative Arts Teacher Education, particularly in the space where we taught together. She further points out that the marginalisation of Creative Arts, coupled with the challenges of resources and time

allocated to Creative Arts modules in Teacher Education, impedes the preparation of teachers.

Lina also highlights the pressing need for more experiential, practical learning opportunities that enable students to gain first-hand experience in teaching Creative Arts (Beukes, 2016). Mere theoretical instruction is insufficient; aspiring educators must have ample opportunities to engage in hands-on activities, lesson planning, classroom simulations, and the practical application of various Creative Arts techniques. It is through these immersive experiences that they can truly develop the confidence, practical skills, and pedagogical content knowledge required to teach Creative Arts effectively (Alter et al., 2009; Eckhoff, 2013; De Kock et al., 2023; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Westraadt, 2015; Westraadt, 2017).

Compounding these material deficiencies highlighted by Lina is the inadequate time devoted to Creative Arts within Tea
cher Education programmes. The pressure to cover a vast breadth of content across multiple disciplines often relegates Creative Arts to the periphery, with minimal instructional hours allocated for their exploration. The limited time allocation not only curtails the breadth and depth of knowledge imparted but also inhibits the development of practical skills and confidence among prospective teachers (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018).

Lina also noted: And often, as you mentioned, they want an all-rounder, which is, as you say, impossible unless we assist students to become all-rounders. I'm not sure if we're currently doing that because of the little time we have with our students. I don't think we get the opportunity. I'm not sure how other universities do it or how much time and how many modules they have to complete, but I feel that, for instance, with just the art module, you don't really prepare a teacher to become a specialist in the field. That's the background I come from. And I know it's more about Creative Arts, but just thinking of the Foundation Phase students—I see them, and you know how pivotal and important those first developmental years are, and how many activities you can actually do by integrating the arts with other subjects like maths and science while you're doing it. I see my Foundation Phase students for one semester in their four-year programme. That's six

weeks that I see them, and some of them haven't done art since grade four, five, or six. I can see, with my daughter as well—she's in grade six now—due to the CAPS curriculum and the very little time it allows for Creative Arts, the focus is slowly shifting towards more maths and science. The learners who love creating, dancing, etc., start losing their enthusiasm because they're being channelled more into a maths and science direction. So, for Foundation Phase students, doing a practical portfolio feels like climbing a mountain.

Lina's observations highlight the unrealistic expectation for Creative Arts educators to be "all-rounders" in all artistic disciplines. This expectation is particularly daunting for generalist teachers, as highlighted by Jansen van Vuuren (2018), who argues that teaching all four learning areas is unrealistic for the generalist teacher. Creative Arts is too specialised and broad for a generalist approach. Creative Arts Teacher Education Programmes must reconsider how they prepare teachers for the Foundation and Intermediate Phases, equipping them with the specialist knowledge, skills, and techniques required to teach Creative Arts effectively (Opoku-Asare et al., 2015).

Lina furthermore notes, what she has experienced with her daughter in school where the CAPS curriculum directs learners more to mathematics and science focus. She brings a parallel to what is happening in school to her practice as a Creative Arts teacher educator, where she notes that she had only seen a group of Foundation Phase students once for six months during their 4-year studies and argues that this is not enough time to develop students into specialists. Literature provides support for what Lina suggests, as scholars note that inadequate pre-service preparation of Creative Arts generalist teachers is a significant factor deterring effective teaching and learning of Creative Arts (Alter and Hays, O'Hara, 2009: 28; Power and Klopper, 2011: 10 Russell-Bowie and Dawson,2005). Due to a lack of previous engagement with Creative Arts or a prolonged period away from Art Education, students thus feel overwhelmed when they must engage with Creative Arts in her class. Suggesting that the environments students had come from or learnt how to engage with Creative Arts caused atrophy in relation to the creation of the mind to appreciate and engage with Creative Arts (Eisner, 2002)

Building on the challenge Lina highlighted about Teacher Education programmes not adequately preparing Creative Arts teachers, I draw from my conversation with Jay. She provided a broader perspective on the Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape and shared insights from her research, which inform her views on the direction for teacher education programmes…

Jay: In my research, I studied ten participants, of whom three were older teachers who attended teacher training colleges. For these teachers, creative teaching strategies such as using art, drama, and music, were integral to their four-year training, regardless of their eventual teaching specialisation. The remaining seven participants pursued university degrees, specialising in their respective areas. Some of these also completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), though I'm not sure how many opted for a four-year BA versus three years plus a PGCE.

A key difference between university degrees and teacher training colleges is the emphasis on practical learning. I've observed, and it has been noted in meetings, that there's often a heavy focus on teaching theory, with insufficient attention to practical application. Teachers may be well-versed in theories such as Bloom's taxonomy or humanising pedagogy but struggle with applying these concepts in the classroom. I've suggested to our institution that a stronger focus on developing relationships with mentor teachers during teaching practice is essential. Real learning and higher education occur in the classroom, and a solid mentor relationship is crucial for this.

At my previous institution, for instance, the close relationship with specific schools led to better mentoring, as the mentor teachers were familiar with the university. In contrast, our institution's broader approach, where relationships with schools are built over time, often results in inconsistent mentor quality. For example, during my training, our mentor teacher left for Greece, and my colleagues and I had to manage without one, which did not hinder my development but highlighted the value of having a good mentor.

Jay's research differentiates between teacher-training colleges and university-based preparation. She observed that those trained in teacher training colleges had better engagement with the four art forms of Creative Arts, as these were embedded in their teacher preparation. Conversely, university-based preparation often emphasises theoretical knowledge over practical engagement. The challenge is that while teachers

may understand theoretical frameworks like Bloom's taxonomy or humanising pedagogy, they frequently struggle to apply these concepts in real classroom settings. We need to consider how to create more opportunities for our students to apply these theories practically.

At the end of Chapter Three, I attempt to address this challenge by drawing on my experiences of teaching all four Creative Arts forms. I propose an alternative approach, "a box full of tricks," suggesting that in cases where time constraints hinder students from teaching Creative Arts, we should rethink how we present the arts in an integrated manner. I suggest that Creative Arts teacher educators adopt an integrated approach to teaching, where Visual Arts, Music, and Drama are connected and culminate in a final engagement with Drama, as suggested by Athiemoolam (2016). This method encourages shared responsibility in the learning process, allowing students to actively shape their final product while gaining diverse skills for teaching Creative Arts. This integrated approach may also expose students to Creative Arts in a way that enables them to draw connections between the different art forms. Here, students draw on their experiences to engage with Creative Arts, leading to a transformative shift in their perceptions of the arts (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2002).

Considering my thoughts regarding approaching Creative Arts as “a box full of tricks”, Ash also emphasised that Creative Arts teacher educators must push their students into spaces of discomfort when exploring Creative Arts.

Ash: And it's exactly what I tell our students when they enter ART in their first year: you do all four art forms. This isn't like science or geography, where it's one subject—you're going to do four. And you're going to find that one, maybe two, are your comfort zones. And there's going to be at least one that drags you out of your comfort zone, like crazy."

Ash suggests that student teachers need to be pushed beyond their comfort zones when engaging with Creative Arts Education. As Creative Arts teacher educators, it is imperative that we challenge our students by exposing them to experiences that stretch their boundaries and expand their knowledge, skills, and techniques (Athiemoolam, 2016;

Beukes, 2016). This process of intentional discomfort may serve a dual purpose. Firstly, it has the potential to build confidence and competence in the various components of Creative Arts, such as Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama (Jansen van Vuuren 2018; Russell-Bowie, 2012; Russell-Bowie, 2013). By delving into these disciplines with depth and rigour, student teachers can overcome initial anxieties and develop an adaptable skill set to empower them as future Creative Arts educators.

Secondly, Ash suggests that the comprehensive and immersive approach to Creative Arts Education directly enhances the employability of our students. In a competitive job market, those who can demonstrate a well-rounded, hands-on understanding of artistic practices and pedagogies will undoubtedly possess a distinct advantage. However, as Ash points out, the Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape is currently not doing enough:

Ash: That's the thing. So, we don't even touch on that. My biggest concern is whether we're giving our students enough of a proper foundation to inspire confidence in teaching a dance lesson. And if they have that skill set, it's just going to make them so much more employable.

The need for experiential, practical learning opportunities is emphasised as a critical aspect of preparing effective Creative Arts educators (Beukes, 2016). Ash advocates for pushing students beyond their comfort zones to develop a robust and adaptable skill set in various artistic disciplines (Athiemoolam, 2016; Beukes, 2016). The view for more practical engagement or at least for students to know how to apply the theory they learn practically, seems to be an important aspect for Creative Arts Teacher Education that is missing.

The South African Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape necessitates a re-evaluation of its approach as it seem that we are not adequately preparing teachers for Creative Arts. As Creative Arts teacher educators, we need to reconsider how we prepare our students providing them with opportunities to make sense of what they have learnt theoretically by engaging with it practically. Based on these renewed perspectives my

students have provided there is an opportunity to consider collaboration amongst ourselves to see how we can address the challenge of inadequately prepared teachers (Jansen van Vuuren, 2018). In such spaces, we can find new ways of addressing the challenges we encounter in our field (Herne, 2006; Jansen van Vuuren, 2018; Mohr, 2014; Pyrko et al., 2017).

However, while we continue to grapple with the challenges of addressing policy around how Creative Arts is conceptualised within the South African school curriculum, it is important for us, as Creative Arts teacher educators, to carefully curate learning opportunities that balance theoretical and practical explorations (Odendaal, 2016). While a solid grounding in the disciplinary knowledge underpinning the arts is essential, this must be complemented by ample opportunities for hands-on experimentation, creative expression, and the development of tangible artistic skills through process-based learning and teaching (Odendaal; Westraadt, 2017). Moreover, we must foster an environment that celebrates risk-taking, experimentation, and learning from mistakes, encouraging our students to push the boundaries of their creativity in their own learning process (Brandt, 1987; Westraadt, 2017).

As I conclude this chapter, I want to acknowledge the valuable contributions of my colleagues, Ash, Jay, and Lina, who have offered alternative perspectives on my pedagogical practices. Through sharing and reflecting on their experiences, I have realised that I am not alone; they have also provided new ways of thinking about the challenges of being a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education. The current experience of Creative Arts teacher educators within the South African context, or at least in our shared context, reveals that we are not doing enough to prepare our students to teach Creative Arts effectively. My colleagues suggest that dedicating more time to preparing Creative Arts teachers and providing more practical opportunities to apply knowledge are crucial aspects that need addressing (Beukes, 2016).

In the next chapter, my colleagues' contributions become the crucial final building blocks in developing my assemblage of becoming. I view their insights as invaluable, akin to the Infinity Stones and the Infinity Gauntlet in Avengers: Endgame. With these insights, I have seen what is possible. With all the Infinity Stones gathered and the Infinity Gauntlet in place, transformation in my practices is not only possible but within reach.

Chapter 6: From the Multiplicity of My Rhizomatic Pockets: Presenting My Assemblage of Becoming to the World

For most people, the arts are about chaos and disorder, but for the child whose life is transformed by the arts, it only brings order, beauty and understanding of a world that is already chaotic.

PB Chisale

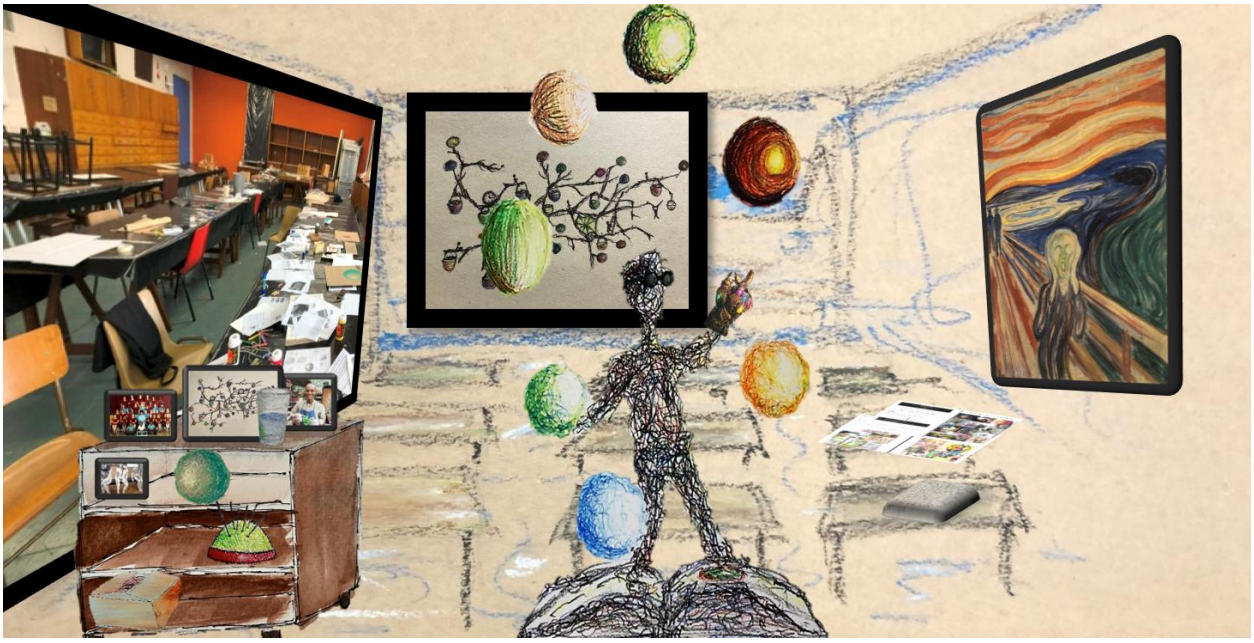


Figure 6.1: My Assemblage of Becoming

As a Creative Arts Teacher Education researcher, I employed self-study research as part of my self-reflexive practice, systematically and critically analysing my actions and context to develop a more conscious approach to my professional practices (Samaras and Freese, 2006). Drawing on Kahneman (2010), I relied on my "remembering self" to retrieve and analyse memories from my rhizomatic pockets, which informed my current actions and guided my future teaching to enhance pedagogical practices. By revisiting

these memories, I aimed to develop my assemblage of becoming a Creative Arts Teacher Education researcher.

I utilised Arts-Based Research (ABR) methods to access, reflect on, and analyse the non-linear nature of memories within experiences from my rhizomatic pockets. Through conversations with colleagues, I used this process, which I interpret as an assemblage of becoming, to uncover new insights into improving practices in Creative Arts Teacher Education (Weber, 2014). This forms my assemblage of becoming.

In this chapter, I interpret Figure 6.1, my assemblage of becoming, drawing on the rhizomatic pockets and illustrating how they inform my practices. I also explore how collaborative engagement with my colleagues, who served as storehouses and resources, has offered alternative perspectives to my assemblage of becoming.

I will begin with the shelf, or as I mentioned in Chapter One, “The empty space on my shelf,” which served as the starting point for my journey in Chapter One. Here, I was able to declutter my shelf so that I could reorganise and make sense of all my experiences in Art Education and how they have informed my current practices as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Reorganizing Time and Memory: Rhizomatic Pockets in Creative Arts Teacher Education

In the process of reorganising my shelf, I drew on the work of Bergson (1889), Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Dewey (1934), and Kahneman (2010), who challenged my understanding of time, memory, and experiences to my journey as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education. Collectively, these theorists inform my concept of Rhizomatic Pockets as dynamic and interconnected storerooms of the past that are in conversation with the present and the future. The Rhizomatic Pockets provide a flexible,

non-linear framework through which I can understand and improve my practice as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Reflections in Rhizomatic Pockets: Designing My Future Through Art Education

The non-linear nature of my Rhizomatic Pockets offers me a new lens through which I view and organise my experiences in Art Education. Starting from the most formative experiences in Art Education, represented by the images in the picture frames where art was used as a tool for the creation of the mind (Eisner, 2002), and in some cases where atrophy in altering the mind was present, the Rhizomatic Pockets allow me to recognise that those who taught me were also shaped by their own experiences in Art Education. While these experiences profoundly impacted me, the Rhizomatic Pockets provide a space for self-reflexivity through self-study research, where reflecting on the past empowers me. As a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education, by confronting the past and looking inward, I become what Mbongwa (2020) refers to as not a victim of my future but its designer.

Interwoven Art Forms: Rethinking Creative Arts Education Through Rhizomatic Connections

The items on my shelf that represent my experiences and understanding of each art form in Creative Arts include the scribble sphere, the half-empty glass, the needle pillow, and a box full of tricks. Through these objects I created, I reflected on my experiences teaching all the Creative Arts disciplines: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama. Each art form provided me with a different perspective on my past experiences. The memories of practices within my experience offer me a lens through which I can draw connections between the different art forms, viewing them not as separate and isolated pockets of knowledge but as interconnected storerooms that can inform present and future practices.

While I hold strong views regarding preserving the different art forms in Creative Arts, as indicated in earlier chapters, the current Creative Arts landscape within the South African context requires us to be innovative in preparing teachers. Thus, the culminating item in the work that represents my experiences of teaching Creative Arts, “a box full of tricks,” symbolises the meeting place of all art forms (Athiemoolam, 2016). Here, the rhizomatic nature of Creative Arts becomes apparent, where the different art forms intersect and enrich each other while simultaneously challenging my strong views on the compartmentalisation of the various Creative Arts disciplines (Athiemoolam, 2016). I believe this approach can help us better prepare our students to teach and navigate the complexities of Creative Arts. By revisiting the rhizomatic pockets of teaching all four art forms, I gain new insights into what is possible in Creative Arts Teacher Education, shaping a more integrated, non-linear approach to Creative Arts (Beukes, 2016).

From Spaces to Places: The Evolving Environments Shaping Creative Arts Education

The introduction of the background represents the environmental backdrop in which Creative Arts experiences have taken place in the past, described as “The music theory classroom where we wrote many tests,” which is the background of my assemblage of becoming’s composition, and “The Scream” on the far right of the composition. While they represent the past, they also inform the present, allowing me to draw on these experiences to decide the kind of learning environment I want to create for my students (Bergson, 1889; Dewey,1934; Odendaal, 2016). Moreover, the environmental backdrop continues to occur in the present and future, represented by “The Visual Arts Studio: A Research Site” (Bergson, 1889; Dewey,1934). The empty space on my shelf being reorganised with items from my rhizomatic pockets no longer exists in isolation or at the centre of attention; it interacts with other elements in its surroundings (Dewey,1934). This highlighted the significant influence of environments on learning and how the spaces we interact with De Villiers et al. (2023) possess the ability to shape and be shaped by us, imbued with sociocultural meanings that can foster inclusion or exclusion.

Apart from the physical attributes of the spaces I have occupied, the concept of place, on the other hand, imbues space with more profound meaning and significance beyond its physical characteristics. I assign the spaces as places of importance concerning developing my assemblage of becoming as the label I attribute to a space (the physical) changes to a place based on the interactions, practices, and lived experiences that unfold within its boundaries (Kruger, 2021). The multiplicity and non-linear perspective of understanding the environments where Creative Arts happen as rhizomatic pockets help me know that spaces of learning are constantly evolving through the lived experiences and interactions that occur inside of them and that are being brought by those coming into the spaces (Kruger, 2021; Müller, 2023). This dimension of place holds truth in the notion that the meaning people attribute to spaces is shaped by their interactions and experiences within those spaces over time.

The environments where Creative Arts happen need to provide opportunities where the invention of the mind Eisner (2002) happens and where students are actively involved with the arts. In such spaces, experimentation and interaction, which assume creating a safe learning environment (Eckhoff, 2012; Odendaal, 2016; Tomljenović, 2015), are encouraged. The activities that take place inside the spaces where we teach, further need to not see Creative Arts as separate from the everyday experiences of our students but consider Art Education an integral part of everyday life (Dewey, 1934). Thus, drawing on the rhizomatic pockets of everyday life experiences, we should allow students to explore Art Education by engaging the non-linear nature of everyday life experiences. It's evident from my reflections that the different environments I've been in have greatly influenced my teaching practices (Dewey, 1924; Eisner, 2002).

Crafting the Gauntlet: Collaborative Perspectives in Shaping Creative Arts Education

The Infinity Gauntlet in The Avengers: Endgame is seen as a powerful tool that has the potential to change the present and future, but only when all the Infinity Stones are placed on it does it have power. I liken my engagement with my colleagues to the coming together of our different perspectives to create a space for sharing that created room for alternative perspectives regarding my rhizomatic pockets. Our conversations developed around our personal experiences of Art Education, our power in the environments we teach, and the current Creative Arts space, the space for collaborative practice and learning from each other as colleagues. The role of their narratives in the assemblage of becoming has been instrumental in providing me with a guiding light and allowing me to reflect on my practices.

Juggling Identities: The Dynamic Role of a Researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education

As I developed and grew through this study, my identity as a Creative Arts Teacher Educator was challenged. I have realised the significant role of being a researcher in informing my roles as an artist and teacher (Meyer, 2018; Thornton, 2013). As I continue to create my assemblage of becoming, I draw from my extensive knowledge and experiences. The human figure in the composition represents me juggling a few orbs, with the top three representing the roles of researcher, artist, and teacher. The four orbs below symbolise the different aspects of Creative Arts: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Drama, which are integral to my ART theory roles. Juggling also points to the complexity of being a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education as I navigate and negotiate the multiplicity of my roles.

Moreover, I have depicted the human figure in a scribbled, expressive style, which indicates the constant engagement with transforming my practices and reformulating my identity as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education (Müller, 2023; Pyrko et al., 2017). On my left hand, I am wearing the Infinity Gauntlet from the Avengers: Endgame,

representing the collective power of bringing the valuable sources of the rhizomatic pockets to inform the present and the future, but also the great power I wield as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education to alter the minds (Eisner, 2002) of my students and those they will be in pedagogical relationships with. The book on which the figure stands represents the grounding of my practice in the researcher role. This power is also wielded through my interactions with my students, as highlighted by Jay.

The book I am standing on top of represents the foundation of identifying as a researcher first, grounding my work in knowledge and the commitment to lifelong learning that underpins the life of a Creative Arts Teacher Educator. The glasses represent a looking forward into the future as I juggle the reality of the present and learning from the past (Bergson, 1889; Dewey, 1934).

This is my assemblage of becoming; it is, and always will be, a work in progress; if I ever tell anyone differently, that would be a lie, as this work of self-reflexivity is an ongoing activity of experimentation and learning from what I find. It is my deliberate effort to not be a victim of my future but its designer (Mbongwa, 2020). I hope that this process of working on myself can show others who may identify as Creative Arts Teacher Educators that there is more to us if we choose to look at the small, everyday details. The mundane everyday acts of our classrooms, the environments we create, and the experiences brought into our classroom matter and become research sites (Müller, 2023). Thus, we only see glimpses of what could be in our practices and the programmes we teach through collaborative spaces and the arduous work of self-reflexivity. The assemblage of all these interconnected and non-linear interactions of non-living and living entities inform our rhizomatic pockets constantly; let's learn from them.

We wield great power in our Infinity Gauntlets, and we should remind ourselves that, just as Thanos' snap caused devastation, our engagements with those we share pedagogical relationships with can be similarly impactful. However, the inverse is also true: by using our Infinity Gauntlets to engage in our own transformation, we can become more mindful of our actions.

SNAP!

Chapter 7: The way forward…

At the end of *Avengers: Endgame*, after an epic battle with Thanos, Tony Stark uses the Infinity Stones to defeat him and save the world. Unfortunately, the immense power of the Stones gravely injures him, and he dies as a result.

Tony's final reflection is recorded in a heartfelt message to his daughter, Morgan. He acknowledges that while everyone desires a happy ending, it doesn't always happen that way. He expresses hope that his message will be played back during a time of celebration, envisioning a world where families have reunited and some semblance of normalcy before Thanos' invasion is restored. Tony marvels at the transformation of the universe over the past decade, contemplating the monumental forces of darkness and light that have shaped their reality. He reflects on the world his daughter, Morgan, will inherit and records his message as a precaution in case of his untimely death. Despite the uncertainties of their time-travel mission, he reassures himself that part of the hero's journey is accepting the end. His final words convey his belief that everything will work out as it is meant to.

"TONY STARK: *Everybody wants a happy ending, right? But it doesn't always roll that way. Maybe this time. I'm hoping if you play this back, it's in celebration. I hope families are reunited, I hope we get it back, and something like a normal version of the planet has been restored, if there ever was such a thing. What a world. Universe, now. If you told me ten years ago that we weren't alone, let alone, you know, to this extent, I mean, I wouldn't have been surprised, but come on. The epic forces of darkness and light that have come into play. And for better or worse, that's the reality Morgan's going to have to find a way to grow up in. So I thought I'd better record a little greeting, in case of an untimely death on my part. I mean, not that death at any time isn't untimely. This time-travel thing we're going to try and pull off tomorrow has got me scratching my head about the survivability of it all. Then again, that's the hero gig. Part of the journey is the end. What am I even tripping for? Everything's going to work out exactly the way it's supposed to".*

*(*Markus and Mcfeely, 2019)

As I reflect, I can almost hear my supervisor, Dr M, saying, *"Be careful not to look for easy answers or happy endings….what I mean is stay critical….most of us continue through our lives with confidence even if it does improve….make sure you communicate the non-linear messiness of your experiences….link your old self to your current self in an authentic way"*

What I am getting from Tony Stark's final message is a reminder of how messy and unpredictable life is. When we take moments to appreciate and try to make sense of it, we learn more about ourselves, and that is where we get to grow. I have come to find that the process of self-study research is messy, and as one travels back in time through the rhizomatic pockets, one can never be entirely certain that you will find what you thought you would find. However, amidst the uncertainty and messiness of the non-linear paths of the rhizomatic pockets through time, there is hope and potential for transforming the self in the arduous journey of self-study research and for something valuable to rise to the surface. Just as Tony Stark felt responsible for the kind of world he would leave behind, I hope that by engaging in such practices, someone in Creative Arts or Art Education finds my work valuable. This chapter is a reflective space to capture to the reader what I did and what I have been able to learn from the rhizomatic pockets and the way forward.

When I began this journey, I did not anticipate that the completion of my assemblage of becoming would look the way it does now. This process of learning and growth has been challenging and not always pleasant, yet here I am. In many ways, it feels surreal. I would like to reflect on this journey, examining the process and drawing on what has emerged from my study and my contribution to Creative Arts Teacher Education. I will shed light on how to move forward as a researcher in this field. Additionally, I will highlight the limitations of my study and the challenges I have faced. This process has also been a transformative tool for my identity and mindset. I will guide how others can learn from my study to inform their practices and chart a path forward in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Here we go…

The overview of my study…

In Chapter One, I draw on the Avengers narrative to navigate the complex nature of time travel as I revisit memories stored within rhizomatic pockets. I emphasise the central ABR and self-study research in my study. The chapter also outlines my positionality, the philosophical foundations, and the key concepts that underpin my research. Additionally, I provide an overview of what motivated my study, its aims, and objectives, stressing the need to address the consequences of inadequate preparation that could hinder the comprehensive teaching of Creative Arts. I critically reflect on my experiences and preparation as a Creative Arts teacher educator, highlighting the importance of collaboration with fellow educators to inform our practices.

In Chapter Two, I reflect on my schooling memories with the assistance of Scott Lang and Tony Stark (my supervisor), who offer valuable perspectives to guide my approach and make me aware of the Quantum Realm and time-space (GPS) needed to navigate this time travel journey. In this process, I began emptying the contents of my metaphorical shelf, initiating the work of reorganising it, and was able to retrieve valuable memories from my rhizomatic pockets, including my school experiences and rekindling my love for ceramics. Most significantly, I learned how to navigate my experiences by developing my time travel tool in the form of rhizomatic pockets that help me make sense of those experiences and consider ways they can inform the present and future.

In Chapter Three, I address the "when" and the "where." In Avengers: Endgame, as Steve Rogers and the team confirm they know how to retrieve the Infinity Stones, they now need to determine the exact points in time to which they must travel. He notes that each of them has encountered the Infinity Stones at some point in their past. Similarly, I have encountered all my "Infinity Stones," as they are based on memories of my experiences over time. I reflect on my journey through my experiences as a Creative Arts

teacher educator, delving into pivotal moments and exploring the rhizomatic pockets of these experiences.

Through my rhizomatic pockets, I found that each institution's unique academic milieu created distinctive experiences that influenced my assessment and curriculum design approach, however, there are valuable avenues for collaboration between institutions to share knowledge to inform the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes that happen in distinct contexts to enhance student learning, teaching and curriculum while also addressing the acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge, practical skills, and confidence. Moreover, the rhizomatic pockets have also revealed that our students can provide great insights into improving our practice as those working in Creative Arts Teacher Education. Using ABR for reflection allowed me to deeply explore these experiences to understand how they influence my present practices. This reflective process helped me trace the connections between different moments in my career, highlighting the interconnectedness of my personal journey with my pedagogical practices. Like the Avengers navigating a complex web of past events to shape their future, I have traversed various experiences across different art forms. Drawing on my rhizomatic pockets, my views on the different art forms in Creative Arts are challenged, and I consider using Drama as the meeting place of all the art forms. When they intersect, they enrich each other and allow us to better prepare our students to teach and navigate the complexities of Creative Arts.

In Chapter Four, I navigate the complex interplay of roles as a Creative Arts teacher educator. Drawing on insights from the rhizomatic pockets explored in Chapter Two, my role as a researcher comes to the fore, challenging my previous perceptions and informing my roles as an artist and teacher. This chapter is a reflective exploration of how my identity as a Creative Arts teacher educator has been shaped by my experiences, environments, and interactions with others. It emphasises the importance of research as a central component of my practice and examines the role of self-study and ABR in facilitating my ongoing journey of becoming. I re-emphasise the significance of

environments, collaboration, and continuous reflection in shaping my identity and enhancing my teaching practices.

In Chapter Five, I further explore how my role as a researcher informs my roles as an artist and teacher. As I continued to create my assemblage of becoming, I drew from my colleagues' knowledge, experiences and insights through our conversations to gain alternative perspectives. While doing this, I also traced my journey through my rhizomatic pockets to draw connections to the previous chapters.

Finally, **in Chapter Six**, I present my assemblage of becoming. Drawing on my "remembering self" and my rhizomatic pockets, I explore what I can learn regarding pedagogical practices. Once again, I employ ABR methods to investigate the non-linear nature of my memories, gaining new insights through conversations with colleagues. This reflective process informs my "assemblage of becoming." I also use this chapter to interpret my assemblage and discuss how these insights shape and inform my practices. Collaborative engagement with my colleagues has provided alternative perspectives in developing my assemblage.

Some challenges were faced…

However, as I embarked on my assemblage of becoming, I encountered several challenges during my study. One self-inflicted challenge was changing jobs twice during my studies; I would not recommend that. Pursuing a PhD is already demanding but doing so while changing jobs multiple times adds an extra layer of complexity. This transition took valuable time away from reading and writing, requiring me to focus on adapting to my new work environment. Life's various demands also hindered my progress. At one point, I went nearly six months without even looking at my research, and each time I received a text from my supervisor, I had a mini heart attack, fearing she might request to see some work.

Another challenge arose when I moved to a different institution, and my supervisor relocated abroad. This meant I could no longer simply knock on her door for a chat about Art Education or my study. As I've mentioned in my research, I wish I had initiated more intentional conversations with her regarding my self-study, as each discussion helped me move forward. However, through online meetings and what is now dubbed our annual meeting when she and her family visit South Africa, her support amidst these challenges has been remarkable.

A third challenge related to the people I wished to collaborate with in my study. I had hoped to use a collaborative workshop to engage other Creative Arts teacher educators from different universities. This approach would have shaped alternative perspectives, guided my thinking, helped me make sense of my experiences, and informed my pedagogical practices. Additionally, it would have allowed me to draw from a wider pool of experiences and collaboratively engage in discussions on Creative Arts Teacher Education. However, as my research progressed, the logistics of involving all my desired participants became increasingly problematic, particularly from an ethical permission perspective. I had to scale back my wide-reaching plans to focus on the context where I was teaching, where there were several Creative Arts teacher educators. After discussing my disappointment over my overly ambitious plans with my supervisor, she reminded me that there would be time to engage in research involving a larger pool of Creative Arts teacher educators later in my scholarly career.

The limitations…

As my study is self-reflexive work to inform my pedagogical practices, I do not seek to generalise my findings to a broader population. Self-study research is inherently personal, conducted in collaboration with others to inform my own identity and transformation, which I hope will positively impact my work and those I teach. However, I can assert that others might benefit from my work, as it could offer Creative Arts teacher educators new perspectives on how to view their practices.

When engaging with the literature, research is often silent on the topic of Creative Arts teacher educators, which has significant implications for Creative Arts Teacher Education. The focus is typically on pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and the school context, with many studies concentrating on the classroom environment. However, the Creative Arts teacher educator role is frequently overlooked in the literature. This scarcity of research on Creative Arts teacher educators presents opportunities for further exploration, particularly from a collaborative self-study perspective. Such research can contribute to Creative Arts Teacher Education, ultimately benefiting pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and the broader school context.

My learnings and contribution to Creative Arts Teacher Education

Identifying as a Researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education

My study contributes to higher education, particularly in Creative Arts Teacher Education and strengthens professional practice by encouraging us as Creative Arts teacher educators to view ourselves as researchers in this field. When we begin to approach our practices from a research-oriented perspective, our classrooms transform into research sites. Within these spaces, we engage with our students, participate in interactions and conversations, and allow our collective experiences to inform our rhizomatic pockets. We become integral to the research process, rather than remaining separate from it.

By considering our classrooms as research sites, we also gain insights into how these environments influence the teaching and learning of Creative Arts. This perspective prompts us to consider how the physical space and its materials and interactions contribute to the educational process in our classrooms.

A key consideration for future research is how, as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education, I can further integrate my students' rhizomatic pockets into my teaching

practices to uncover new ways of preparing them. Moreover, by drawing on the multifaceted identities of A(artist), R(researcher), and T(teacher), we can explore how the chosen identities of Creative Arts teacher educators influence their pedagogical practices, particularly across the different art forms within Creative Arts.

Creating Safe and Supportive Learning Environments

The second contribution of my collaborative self-study relates to improving a generalist Creative Arts teacher educator programme, which considers our awareness as researchers in Creative Arts Teacher Education in creating safe and supportive learning environments. It is particularly valuable for those of us engaged in Creative Arts Teacher Education to consider the long-term effects of our actions, specifically the feedback we provide, which guides students in building confidence in their engagement with Creative Arts. For those of us working in Creative Arts Teacher Education, this calls on us to be mindful of the power of assessment and consider using it as a tool for enhancing student learning and fostering a positive outlook on Art Education and Creative Arts.

The challenges associated with feedback, particularly in relation to assessment, highlight the need for further research into the long-term effects of assessment practices on our students in Creative Arts education. By doing so, we can gain new insights into how assessment and feedback shape students' attitudes and perceptions towards Creative Arts and Art Education over time.

Communities of Practice in Creative Arts Teacher Education

The third consideration in Creative Arts Teacher Education is the value of viewing colleagues as resources, drawing on each other's knowledge and experiences as rhizomatic pockets. Insights into Communities of Practice in Creative Arts Teacher

Education provide us with rich opportunities to learn from and share best practices with other Creative Arts teacher educators.

The Value of Collaboration

My research highlights the importance of collaboration among Creative Arts teacher educators within the South African context. By sharing experiences and insights as colleagues, we create opportunities to work together to address common challenges and develop innovative solutions for Creative Arts Teacher Education. I hope the emphasis on collaboration in my work will inspire other Creative Arts teacher educators to seek out and engage in reflective dialogues with their colleagues. These interactions can lead to the exchange of diverse perspectives, expanding our understanding of Creative Arts Teacher Education and improving the programmes we teach. Through such collaboration, the Creative Arts Teacher Education space can become more supportive, as we create environments that facilitate the sharing of knowledge, which in turn informs both our individual practices and the programmes we offer.

Practical Strategies for Enhancing Creative Arts Teacher Education

Finally, in considering the complexities of the current Creative Arts Teacher Education landscape and drawing from my rhizomatic pockets, my study offers a practical approach for enhancing the preparation of Creative Arts educators. This includes the "box full of tricks" method and an emphasis on encouraging students to push beyond their comfort zones. This strategy can be adopted or adapted by other teacher educators to improve their own practices.

The Rhizomatic Pockets

The concept of rhizomatic pockets is a metaphorical framework informed by various philosophical ideas, to understand how past experiences can be dynamically retrieved and used to inform present and future actions. This concept integrates the non-linear, interconnected nature of experiences, memories, and learning, positioning them as rich resources that contribute to ongoing self-awareness and development. Drawing on the work of Bergson (1889), Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Dewey (1934), and Kahneman (2010), I develop what may be my most significant contribution to self-study research and Creative Arts Teacher Education: the concept of rhizomatic pockets. These rhizomatic pockets serve as dynamic, interconnected storerooms of the past that engage in conversation with the present and the future. They provide a flexible, non-linear framework through which I can make sense of the past to inform my present and future practices as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education.

As we make sense of our experiences, the rhizomatic pockets also consider the influence of both living and non-living beings on our experiences. The non-living include the environments where we live, learn, and teach, as well as the materials in those spaces and places. The living refers to the interactions and relationships we have with others. All these elements serve as rhizomatic pockets from which we can learn, informing our identities and practices.

What Now?

As my study was ending, I remembered my supervisor's advice: “You need to tell the examiner how your study informs your next steps as a researcher in Creative Arts Teacher Education.” Sleep-deprived, high on coffee and peanut butter sandwiches, I thought to myself, “I’m pretty sure the examiners will understand if I just say I need a nap and a good home-cooked meal after all this work.” But then, again, I thought, such a response probably wouldn't impress the examiners.

On a more serious note, I believe that creating spaces through workshops and conferences where Creative Arts Teacher Educators can gather and share their experiences is crucial for advancing the insights uncovered in this study. In these spaces, it’s important to consider our experiences and challenges in Creative Arts Teacher Education through ABR inquiry, engage in self-study, and bring our collective experiences together. By utilising the rhizomatic pockets developed in my assemblage of becoming, this approach will provide valuable opportunities for learning from the past, fostering self-reflexivity, and promoting knowledge sharing and development in the field of Creative Arts Teacher Education.

Moreover, there are significant loud silences in the literature concerning Creative Arts Teacher Educators. The paucity of research on Creative Arts Teacher Educators presents opportunities for further exploration, particularly from a collaborative self-study perspective. Such research can contribute to the advancement of Creative Arts Teacher Education, ultimately benefiting pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and the broader school context.

As I Close...

Self-study and self-reflexivity, although arduous, confront us with ourselves. Parts of us that were lost can be revisited and seen from new perspectives, and perhaps these lost parts and past wounds can be healed and revitalised. The achievements and victories of the past are equally important, as they remind us of our capabilities, and these stories deserve recognition. However, it is through sharing our struggles and victories and holding each other accountable that we recognise our interconnectedness as humans, learning to share this beautiful thing called life. Those around us are valuable resources from which to learn. For our practice in Creative Arts Teacher Education, I hope it leads to a resurrection of creative dreams long forgotten, moving beyond the constraints imposed by those whose esoteric view of Art Education is something to be preserved within their self-defined, narrow confines. I hope you come to see art as the essence of everyday life and a place of belonging for you and your students.

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Supporting Documents

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA
UFS UV

GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

07-Mar-2023

Dear Mr Paseka Chisale

Application Approved

Research Project Title:
A collaborative self-study exploring the experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators to inform professional practice.

Ethical Clearance number:
UFS-HSD2022/0655/23

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Take note: if the researcher intends to involve any other Higher Education Institutions, besides STADIO employees, then gatekeeper's approval must be obtained before commencing with any research activities. Please provide the RIMS office with copies of gatekeeper's approval for recordkeeping.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis
Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Adri Du Plessis
Digitally signed by Adri Du Plessis
Date: 2023.03.09 17:27:01 +02'00'

205 Nelson Mandela Drive
Park West
Bloemfontein 9301
South Africa

P.O. Box 339
Bloemfontein 9300
Tel: +27 (0)51 401 9337
duplessisA@ufs.ac.za
www.ufs.ac.za

EDITING CERTIFICATE

EDITING AND PROOFREADING CERTIFICATE

22 Osche Street

The Reeds

Centurion

0157

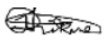
29 July 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This certificate serves to confirm that I have edited PM Chisale's thesis titled, **"A collaborative self-study exploring the experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators to inform professional practice."**

I found the work easy and intriguing to read. Much of my editing basically dealt with obstructionist technical aspects of language, which could have otherwise compromised smooth reading as well as the sense of the information being conveyed. I hope that the work will be found to be of an acceptable standard. I am a member of Professional Editors' Guild.

Hereunder are my contact details:



Jack Chokwe (PhD – University of Leicester (United Kingdom)

Contact numbers: 072 214 5489

jackchokwe@gmail.com

Professional EDITORS Guild

Addendums

Addendum A

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA
UFS

Research study information leaflet and consent form

Date

Date of the research project

Title of the research project

A collaborative self-study exploring the experiences of Creative Arts teacher educators to inform professional practice.

Principle investigator / researcher(s) name(s) and contact number(s):

Paseka Blessing Chisale
Name of student/researcher Student number Contact number

Faculty and Department:

Faculty of Education
School of Social Sciences and Language Education

Study leader(s) name and contact number:

Dr Marguerite Mülle
Contact number:

What is the aim / purpose of the study?

The aim of this study is to reflect on the teaching experiences and training of Creative Arts teacher educators to better inform my own practices and that of other Creative Arts Educators. Furthermore, through collaboration with you as a Creative Arts teacher educator, I hope this will also help create a community of practice and strengthen the program you teach.

Who is doing the research?

I, Paseka Blessing Chisale, student numbe will conduct the study.

Has the study received ethical approval?

This study has not received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of UFS yet. However, the study is undergoing modifications with the Research Ethics Committee of UFS. Once approval is provided you will be notified1 of this change.

Approval number: No approval number has been obtained yet, however there is a record number provided by the Research Ethics Committee of UFS: UFS-HSD2022/0655

Why are you invited to take part in this research project?

You have been invited to participate in my study based on your expertise in the teaching of Creative Arts. Your contact details have been obtained through interaction with your work on the field of Creative Arts/ Art Education and links with some members of your faculty.

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)51 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za

What is the nature of participation in this study?

The study intends on collecting data in the form of a collaborative online workshop where we will share on our experiences and practices of Creative Arts teaching. We will create a visual representation of our experiences through ceramic clay, drawings, paintings and dialog.

Can the participant withdraw from the study?

Should you at any point before, during or after the workshop wish to withdraw from the study, you will be free to do so without incurring any penalties or consequences.

What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

This study does not only aim to benefit my practice as a Creative Arts teacher educator; however, it will also benefit your own practice and help strengthen the program you teach. The hope is also to create a community of practice through this collaboration.

What is the anticipated inconvenience of taking part in this study?

The study aims to ensure that you do not experience any inconvenience or discomfort at any point. However, there may be instances of inconvenience with regards to finding a convenient time to gather all colleagues for the workshop. The study aims to make use of some of your responses for exhibition purposes. However, all responses to be used during this time will only be exhibited with your permission.

Will what I say be kept confidential?

Due to the nature of this study, there will be a certain level of disclosure. By participating in this study, you will form part of a recorded online workshop that will be used for gathering data and transcription. Extracts from the workshop recording may also be used in the final exhibition representing the culmination and results of the study, thus your responses in the workshop will be seen during the exhibition. However, the loop of these responses will be sent to you before the exhibition takes place to ensure that you are comfortable with the extract of your response that will be used. At no point during this collaborative workshop will you or the institution you represent be under any risk of reputational damage. All the data collected during the workshop will only be used for the purposes of this study, the development of publications and the recorded workshop will only be disseminated to my supervisor. Your personal information will be treated with the greatest level of confidentiality.

How will the information be stored and ultimately destroyed?

Once the study is concluded, you will be provided with the results of the study, while the recording of the workshop will be kept safely by myself and my supervisor under a password protected file and not disseminated to any other third parties.

Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

No payment or incentive will be provided to during this study. You will not incur any cost on your part and all materials used during the workshop will be at the expense of the researcher.

How will the participant be informed of the findings / results of the study?

Once the study is concluded, you will be provided with the results of the study. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding my study and how it is conducted, you are welcome to contact me: at or email me on or
Otherwise, you may also contact my supervisor or email her at you have any concerns or complaints related to the research, and how it is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Department: or

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

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YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA
UFS

Consent to participate in this study

I, the undersigned,

_____
(participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")
confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in relation to

_____

and which Study is being conducted by

__Paseka Blessing Chisale: _____
(insert the name of the researcher), (the "**Researcher**").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that–

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the <insert specific data collection method>.

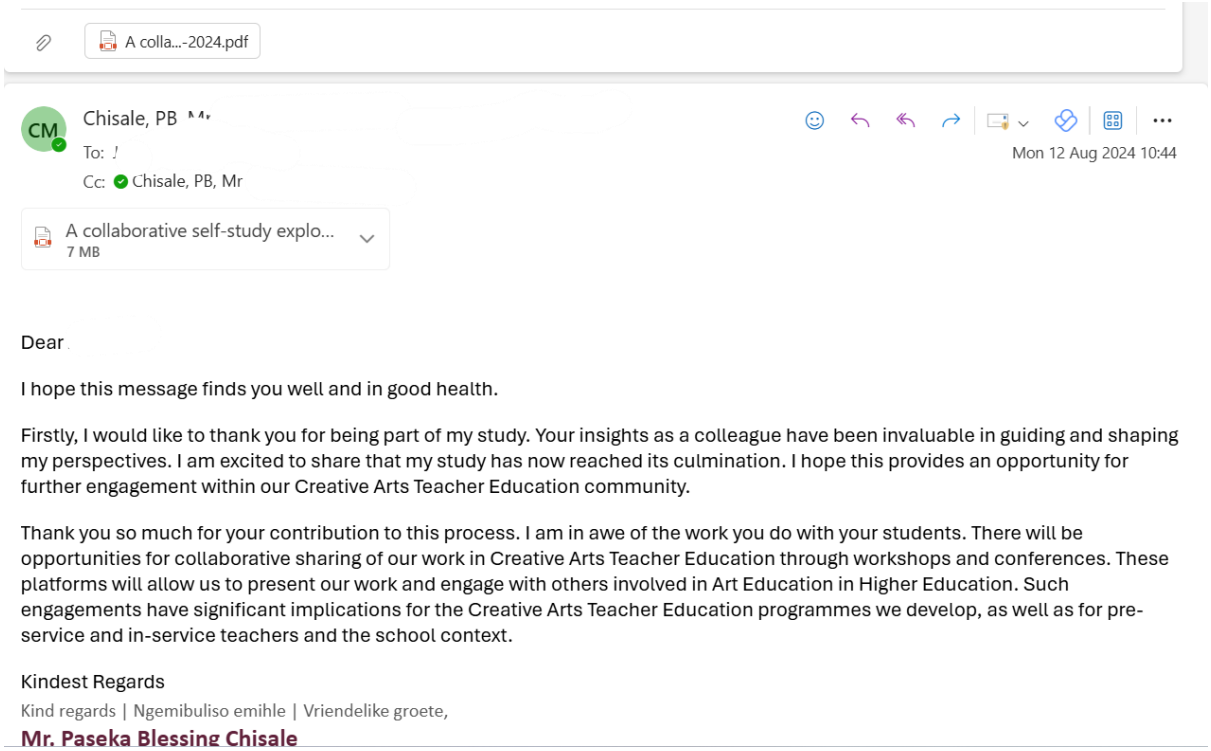
Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____Date: _____

Addendum B



A colla...-2024.pdf

CM Chisale, PB

To: !

Cc: Chisale, PB, Mr

Mon 12 Aug 2024 10:44

A collaborative self-study explo...
7 MB

Dear

I hope this message finds you well and in good health.

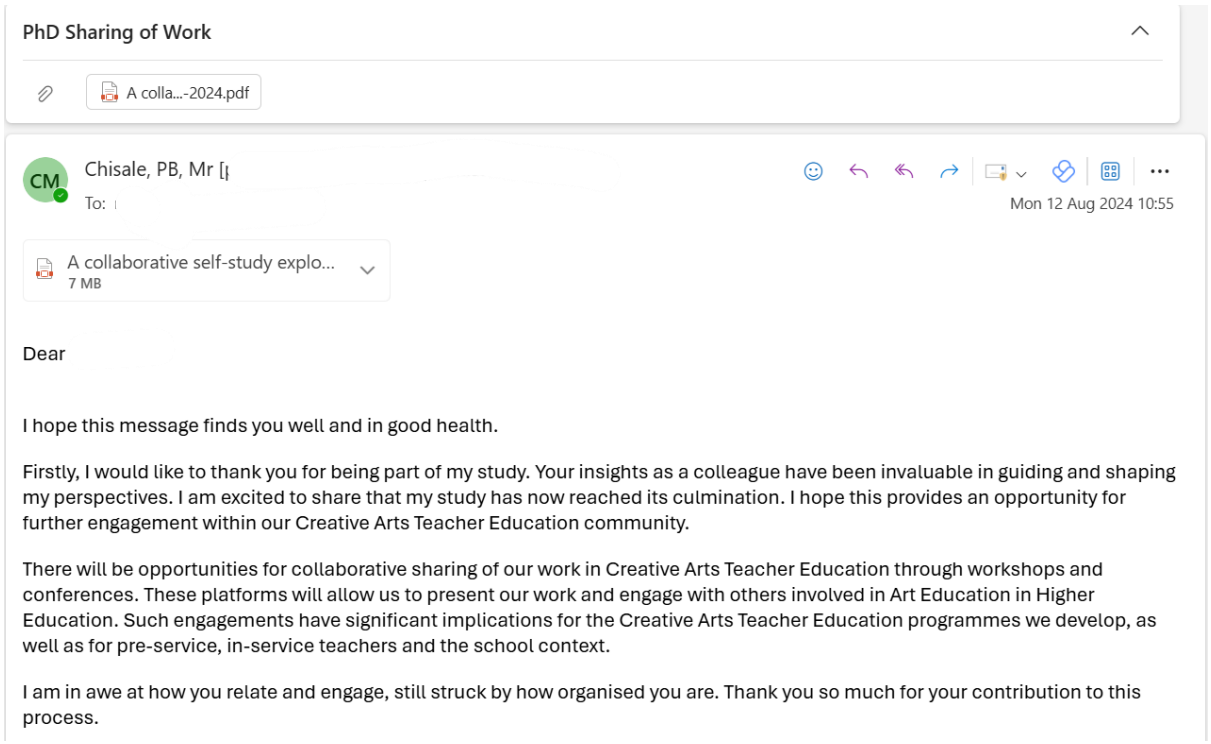
Firstly, I would like to thank you for being part of my study. Your insights as a colleague have been invaluable in guiding and shaping my perspectives. I am excited to share that my study has now reached its culmination. I hope this provides an opportunity for further engagement within our Creative Arts Teacher Education community.

Thank you so much for your contribution to this process. I am in awe of the work you do with your students. There will be opportunities for collaborative sharing of our work in Creative Arts Teacher Education through workshops and conferences. These platforms will allow us to present our work and engage with others involved in Art Education in Higher Education. Such engagements have significant implications for the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we develop, as well as for pre-service and in-service teachers and the school context.

Kindest Regards

Kind regards | Ngemibuliso emihle | Vriendelike groete,

Mr. Paseka Blessing Chisale



PhD Sharing of Work

A colla...-2024.pdf

CM Chisale, PB, Mr [

To:

Mon 12 Aug 2024 10:55

A collaborative self-study explo...
7 MB

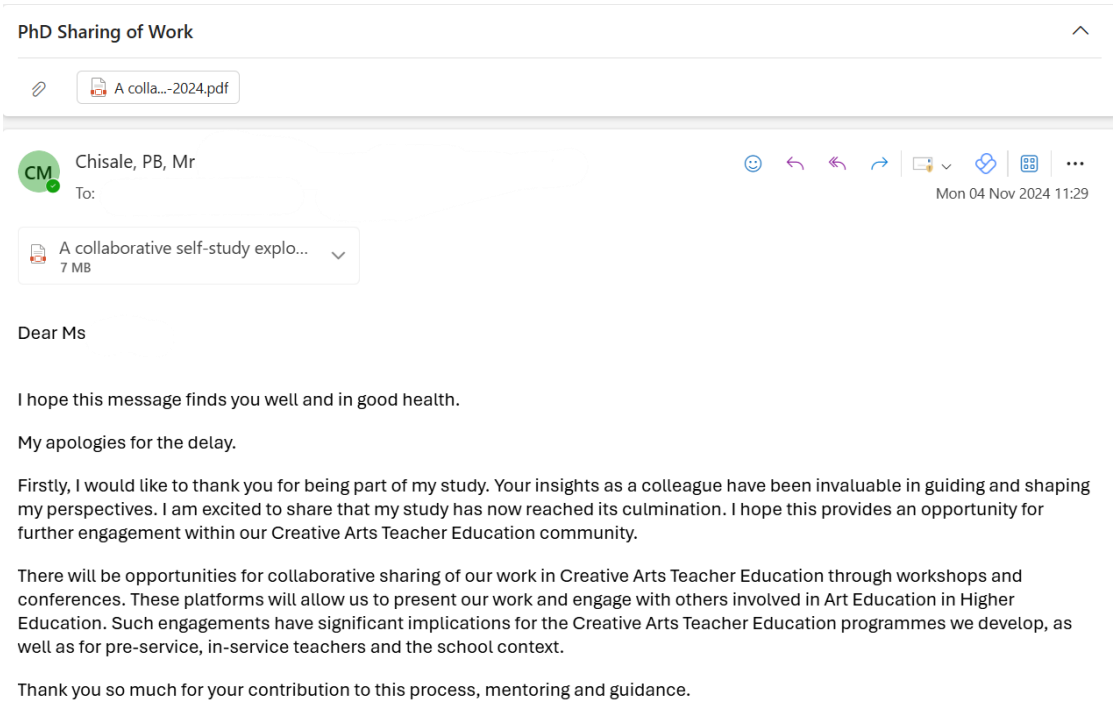
Dear

I hope this message finds you well and in good health.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for being part of my study. Your insights as a colleague have been invaluable in guiding and shaping my perspectives. I am excited to share that my study has now reached its culmination. I hope this provides an opportunity for further engagement within our Creative Arts Teacher Education community.

There will be opportunities for collaborative sharing of our work in Creative Arts Teacher Education through workshops and conferences. These platforms will allow us to present our work and engage with others involved in Art Education in Higher Education. Such engagements have significant implications for the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we develop, as well as for pre-service, in-service teachers and the school context.

I am in awe at how you relate and engage, still struck by how organised you are. Thank you so much for your contribution to this process.



PhD Sharing of Work

A colla...-2024.pdf

CM

Chisale, PB, Mr

To:

Mon 04 Nov 2024 11:29

A collaborative self-study explo...
7 MB

Dear Ms

I hope this message finds you well and in good health.

My apologies for the delay.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for being part of my study. Your insights as a colleague have been invaluable in guiding and shaping my perspectives. I am excited to share that my study has now reached its culmination. I hope this provides an opportunity for further engagement within our Creative Arts Teacher Education community.

There will be opportunities for collaborative sharing of our work in Creative Arts Teacher Education through workshops and conferences. These platforms will allow us to present our work and engage with others involved in Art Education in Higher Education. Such engagements have significant implications for the Creative Arts Teacher Education programmes we develop, as well as for pre-service, in-service teachers and the school context.

Thank you so much for your contribution to this process, mentoring and guidance.